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Identity, Trust, and Reconciliation in East Asia

Dealing with Painful History to
Create a Peaceful Present



Edited by Kevin P Clements



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Kevin P Clements
Editor

Identity, Trust, and Reconciliation in East Asia

Dealing with Painful History to Create
a Peaceful Present

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Editor

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“This book could not be more timely or more important. With China’s rise and the waning of US influence in East Asia, it is crucial to understand the historic and current relationships in the region in order to prevent any escalation of conflict. This book makes available the views of local actors who have thought deeply about these issues in new ways, leading to ideas for problem-solving and trust building that are sorely needed. A must-read for the IR field, especially those focusing on conflict resolution and peace building.”

—Eileen F. Babbitt, *Professor of Practice, and Director, Institute for Human Security, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University*

“This important book examines the recent rise of disturbing nationalism in China, South Korea, and Japan, after a period of focusing on economic well-being and peaceful integration. The perceptive analyses by the book’s contributors help account for these changes by the complex interplay of identity concerns within and among these three countries. Very usefully, the contributors also discuss ways to help overcome the deteriorating relations among these countries.”

—Louis Kriesberg, *Maxwell Professor Emeritus of Social Conflict Studies, Founding Director, Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts, Syracuse University*

“North East Asia has become a vital region in world politics. Issues of identity and historical memory play a central role in its international affairs. This outstanding book offers first-rate analyses of these issues and proposes positive and practical steps forward. Everyone concerned with world politics should read it.”

—Hugh Miall, *Emeritus Professor of International Relations, University of Kent*

“This is a masterly edited collection, each chapter is well integrated into the big themes that underpin the overall narrative. The questions it poses for the reader are challenging, but also inspiring. –The explanation of the ways in which identity and memory are fundamental to trust building and reconciliation is compelling. It should be read by all scholars and students of peacebuilding and we can dare to hope that it is also read, and its lessons learned, by some policymakers too.”

—Feargal Cochrane, *Professor of Politics and Director, Centre for the Analysis and Resolution of Conflict at the University of Kent*

“Kevin P Clements has expertly edited a fascinating series of commentaries on the intensifying tensions challenging East Asia, and how these might be addressed for the mutual benefit of China, Japan, and Korea. The whole undertaking, deepened by

workshop interactions, warns of the dangers posed if new nationalisms are not sensitive to the regional interplay of historical memories and cultural differences.”

—Richard Falk, *Professor Emeritus, International Law, Princeton University, and Professor of Global Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara.*

With a rising China, an anxious Japan, and an ambivalent South Korea, this excellent edited volume by Clements et al. opens up a timely dialogue on the historical grievances that have underpinned contemporary politics in East Asia. Collectively, the authors make a strong case that current issues of regional security and economic cooperation cannot be addressed without first confronting the injustices of the past. To stimulate this much-needed conversation, Clements has brought together a stellar group of Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Western scholars to grapple with deep-seated feelings of mistrust, humiliation, domination, apology, and trauma that have been experienced over the past century. The importance and uniqueness of this volume's trilateral approach cannot be overstated — the authors engage directly with national fears and stereotypes, acknowledging the anger and emotion that fuel continued conflict. As a Chinese-Canadian scholar who has lived and worked in Japan, I found the arguments to be refreshing and even-handed. In taking on such sensitive subjects, it makes for uncomfortable reading at times, but the authors should be applauded for pulling no punches. At the same time, it is a highly empathetic book that exposes the hopes and concerns of the Japanese, the Chinese, and the South Koreans. This is a volume that should be read by scholars, students, and policy makers seeking to understand East Asian politics.

—Christine Cheng, Ph.D., Lecturer, *War Studies, King's College London*

An insightful collection of works that illuminate the problems of reconciliation among a triad of crucial Asia-Pacific countries - Japan, China and the Koreas - struggling with memories of the Second World War.

—Christopher Mitchell, *Professor Emeritus, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University*

This book refuses to take the “conflicts of interest” between China, Japan, and Korea as a given. It recognises that these seem intractable because each nation protects its self-image by casting the “blame” of their unhappy history on others – and uses this lens to assess every current trend as positive or negative.”

—James R. Flynn – *Professor of Politics and Psychology, University of Otago.*

“When ceasefires silence the guns, nations must begin the laborious tasks of regional social reconstruction: healing from trauma, amending enemy images, building trusting relationships, cultivating transnational identities, and developing cooperative economic and security objectives. This exceptional volume explores the obstacles and processes for creating an enduring peace between Japan, China, and Korea, with their entwined histories of enmity, competition, and conflict. The book offers vital perspectives from writers representing all three nations as well as the voices of outside experts in the field of peace and conflict. Lessons learned in East Asia instruct all of us concerned with keeping the peace and preventing future cycles of violence.”

—Paula Green, *Professor Emerita School for International Training; Co-editor*
Psychology and Social Responsibility: Facing Global Challenges

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All of the workshop participants and authors in this volume deserve special praise for their willingness to give their precious time, intelligence and expertise to explore the deeper sources of conflict in Northeast Asia and for their enthusiasm in suggesting how these negative dynamics might be addressed creatively and non-violently.

I would like to thank my wife, Valerie Clements, for some early editorial work on individual papers and for her unswerving support over the years. I also want to thank her and my wider family for enduring my frequent absences as this book has evolved over the past year.

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I hope that this book will enable its readers to understand some of the ways in which emotions, identities and shared history can combine to generate negative and conflictual dynamics and why addressing these factors is so important to ensuring the conditions necessary for peaceful co-existence and more optimally deep co-operation and reconciliation between former adversaries.

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Trust, Identity and Conflict in Northeast Asia – Barriers to Positive Relationships

Kevin P Clements

There is absolutely no doubt that the Northeast Asian region – China, Japan and Korea – is absolutely critical to global peace and stability in the twenty-first century. Northeast Asia is the centre of global economic development. It has a land mass 15% bigger than all of Europe and a combined population of 1.5 billion people or over one fifth of all the people of the world. What happens in Northeast Asia (economically, socially and politically) is going to have a major impact on levels of prosperity, well-being and political stability in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. In the twenty-first century, it is no longer just a question of the world catching cold when “Wall Street” sneezes, it is clear that when China, Japan or South Korea sneeze, the rest of the world will get colds as well.

It is vital, therefore, to ensure that the social, political and military relationships between all three countries are as positive as the economic links so that each country can contribute what it can to regional and, by extension, global peace and security.

There is certainly no space for competitive or, worse, destructive nationalism, in Northeast Asia. If these countries were to revert to their pre-Second World War and immediate postwar conflict patterns, it would

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have major negative implications for regional and global peace and stability. The challenge, therefore, is how to deepen and expand strong and robust bilateral and trilateral socio-economic and political relationships within the region while minimising incompatible and conflictual relationships. If trilateral relationships flourish, Northeast Asia's claims to global economic and political leadership in the twenty-first century will be secure. If there are tensions in these relationships, then Northeast Asian global leadership will be less secure and once again Northeast Asia could become a region of instability rather than stability. The election of Donald J. Trump to the Presidency of the United States adds another layer of complexity to those who already exist in East Asia. His threatened challenge to the "One China" policy, for example, will significantly problematise US-East Asian relationships.

From 1945 to the 1980s, Northeast and Southeast Asia accounted for most of the major wars of the postwar period (Gleditsch et al., 2002). Once Asian political leaders chose economic development and nation building over armed conflict, however, most of the world's violent conflict shifted from the East and Southeast Asian regions to the Balkans, Africa and the Middle East. Thus began the period now known as the East Asian Peace (see Stein Tønnessen, 2009). As director of the East Asian Peace Project, Tønnessen argued that peace emerged in East Asia because of explicit choices on the part of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean political leaders in favour of economic development over national rivalry and competition. During the regimes of Deng Xiaoping and Shigeru Yoshida, for example, both leaders intentionally opted for (i) crisis management (ii) internal priority shifts aimed at stimulating growth and development, (iii) prioritising the economy, (iv) accommodating the United States and its regional interests and (v) peace with neighbours.

The results of these leadership choices were internally and externally stabilising and peaceful (Stein Tønnessen, 2017). According to Tønnessen's argument, it was Deng Xiaoping and Yoshida Shigeru's commitment to open capitalist development that was critical to ensuring stable peace between China and Japan and the wider region. This "open market peace" rests on high levels of economic interdependence, financial and market integration. These findings are consistent with other capitalist and liberal peace theorists who argue that economic integration will drive stable peaceful relationships.

Liberal Peace theorists predict that commitment to capitalist economic development everywhere will result in higher levels of financial and market

integration, domestic pluralism and the rapid evolution of the rule of law and democracy. These dynamics are assumed to generate economic and peace dividends for all economies and polities. Liberal Peace theory also predicts the development of regional institutions to consolidate these gains transnationally thereby ensuring political and peaceful stability. While this prediction has been most successful in Western Europe, neither democratic nor regional integrative agendas have advanced very much in Northeast Asia (Peou, 2009) or in many other parts of the world (Richmond and Franks, 2009). Even in Southeast Asia, however, which has seen the successful growth of ASEAN over the past fifty years, recent elections and political changes in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand (2016) have seen significant challenges to democratic dynamics and the re-emergence of autocratic rather than democratic leadership.

Similarly, in Northeast Asia, over the past five years, there has been a resurgence of nationalism, elite nervousness about democratic pluralism, the emergence of autocratic leadership and the re-activation of unresolved deep and painful historic memories between Japan, China and Korea. These have challenged taken-for-granted economic relationships and exchanges and placed a question mark over the solidity and reliability of the Asian Peace hypotheses.

The East Asian experience is not unique, however, and there has been a radical questioning of both capitalist and liberal peace theories all around the world (Paris, 2010). These have been focused in recent times by a popular rejection of what has been thought of as “negative globalisation” and an embrace of atavistic nationalism as demonstrated by the Brexit referendum and the election of Donald Trump in the United States.

In 2012, for example, when Shinzo Abe and the Liberal Democratic Party won the Japanese election with a two thirds majority, Japanese politics took a dramatic turn to the right (Muneo, 2013). Abe was elected because of widespread disillusionment with the Democratic Party of Japan, and a deep sense that Japan was unable to break out of the economic doldrums of the time. But the 2012 election was also fuelled by a strong nationalist platform. This was driven by pressure from right-wing politicians like Shintaro Ishihara, ex-governor of Tokyo, who was hawkish on foreign policy and a long-time opponent of China on a range of sensitive political and security issues. But these hawkish dynamics also coincided with Shinzo Abe’s own nationalist inclinations and connections to ultra right groups within Japan. Before the 2012 election, for example, he adopted a more assertive stance towards China over the disputed

Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands issue. He also initiated campaign goals to revise the country's pacifist constitution and to review Japanese postwar history. This reassertion of Japanese exceptionalism and nationalism stimulated very negative reactions in Korea and China. The political relationships between all three countries deteriorated very rapidly after the 2012 election and remain stressed.

It was into this increasingly toxic environment that the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago and the Toda Peace Institute in Japan, initiated a series of analytical problem-solving workshops on East Asia (Mitchell and Banks, 1999) (Kelman, 1998). These took place between 2013 and 2015. They were aimed, among other things, at seeking to understand how strong economic exchanges and relationships could be so easily compromised by the reassertion of nationalist identity politics in Japan, China and Korea. In particular, we wanted to understand why historic grievances and painful memories were surfacing sixty-six years after the end of the Second World War and how and why political leaders were using these grievances (or in Japan's case, defence against Chinese and Korean war complaints) to stimulate nationalist sentiments in an era of regional and global integration. Finally, we were concerned to understand how all of these dynamics were generating a rather rapid decline in trust, confidence and functional cooperation between the leaders of all three countries.

The chapters in this book, therefore, are written by academics and policy makers from China, Japan and South Korea who attended these workshops.¹ The workshops enabled key opinion leaders to reflect on why transnational relationships in Northeast Asia were deteriorating and becoming more volatile. While there was a general acceptance, within the workshops, that market and financial integration had been useful in promoting negative peace in Northeast Asia for thirty-six years; the emergence of multiple unresolved and divisive issues between the political leaders and peoples of all three countries provided some challenging theoretical and practical puzzles.

Some of these were explicable in terms of realpolitik and big power transition theory but most required much deeper cultural, historical and social-psychological explanations. In particular, all of the contributors to this book acknowledge the centrality of "identity", memory and "identity-based politics" in understanding why "functionally driven" relationships can and do turn toxic. With the advantage of hindsight it is clear that the 2012–2016 period in East Asian relationships

has strong parallels with the 2016 global disenchantment with domestic politics in Europe, North America and other parts of Asia.

Throughout 2016, for example, many political leaders in Europe, Asia and the United States, have experienced trouble maintaining high levels of inclusion, engagement and participation in democratic politics. This is because of high levels of alienation from elite politics generally, a rejection of negative globalisation, resistance to national “political establishments” and a susceptibility to what Kinnvall and Jonsson (Kinnvall and Jönsson, 2002) call autocratic nationalist populism. While East Asian politics have not been as stark as those that generated Brexit or the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States; political leaders in Japan, China and the Republic of Korea have not been averse to playing the nationalist card for domestic political purpose and in doing so have generated environments inimical to cosmopolitanism, diversity and transnational solidarity.

As we started the workshop discussions² participants articulated the relationships between unresolved domestic issues and foreign policy positions. Japan, China and South Korea, for example, despite having high levels of economic growth and development, all face a variety of economic, social and political challenges. These are reflected in popular disenchantment with the capacity of state systems in East Asia to both facilitate growth and address growing levels of inequality, marginalisation, exclusion and corruption. Faced with these problems, political leaders in all three countries have regularly sought to divert attention from domestic issues through an intentional heightening of fear levels and “negative othering”, that is, critical comments about foreigners, and the articulation of nationalist sentiments in the face of domestic, regional and global challenges. These nationalist narratives in Japan, China and South Korea (Deans, 2007) have activated or re-activated deep and painful historic memories and conflicts over past perpetrator-victim roles; spoiled political reputations; and deeper questions about collective responsibility for past acts of aggression. These have then become the optics through which politicians and people view the future military and political intentions of political leaders in all three countries.

The very first problem-solving workshop started with an exploration of national visions for a peaceful region. These took place in national groups. It was interesting that Japanese participants had the most trouble articulating and agreeing on a national vision for Japan in Northeast Asia. Some felt that Japan should build on its “pacifist” constitution to become a

permanent pacifist state. As part of this they wanted more attention to a Northeast Asian nuclear weapon-free zone while admitting that the obstacles to realising this were enormous. Their more realistic vision was linked to a continuing role for the United States in Northeast Asian trade and security issues. At the same time, Japanese participants hoped that other Asian countries would become more actively involved in Northeast Asia in order to balance the US engagement and to mute some of the divisive issues that were beginning to emerge within the region. They also articulated a strong concern to increase people to people exchanges and cross-border contacts with Korea and China. The innovative part of the Japanese group's vision was on environmental cooperation. It was felt that this was a superordinate issue affecting China, Japan Korea equally and that Japan could offer technological know-how to help China and Korea solve some of their environmental problems. Participants argued that Japan could provide Overseas Development Assistance plus technological expertise to help address China's environmental headaches. In doing so, it was assumed that Japanese self-interest would be served by altruistic sharing. Focusing on something like environmental pollution provided a reasonably safe superordinate goal to bring the countries a little closer together. This vision was subsequently sharpened into co-management of environmentally significant areas like the Yellow Sea area and a desire to develop a collaborative Japan-China-Korea institution to deal with environmental issues. There was also a desire for all countries to develop mechanisms for collaborative responses to natural emergencies and maritime surveillance.

Korean participants had a somewhat sharper vision. They were united on the need for the eventual reunification of Korea but were conscious that this was not an imminent possibility because neither the North nor the South were willing to sacrifice their sovereignty. A loose union between North and South Korea, modelled on the European Union, would enable higher levels of integration and generate a *de facto* unification in the interim. They felt it would be easier to talk about unification possibilities if there were higher levels of regional economic unity, including an integrated and institutionalised mechanism like the European Union, which would include Russia and Mongolia. In addition, the Korean group was also in favour of developing regional security architecture and changing from defence mechanisms based on confrontational alliances (there was particular concern about the US pivot in this context) to a regional collective security mechanism. Collective security was seen in an inclusive sense, that is, as a reversion to traditional concepts of

collective, co-operative and common security. In particular, the group felt that there should be a rejection of realist NATO-type security architecture and that China, Japan and Korea should form a “Confucian triangle” for defence and security instead of living in an extended cold war environment. Koreans wanted China and Japan to make joint non-intervention and non-aggression declarations as symbolic confidence building measures. They also had practical proposals for a maritime code of conduct, which would address the use of force in resolving maritime and other territorial disputes. Culturally, there was a strong sense that China-Korea-Japan should work to build trust and confidence based on a shared cultural identity and language and enhanced cooperation on such things as regional disaster management. Along with other groups, participants thought that the emphasis should be on enhancing the rich cultural heritage of the three Asian countries (e.g. common Chinese Kanji characters; traditional ethical values, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism and an emergent embrace of universal norms of mutual respect as embodied in the UN Charter). Finally, there was a vision of a region where there was a free flow of goods and people without any passport controls and a free regulatory environment.

Chinese participants were in favour of establishing an East Asian community: based on economic and political cooperation as well as articulating and consolidating a shared cultural identity. This vision was proposed as a way of distinguishing East Asian from Western values. This was one issue where there were fairly strong distinctions between Japanese and Chinese perspectives. As with their Korean colleagues, Chinese participants wanted economic co-operation to lead eventually to the formation of an East Asian political community. Initially this was seen as a loose arrangement which would fall somewhere between the maximalist European Union and minimalist ASEAN models. There was a willingness to move in these directions with a variety of Free Trade Agreements as long as these were not stalking horses for increased US economic domination of the region. Chinese participants expressed a strong preference for a trilateral Free Trade Arrangement rather than a multiplication of bilateral agreements or exclusionary arrangements like the Trans Pacific Partnership. In relation to security mechanisms, Chinese participants were interested also in establishing a new cooperative security mechanism which was not US alliance or NATO based but one which would respect the mutual (economic, military and political) interests of all three countries.

On the question of military relationships, Chinese participants wanted a “vision anchored in reality”. There was a generalised anxiety about the emergence of another arms race in East Asia and a strong desire for civilian-military mechanisms capable of placing limitations on offensive weapons, controlling and capping military expenditure and ensuring high levels of transparency about “threat perceptions” and responses to them. In relation to this there was considerable anxiety about Japan revising Article 9 section 2 of the Japanese Constitution and becoming a “normal state” again (Hagström, 2014). This anxiety about Japan was deepened when Japanese “normalcy” was defined as an expanded reliance on military power and an ability to engage in coercive as well as preventive diplomacy. As part of this concern about Japanese and Korean defence intentions, Chinese participants wanted more clarity on the meaning and significance of United States external military assistance to Japan, Korea and other countries within the region.

Although there are many deep differences between Chinese, Japanese and Korean participants, there were also many commonalities. There was, for example, general agreement between everyone on the desirability of an East Asian economic community involving the free flow of goods and services, finance capital and a relatively free regulatory environment. There was also appreciation of the positive values of a range of regional institutions such as APEC, ASEAN, Bilateral FTAs and new institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which was seen as an Asian-led alternative to the Trans Pacific Partnership.

In all of these aspirations, however, there was a desire not to allow political/military issues to impede or prevent the development of an expanded and deepened economic community. Given the current political situation and tensions between all three states, there was no strong support for higher levels of political integration at this stage, although there was a strong desire to work out mechanisms for advancing higher levels of institutional collaboration and a revival of regular Summit talks between the political leadership of all countries in Northeast Asia. One of the big issues (which has become more acute with the election of Donald Trump to the US Presidency) is how to move in the direction of a regional security mechanism without alienating the United States. Everyone agreed on the importance of thinking in terms of the development of parallel security systems:

This would enable the development of a collective security arrangement for China, Japan and Korea, hopefully, while enabling a continuation of the Japan-US and the Korea-US alliances.

From these brief summaries there are some obvious commonalities between the different visions of respected East Asian academics and policy makers. There is agreement on the desirability of deepened economic relationships as a step towards higher socio-economic integration and as a means of boosting bilateral and trilateral trust and confidence levels. There is also a strong desire for the re-activation of cordial political relationships at the elite level but an awareness that these have become stressed and strained over the past five years. One of the puzzles to be explored in this book, therefore, is why these relationships have become stressed and why there are so many blockages and impediments to developing “virtuous” dynamics to advance positive regional objectives.

In the first place, it is clear that East Asian relationships have become stressed and problematised because individual citizens and their political leaders continue to operate with deep and negative cultural stereotypes (see Fuligni, 2007 for an elaboration on the ways in which negative stereotyping affects identity and intergroup relations). Some of these stereotypes are based in fact and others on imagination; but regardless of their source they all have an impact on how other people and different countries relate to one another. Stereotypes and the biased behaviour that flows from them are a major factor in generating negative emotions and perceptions between the leaders and peoples of China, Japan and Korea.

Korean and Japanese participants, at the workshops, for example, felt that China was trying to conquer Asia economically, socially and politically. They felt that they were doing this through an ambitious set of programmes aimed at bolstering Chinese wealth, influence and prestige. The multilateral vehicles for Chinese primacy are the One Belt, One Road Initiative, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

Japanese and Korean participants also felt that Chinese leaders and people could neither overcome nor forget painful war memories. Because of this, Japanese apologies, financial aid (ODA) and private direct investment did not or could not assuage these memories. On the contrary, there was a strong feeling that China likes to burnish negative war memory and nationalism to bolster its popularity.

Participants also felt that China was over-reactive to territorial and historical issues and lacked inter-subjective understanding and empathy of the ways in which Japan and Korea viewed Chinese penetration and expansion in the region.

In more specific discussions of stereotypes, Japanese and Korean participants argued that Chinese people were calculating, materialistic, and inclined to exaggerate. Even more negatively, there was a feeling (even among the intellectual elite) that Chinese people were not averse to cheating, were arbitrary in their responses to others and capable of stealing such things as intellectual property. Koreans and Japanese in the workshops felt that Chinese people were rude in their interpersonal relationships and externally aggressive because of a deep sense of national humiliation and inferiority. These stereotypes (and there were many others!) have undoubtedly had a negative impact on Korean and Japanese views of the Chinese state and generate a climate of fear and anxiety rather than trust and reassurance.

Korean and Chinese stereotypes of Japan and the Japanese people were also negative and conducive to tense cross-cultural relationships and exchanges. Japan was viewed by Korean and Chinese workshop participants, as having a “superiority” complex in relation to both China and Korea. They felt that Japan flaunted its economic wealth and technological achievement over both countries, making them feel inferior and underdeveloped. There was a belief that Japan refused to accept real responsibility for its war guilt. And there was a strong sentiment that Japan’s fifty-one different apologies to both China and Korea rarely, if ever, sounded sincere or were given in a spirit of genuine humility. Japanese were viewed as “reactive”, too dependent on the United States, introverted and conformist, and the dualistic culture of “Honne and Tateme”³ meant that neither Korean nor Chinese participants felt that they could take Japanese political statements at face value. This also led to a generalised sense of ambivalence and mistrust.

Finally, Chinese and Japanese participants shared some common stereotypes of Korea. Koreans were seen as nationalistic and overly sensitive to outsider criticism. This manifested itself in an inferiority complex in relation to Japan and a superiority complex in relation to Southeast Asia. Because of the ancient Chinese Tribute system, China, Japan and Korea have had a long history of jostling for position and influence within the region. The relationships between all three countries have always been about competition for power, payment of tribute and patron-client

relationships. Japan used to be in an inferior “tribute” position in the past, but now Japan feels that China and Korea are inferior. Interestingly, both Chinese and Japanese participants felt that their leaders had a superiority complex towards Korea and that they viewed Korea and Korean people as socially and politically inferior. There was, however, an appreciation of Korean discipline and shared Confucian ethics. Chinese and Japanese participants had a strong sense, however, that Korea was unable to develop a “cosmopolitan” worldview because it was so focused on the Peninsula; North-South relationships and the deep and polarised division between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

It is important not to underestimate the power of national stereotypes in generating stresses and strains in relationships between China, Japan and Korea. Stereotypes are important attitudes/triggers/frames, however, for popular views of the “other” in Northeast Asia. In so far as they are “negative”, they are likely to generate negative attitudes and behaviour. If they are positive the opposite will occur. What is interesting about Northeast Asia is that positive stereotypes (e.g. about Japanese technology, investment, development support and growth models) have, over the past five years, been replaced by more negative stereotypes of the kinds mentioned above.

These negative stereotypes, seventy years after the end of the Second World War, have reasserted themselves primarily through a systematic re-activation of “war history and painful memory” for national identity, unity and foreign policy purposes. (See Christiansen for an analysis of these processes in both Europe and Asia (Christiansen and Hedetoft, 2004)).

Although there are many political and economic issues (e.g. pollution, corruption, competitive mercantilism) which could be shaping East Asian relationships, it is conflicts over history that are posing the biggest challenges to “normal” and easy relationships between China, Japan and Korea. Divergent national memories of the Second World War have generated “historical revisionism” in all three countries. Postwar national identity formation in China, Japan and Korea, therefore, may have generated some internal unity in each country, but it has had a profoundly negative impact on intergroup relationships within the region. See Tajfel for a theoretical explanation of these dynamics (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

One of the reasons that historical revisionism has had such negative consequences for intergroup relations in Northeast Asia is because the issues (e.g. responsibility for wartime aggression and atrocities such as the rape of Nanjing, Comfort Women, medical experimentation, torture and

so forth) have surfaced painful and traumatic memories that have not been resolved by war crimes tribunals, formal apologies or reparations.

On the contrary, in relation to the Japanese War Crimes tribunal, for example, the Chinese and Korean governments feel that because it was set up by America and its allies it focused primarily on Japanese aggression against the West rather than aggression against their two countries. There is a strong feeling, therefore, that Chinese and Korean war history has not been acknowledged or recognised either in the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal or in other fora.

History in East Asia, therefore, is not simply an academic endeavour; it has real social and political consequences as Chinese, Japanese and Korean leaders and citizens try to come to grips with wartime suffering, feelings of national humiliation, victim-perpetrator roles, competitive victimhood and wider questions of inherited responsibility for the actions of past generations.

These issues have become more intractable as each country commemorates its war history in divergent and provocative ways. They are compounded by the official commissioning of new historical research which revises taken-for-granted explanations of the war. These memories become even more intense when they are accompanied by new territorial claims and by provocative actions such as high-level Japanese visits to the Yasukuni shrine (Breen, 2008).

Chinese and South Korean historians began to challenge Japanese nationalist history in the 1980s. Along with some sympathetic Japanese colleagues they even developed a Comparative History and History Education Research Group in Tokyo in order to identify areas of agreement and disagreement on war history. But as each country sought to gain greater national control over war memories, and events to be included in national history texts, Japanese, Chinese and Korean views of the Second World War diverged quite dramatically (Shin & Sneider). These textbook controversies, in the past five years, have laid the foundations for deeper division and polarisation over questions of historic memory and national identity.

These divisions were created initially by Japan contemplating how to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the ending of the Second World War in 1995. The question that faced the Japanese government then was how to acknowledge Japan's responsibility for its war time aggression against China and Korea, without spoiling its postwar reputation as a democratic, technologically advanced economy closely allied to the

United States. The 1995 debates in Japan centred around whether or not the Japanese Diet would offer an apology to all victims of Japanese aggression. The Liberal Democratic Party members were unwilling to do this, but Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi of the Japan Socialist Party persuaded his cabinet to issue an official apology in August 1995 (see Ria Shibata, [Chapter 12](#) in this volume).

This Murayama statement represents the frankest acknowledgement of Japanese responsibility for wartime aggression. It was well received in Beijing and Seoul but then undercut and contradicted by Prime Minister Koizumi and others, however, when he and they visited the Yasukuni shrine to honour Japanese war dead, including the Class A war criminals condemned at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal.

The Murayama statement, however, continues to provide the benchmark against which other Japanese apologies and expression of regret are measured. It also marks the beginning of what can be called Japan's schizophrenic orientation to war history and its own moral reputation as a Western-aligned nation in the twenty-first century. This position is schizophrenic because Japanese political leaders want to generate national unity behind a positive nationalist interpretation of the past while not alienating China, Korea and other countries who would like to see more contrition and regret for twentieth-century Japanese aggression and war crimes.

Right-wing and ultraright-wing Japanese nationalists, on the other hand, seek to challenge Japan's shameful, "masochistic" post-Second World War history in order to create a "beautiful history" that they can all be proud of. In order to do this, they first need to tell the world that Japan and the Japanese people did not do anything wrong in the war. That they were victims of a military coup and they, therefore, have diminished responsibility for anything that took place under the name of the military. Under this rubric, "comfort women" history, for example, becomes a problem that is rationalised as the kind of thing that could happen in any war. So too the Nanjing massacre is just another example of normal wartime behaviour.

In terms of the postwar settlement and the US occupation of Japan, General MacArthur retained the Emperor system in return for the Japanese government, admitting liability for war crimes. Current political leaders like Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, however, do not see this postwar agreement as an enduring agreement. On the contrary, he sees the peace constitution as "despicable" and "emasculatory", thereby making it

impossible for Japan to be proud of itself (Kim, 2016). Because of this, he would like to revise the pacifist sections of the Constitution (Article 9 section 2) or more optimally write a totally new Constitution that would enable Japan to become a “normal” nation again. Normal in this context means a country that is not subject to any pacifist constraints (see Linus Hagstrom Chapter 5).

There is no way that Korea and China can accept a revised Japanese Constitution, the maintenance of the Emperor system and a denial of responsibility for past wartime atrocities, so these aspirations only serve to intensify Sino-Japanese-Korean divisions over war narratives.

Chinese and Korean intellectuals and political leaders are perplexed by recent Japanese politics. They do not understand why Japan is reasserting nationalist narratives that provoke negative reactions in China and Korea. There is a mutually reinforcing self-fulfilling prophecy at work in the region. Each nationalist statement from China, Japan or Korea, generates competitive nationalist responses from the other two. When these nationalist statements are accompanied by increased national defence expenditures, assertive maritime and territorial claims or provocative military behaviour, they generate trans-national mistrust, which in turn generates vicious rather than virtuous cycles in the East Asian region. Since there is no regional security architecture to deal with these negative dynamics, mistrust replaces trust and anxiety replaces confidence all of which challenge cosmopolitan ideals and make deeper economic or political integration problematic.

These painful memories and histories are, therefore, major impediments to the realisation of peaceful relationships in Northeast Asia. Dealing with stereotypes and prejudice is the first focus of the book. The second major focus of the book is how to deal with this painful history to create a peaceful present.

The third major focus is how to develop a de-escalatory dynamic that enables states and peoples in the region to think in terms of future-oriented integrative relationships and East Asian community building (Saunders, 2013). Focusing on these future possibilities should address and help overcome the paralysis created by negative national stereotypes, discrimination and feelings of humiliation that flow from traumatic and painful histories.

While power-oriented realists might argue that East Asian relationships are determined primarily by regional power politics and big power transitions, peace researchers argue for a more intentional orientation to

regional relationships in order to deal with the past and to satisfy the identity and group needs of Japanese, Chinese and Koreans (Abrams and Hogg, 2012; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). If identity needs are unmet, it will be very challenging for policy makers and peoples in the region to develop superordinate goals that transcend national interests. It will also be very challenging to develop regional security mechanisms capable of satisfying collective needs for recognition, welfare, security and the prevention of violent conflict (Burton, 1990).

To satisfy regional identity needs in East Asia it is important to understand how political leaders in each country see “the other” and whether this recognition enhances or undermines basic dignity and respect between them. We also need to understand how each state in the region satisfies its own welfare and security needs and whether these are best met collaboratively rather than competitively. Joint action will result in a deepening of economic development, collaborative responses to negative externalities and a willingness to develop and promote co-operative rather than confrontational security. To do any of these things, however, will require some deliberate conciliatory gestures from Japan as well as specific confidence building measures from all three countries. These should be aimed at enhancing clear communications, higher levels of cooperation and a commitment to a shared regional community.

Political, economic and political problems are negotiable and solvable only as long as the relationships between the different parties are trustworthy and oriented towards collaborative problem-solving. Stable peace in the region flows from multiple economic, social and political exchanges between Korea, China and Japan and the positive inter-subjective spaces created as a result of these exchanges (Saunders, 2013: p. 54.)

It is particularly important to focus attention on the symbolic acts and statements of political and religious leaders since these represent or are assumed to represent the attitudes, experiences and behaviours of their constituencies. Actions such as the memorial statements of Prime Ministers, Presidents and Emperors commemorating different historic events all have a vital role to play in determining whether relationships within the region will be easy or strained.

The essential proposition driving this book is that tensions in relationships within Northeast Asia might be triggered by power struggles, territorial claims and arms races but they remain unresolved and intractable because they flow primarily from clashes of history, competing identities

and divergent memories of suffering and pain all of which result in a generalised inability to trust the other.

“People over the centuries have been killed because of identity not necessarily because of what they possess or what they have done or threatened to do but because they are different.” (Saunders, 2013: p. 71)

It is easy to minimise the differences in the Northeast Asian context because there has been such an intermingling of cultural, social and political influences over the centuries. It is assumed, by many regional specialists, for example, that the commonalities that flow from shared religious and cultural traditions (e.g. Buddhism and Confucianism) have a capacity to transcend the specifics of cultural difference. Unfortunately this is not proving to be the case. The differences dividing Northeast Asia are not “the narcissisms of small differences” but quite profound cultural and political divides that have played themselves out over time with deadly consequences. These divisions can be and often are mobilised by political leaders for malign and unpeaceful political purposes.

If we are to reframe political, economic, social and religious exchanges in Northeast Asia in relational terms, therefore, it is important, that we try and grasp the emotional as well as the rational elements that drive people, groups, and organisations in and out of relationships. Interstate relationships in Northeast Asia, like personal relationships, everywhere, are profoundly affected by how political actors have engaged each other in the past; by the gestures and communications that they make to each other in the present and by what vision each one has of their joint future.

When individuals and states invest in a relationship that proves mutually beneficial, this generates a willingness to perpetuate the relationship through time. When actors value relationships they are more likely to make concessions and treat each other with respect than in those situations where relationships are not intrinsically valued or alternatively are driven primarily by instrumental motives.

The quality of East Asian relationships and exchanges is determined by a number of factors, one of the most important of which is how each country chooses to communicate with the other. It is important, therefore, to determine whether these communications are primarily adversarial or dialogical. Are they aimed at point scoring or understanding? Are the parties listening to or talking past each other? Communication theory tells us that the way messages are

communicated will have a very profound impact on the ways in which they are received (Wheelan, 2005). If we are to analyse current exchanges between Korea, China and Japan, for example, what characterises most of the exchanges? Are they primarily oriented towards the assertion of national interest or the building of community and the promotion of the common interest? Do they advance national security at the expense of collaborative and common security? The answers to these questions will enable us to understand some of the ways in which differences and conflicts might be framed and reframed.

In any conflict, there are three variables that need to be addressed in order to move the parties from hostility to mutuality. The first is the attitudes that the parties bring to the table. The second is their behaviour and the third is the surrounding context. A good deal of the work that conflict resolvers do is connected to understanding perceptions, misperceptions and dealing with stereotypes. Many Track Two initiatives, for example, are dedicated to combating stereotypes and misperceptions so that the parties to the conflict can see each other in an unprejudiced fashion. One of the important ways of doing this is by facilitating contact between peoples so that parties don't lapse into prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour on the basis of ignorance. There have been many studies done on the positive impacts of contact across different kinds of cultural, linguistic, gender, political boundaries. The Pettigrew and Tropp meta-analysis (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006), for example, found that intergroup contact normally reduced intergroup prejudice, bias and discrimination. These were very robust findings that were generalisable across a broad range of out-group targets and contact settings.

One way in which relations can be improved across Korea, China and Japan, therefore, is by encouraging more frequent and more in-depth contact between the peoples and leaders of each country. There are many such exchanges taking place at the present time but some of the positive effects are undoubtedly negated by elite maintenance of prejudiced and discriminatory views of the other.

What we discovered in the problem-solving workshops, however, is that sustained contact and the emergence of mutually satisfying relationships can overcome prejudice and are important for ensuring peacefulness between peoples. Contact is also important for the development of ripe conditions for positive negotiations, for changing behaviour and for the creation of conditions within which apologies will be received positively rather than suspiciously. All of these have to do with how narrowly or

widely leaders are drawing what social psychologists call boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. In this regard, it is important that the states and peoples of Northeast Asia have some sense of how broadly they define what is known as their “moral community”, that is, their local and extended in-group (Opatow, 1990).

The authors in this book are all, in their own way, endeavouring to grapple with these questions so that shared visions might engage political realities to construct harmonious and peaceful relations. It is unashamedly constructivist in orientation (Kivimäki, 2001, 2010; Weissmann, 2009) so that it can understand the cumulative, multi-level, open-ended and continuous interactive processes that either generate shared understandings and common perceptions of problems or generate misunderstandings, misperceptions and division.

Geun Lee (Chapter 2), for example, analyses the important roles that identities play in building trustworthy relationships in East Asia. He does this by the development of an analytical framework for understanding the relationship between identity, threat and trust and then applies this to the imagined identities of all three countries. His normative proposal is that if China, Japan and Korea can develop an epistemic community capable of engaging in what he calls “Backward identity Realization”, each country will be able to address painful memories from the past in order to generate a more optimistic future. The critical dimension of this chapter, however, is that trust flows from reassuring rather than confrontational relationships and that epistemic communities enable opinion leaders and others to come to shared understandings of the past in order to embrace their common future without activating painful divisions.

Rex Li (Chapter 3) also considers how the national identities of China, Japan and Korea are defined and constructed and how their changing identity discourses are linked to national foreign policy and security strategies. In addition to resolving regional “security dilemmas”, Li argues that states need to address and resolve what he calls the East Asian “identity dilemma” if they are to generate stable peaceful and relatively spontaneous relationships between themselves. To do this requires some deliberate “sensitisation” to the ways each nation chooses to remember its past but it also requires some commitment to the development of a vision that will enable a shared common future. Europe provides a good example of how to do deal with painful postwar history productively and creatively. The European Union certainly provides an important model of the sort of

institutions that are capable of turning ex-combatants into allies and friends. Asian political leaders, however, (especially those in Korea and China), do not seem willing to move in this direction just yet. They seem to have invested too much in maintaining painful memories rather than working on ways of addressing and transcending them.

There are some important social-psychological explanations as to why negative memories and self-perceived collective victimhood persists (Bar-Tal et al. 2009). These memories are driven by an experience of perceived harm inflicted on one group by another but they persist because they play important integrative roles for the victim group. Li argues that unless these perceptions are challenged and alternative integrative processes engaged, mistrust rather than trust will continue to shape relations in East Asia with very negative consequences for relations between all three countries.

One other reason, for the persistence of mistrust in East Asia relations is the utilisation of past historical experiences as interpretive frames for current events. This is related to, but different from, the persistence of painful memories. Trust is built on memories of positive exchanges and relationships through time. Mistrust is built on the memories of more negative interactions. Chung-in Moon and Seung Won Suh (Chapter 4), for example, raise some interesting questions about the ways in which Chinese and Japanese policy makers continue to view each other through the optics of 1930s Japan. Somewhat paradoxically, they argue that policy makers in Tokyo view China's recent offensive maritime posture in the East and South China seas, for example, through the experience of their own military in the 1930s. For Beijing, on the other hand, Prime Minister Abe's foreign policy is reminiscent of Japanese military expansion in the same period. They are mirror images of each other and fuel anxiety about political intention and threat. When these historical lenses are added to the current revival of right-wing Japanese nationalist movements, continuing visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, Abe's desire to exercise collective self-defence rights, the establishment of the Japanese National Security Council, an increase in defence spending and efforts to amend the Peace Constitution, Chinese foreign policy makers feel that they are seeing a repeat of pre-war Japanese militarism. These historic lenses mean that foreign policy experts in China and Japan utilise the same history, namely 1930's Japanese militarism, and territorial expansion to demonise each other in the present. The normative proposal that flows from

this analysis is that both countries need to focus more attention on future possibility, and set past history on one side if they are to avoid being entrapped by the negative past.

Some of these themes are deepened in Linus Hagstrom's chapter (Chapter 5), which focuses attention on what makes Japan "abnormal" as a modern nation state and what "normalizing" Japan would entail. This chapter argues that the whole discussion about what is or is not a "normal" state is fundamentally a conversation about Japanese sovereign identity. This discourse focuses on the role of Japan in the international system, namely how it wishes to project itself, how it is actually projecting itself in terms of sovereign deficiency, "abnormality" and "exceptionalism" and how it is actually dealt with by others. As with many other authors, Hagstrom argues the primacy of ideational factors and their ability to override structural and material ones in conditioning how Japanese foreign and security policy has been understood in the past and how it is projected in the present. His solution is to develop a deeply relational and fluid concept of identity. This is so that China and Japan might develop self-other concepts that are not negative but positive. Concepts which enable both to build mutuality across the boundaries of cultural and political difference.

While acknowledging that an ideational perspective cannot explain all the issues and trends in the East Asian affairs, Aijin Choi and Jihwan Wang (Chapter 6) direct their attention to the relationship between basic human needs, identity and conflict in East Asia. They, along with others such as Sorpon Peou, argue that understanding the relationships between these factors can significantly enhance our understanding of the origins of conflict and what might promote cooperation in East Asia (Peou, 2010). In particular, they are interested in the impacts of a range of ideational variables, including perceptions, experiences and emotions. In a world of "post-truth" politics, understanding the emotional drivers of both affiliation and antagonism is critical to deciphering why different kinds of events, ceremonies, and rituals generate positive or negative outcomes. This is important for understanding trilateral relationships in East Asia, but it is equally important for understanding the bilateral perceptions, exchanges and relationships between North and South Korea.

How Japan and Korea wish to present themselves within the region and further afield is very closely connected to China's presentation of "self" in relation to the others. The robust assertion of Chinese identity is consonant with but not completely caused by its expanding economic,

military and political power. These factors simply mean that China's own view of itself as an indivisible sovereign power has a weight that Korea and Japan have to take into account when asserting their needs and wants in bilateral and trilateral terms. Xiaoming Zhang ([Chapter 7](#)) argues that while Northeast Asia is interlinked by geographical proximity, economic complementarity, interdependence and cultural ties, there is a deep mistrust between China, Japan and Korea, which is so deep and long-lasting that it is a major impediment to regional integration. The lead economies of China, South Korea (ROK) and Japan have been making tentative efforts to promote trilateral cooperation by hosting annual summits, establishing the China-Korea-Japan Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (based in Seoul, ROK) and negotiating a China-Korea-Japan Free Trade Agreement, but these are often contradicted by the deeper incompatibilities. Political mistrust, military conflicts, bilateral alliances and balance of power politics create uncertainty and generate unpredictability in the region's international relations. In the context of China's rise, Zhang argues that power politics (such as the strengthening of the US-led military alliances in the region) are challenging China's identity claims and its desire to pursue its interests through a combination of "soft" and "hard" power but mainly through "soft power". This is particularly acute when factors such as the North Korean nuclear issue, and territorial disputes between China and Japan, and between South Korea and Japan are factored in. Xiaoming concentrates on the negative impact of historical memory (with a very specific focus on the ancient Chinese Tributary system) on international relations in Northeast Asia. Although the Tribute system is not the most important or critical factor in Northeast Asian regional politics, today he claims that the transferred memory of traumatic events over the centuries has functioned as a barrier to deeper regional reconciliation and cooperation. To some extent, therefore, this chapter echoes the concern of Chung-In Moon and Seung Won Soo (above) about the use of particular historic lenses to interpret current relationships. The difference being that this time the memory is much longer and ended with the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1912.

In an interesting argument, which to some extent challenges the relational views of identity in other parts of the book, Masaru Tamamoto proposes ([Chapter 8](#)) that the rise of nationalism in Japan is *sui generis* and does not need an external national other. In a very interesting argument he suggests that the "other" of Japanese nationalism is Japan itself. The history of postwar Japan began on 15 August 1945, when Japan

surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Powers. From that moment the nationalist other is Japan's postwar (*senjo*) experience. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's political project, therefore, is to "slough off the postwar regime" and the agreement that has shaped Japan's postwar pacifist constitution since 1945. It is assumed that by doing so, Japan will overcome its compromised sovereignty, regain its independence and take its place as a "normal" by which is meant a militarily capable country, able to deploy coercive diplomacy when and as it wishes.

While the Japanese desire to write a new constitution is acceptable, Abe's nationalist programme is not just about writing a new constitution, it is also about demonstrating that the postwar constitution is illegitimate; and it is this which drives Abe to revisit the history of the Second World War.

Tamamoto argues that Abe sees the postwar constitution as the ultimate symbol of victor's justice and as punishment for Japan's wartime transgressions. Until it is revised or rewritten, Japan will be incapable of transcending its history and developing new relationships with its neighbours in East Asia. Tamamoto explores the implication of all these assertions for modern Japanese politics and regional peace and stability.

In a similar vein, Koichi Nakano argues (Chapter 9) that the politics of national identity and historical memory continue to play a key role in shaping negative international relations in East Asia. His chapter analyses the "Yasukuni view of history" (*Yasukuni shikan*) and the postwar contest between all three countries over historical narratives and how these are featured in conflicts over textbooks (see Shin and Sneider, 2011). Between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s, however, as liberal/neoliberal, internationalist policies became dominant in Japan, anything that interfered with trade and open markets was considered problematic. Because of this, Nakano argues that Japan's ruling elites made a number of genuine political efforts to try and resolve the unresolved "history" issues with China and South Korea. These resulted in some rather fragile compromises. They were not ultimately persuasive, however, because Korea and China believed them to be insincere and instrumental. These early efforts to address historical divisions generated a revisionist backlash in the late 1990s. Nakano argues that nationalist revisionism was precipitated largely by internal social dislocation, negative globalisation, the upsurge of a new nationalism in Japan, and perceptions of Japan's relative decline in Northeast Asia. This chapter closes by assessing the long-term negative impacts of the Yasukuni view of history on East Asian relations.

Noboru Yamaguchi and Sano Shutaro are two serving Japanese Defence professionals. They thus bring an important military lens to the discussions of identity, trust and security co-operation in East Asia (Chapter 10). While they acknowledge the ways in which Republic of Korea-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relationships have strengthened in economic and cultural terms over the past few years, there are many factors that have cast shadows over the economic integration that has occurred. Disputes over territorial issues (such as the Senkaku/Diaoyu and Takeshima/Dokodo islands) as well as historic issues (such as comfort women, the Nanking massacre and the Yasukuni shrine issues, together with confrontation over the content of text books), have affected levels of cultural exchange as well as security cooperation among Japan, South Korea and China quite negatively.

Yamaguchi and Shutaro argue that these specific issues and challenges are caused by a lack of trust and insufficient attention to intentional trust-building between all three countries. While these mistrust issues originate at a national level, they are reinforced and amplified transnationally as each country generates ambivalent and negative perceptions of the others. This ambivalence eventually translates into different threat perceptions, fuelling further mistrust. Exploring these issues from a defence and security perspective reveals the different ways in which economic problems become social then political problems which, if left unresolved, can become security threats demanding military solutions. This is why political leaders have to focus attention on how to build trust across boundaries of difference and potential harm among the three countries. Somewhat surprisingly for military professionals, Yamaguchi and Shutaro would like political and military leaders in East Asia to develop a new empathetic consciousness capable of resolving past issues to create a peaceful present.

In Chapter 11 Stein Tonnessen argues that any revision to Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution will reactivate and deepen East Asian neuralgia about Japanese intentions and strategies for the whole region. His argument is that Article 9 and the whole pacifist Constitution has benefitted the whole of East Asia. It did so by removing fears of a Japanese military revival and by enabling other Asian countries to focus on their economic development instead of preparing for war. In fact, as mentioned earlier, the Japanese economic development model was a critical component in moving many countries in East and Southeast Asia from armed confrontation to peaceful economic and social development. Tonnessen's central argument is that if Shinzo Abe persists in trying to amend the Japanese

Constitution or worse completely rewriting it, all the painful memories of the past will resurface and peaceful relationships within the region will be severely problematised.

Finally, Ria Shibata ([Chapter 12](#)) focuses on the important role of apology in rebuilding trust, confidence and peaceful relationships within the region. She argues that despite years of contact and deepened economic and social exchanges issues involving war history continue to plague the process of reconciliation between Japan, China and South Korea. Nearly seven decades have passed since the end of the Second World War, and the “history issue” still haunts and protracts conflicts in Northeast Asia. Despite efforts to lay the history issues to rest (see Nakano [Chapter 9](#)), Japan is seemingly unable to do so.

Her chapter, explores why Japan has gained so little recognition for its various apologies and efforts to promote reconciliation? It analyses a series of official apologies issued by the Prime Ministers of Japan and why they failed. She does so by exploring the reasons for victim nations’ rejection of Japanese apologies and what obstacles make it difficult for victim nations to forgive, forget and reconcile. If reconciliation is a distant prospect, the critical question has to do with what changes in the bilateral and trilateral relationships have to occur so that co-existence and confidence building can become the norm in East Asia. This excellent chapter analyses the obstacles to reconciliation and what makes Japan’s apologies unacceptable to its victims. It also sheds light on the psychological drivers that motivate Japanese revisionist nullification of the government’s official apologies, making it impossible for the victim nations to readily forgive.

All of these diverse chapters raise some fundamental questions about how and why the peoples and leaders of East Asia view each other with so much ambivalence, mistrust and anxiety. Stereotypical attitudes and the biases associated with these clearly play their part but dealing with past trauma, painful historic memories and who were the victims and who the perpetrators during the Second World War and afterwards remain active ingredients impeding spontaneous, taken-for-granted and trustworthy relationships in Northeast Asia. East Asia is an integrated but competitive economic environment and a region that is rapidly militarising. In the past five years each country has seen more coercive than preventive diplomacy and a revitalisation of nationalist sentiments that seem more appropriate to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries than this one. This book and the problem-solving workshops that preceded it argues that these negative dynamics cannot be dealt

with on their own terms until there is first a willingness to confront the past together and to devise more satisfactory processes for dealing with the trauma, pain and humiliation of that past so that relationships can be more peaceful in the future.

NOTES

1. These workshops were attended by senior academics, policy makers and journalists from all three countries. While not participating in any official capacity, each participant had some experience of what moved national decision-makers in each country (some of them were and still are active defence or foreign policy actors).
2. The workshops were conducted on principles of confidentiality and Chatham house rules. When I refer to these workshops, I will do so with non attributable summary reports from the three meetings. These summaries are based on near verbatim reports from the different conversations.
3. Honne and Tatemae can best be described at the private and public self. “Honne” reflects real feelings and “Tatemae” is the façade or the face Japanese show in public. This distinction also exists in Chinese culture as well but it is more prominent in Japan.

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Identity, Threat Perception, and Trust-Building in Northeast Asia

Gunn Lee

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the roles that identities play in both hampering and rebuilding trust-relations in East Asia. Alarmed by the recent disputes and deterioration of relations among China, Japan, and Korea involving history and history-related territorial issues, this chapter focuses particularly on the threat perception and trust-building problems of the three countries. The three countries together represent one of the largest and the most dynamic economies of the world and need to overcome the barrier of historical antagonism to sustain or accelerate the dynamism of the region. The amplified threat perceptions derived from “imagined identities” and the “chosen traumas” of each country are creating unnecessary hurdles against cooperation and trust-building in Northeast Asia. Given that trust is indispensable to the formation of the social capital, which promotes stable and vibrant economic transactions as well as cooperation in other fields, it is absolutely necessary to tackle the problem of divided “imagined identities” in East Asia so that the region might realize its vision of a peaceful and prosperous East Asia.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first develops an analytical framework to understand the relationship between identity and threat perception (and for that matter, trust). This section is followed by an

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empirical section on the ways in which selective memories produce imagined identities for all three countries. The third and final section concludes the chapter by suggesting a policy recommendation for an epistemic community capable of understanding and dealing with “Backward Identity Realization (BIR)” among China, Japan, and Korea. The guiding hypothesis is that if the three countries can generate an epistemic community to jointly address and deal with BIR, the road to trust-building in the region will be smoother and faster than is currently the case.

AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: IMAGINED IDENTITY AND THREAT PERCEPTION

The seminal article by Alexander Wendt (1992), *Anarchy is What States Make of It*, locates the concept of identity at the centre of international relations analysis.¹ The introduction of identity to international relations theory opened new perspectives on inter-state relations by suggesting that anarchy may not have a one-directional influence upon the behaviours of the states. For example, his theory suggests that while international cooperation is relatively easy among friends under anarchy, international cooperation is extremely difficult between states that share the identity of “foes.” Likewise, while security dilemmas normally take place between enemies, trust-building between friends constitutes a viable alternative to such dilemmas. In other words, it is the shared identities of states which generate different kinds of anarchical structures and conflictual, harmonious, or cooperative relationships between them.

Even though previous studies on identities in international relations tend to focus on the inter-subjective understanding of identities among states, in reality states do not always share a common inter-subjective understanding particularly when identities are still evolving after a sudden change in the international context. During the era of nineteenth-century Imperialism, for example, states struggled to differentiate between their enemies and their friends because they were confronted by constantly shifting alliance coalitions. More than two decades after the end of the Cold War, Western countries are still figuring out whether or not former socialist countries are friends. These contextual changes in international relations often bring about new opportunities for states to reconstruct their identity relations or to reinforce their previous identity relations.

After the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States in 2001, for example, the Bush administration tried to reinforce its previous identity relations with its alliance partners when some US allies resisted joining the invasion of Iraq. In other words, rock-solid Cold War identity relations between the United States and its allies against the common socialist enemies could not be taken for granted against a new type of evolving enemy like Iraq. In Europe, on the other hand, twenty-eight countries including former Second World War and Cold War enemies share a common European Union (EU) identity and perceive the future as an integrated rather than polarized region.

When national identities are being forged, countries face many uncertainties and risks as they determine their positive and negative “others.” Under conditions of anarchy, carelessly taking other countries as friends may generate future uncertainty and conflict. It is difficult to decipher the friendly gestures of former enemies if new identity relations have not been carefully negotiated between states. Signals can be misinterpreted if countries have not clearly identified the other parties’ identities. It is imperative for states, therefore, to be very explicit about the inter-subjective connections to others if they wish to minimize uncertainty and generate positive rather than negative identities for the others. If countries are still in the process of constructing new identities, they ought to envision non-threatening, mutually beneficial, and community-oriented identities.

When identities are still in flux, people mobilize selective memories of both the near and distant past to determine where both “self” and “other” identities are heading. Of course, these selective memories are not entirely spontaneous. They are rooted in concrete historical events and understood through directly and indirectly transmitted memories. These memories are activated by different cues and stimuli. When the cues trigger particular stereotypes and “imagined identities,” they can create considerable cognitive dissonance. For instance, defensive remarks by Prime Minister Abe on the “comfort women” issue triggers memories of the Japanese colonial era in the minds of Koreans, invoking both memories and fears of brutal imperial Japan. Another way of describing this is that many Koreans, hearing such remarks, reactivate a “chosen trauma,” which is a “shared mental representation of a massive trauma” from which their ancestors suffered during the colonial era.² This imagined identity coupled with “chosen trauma” generates threat perceptions, and negatively affects the relationship between Korea and Japan. On the other hand, recent observations and experiences by Koreans

about the rapid economic development and liberal democracy of Japan invoke a completely different identity of Japan (as a liberal market economy), which does not necessarily clash with Korea's interests. Koreans, therefore, hold multiple identity impressions of Japan. If there is an interest in generating peace, the political leaders of both countries need to surface the trauma-inducing identities and make the sources of positive identities clearly visible.

There is an analytical logic that connects the three dots of identity, threat perception, and trust among China, Japan, and Korea. When identities are still in formation, certain remarks and behaviours activate past memories of both positive and negative relationships. Such memory-driven identities are "imagined identities." When these imagined identities are coupled with real "chosen traumas," people imagine humiliation and threat. Simply put, threatening identities produce fear. This situation is completely different from that of the "security dilemma" where defensive measures are misperceived as threats, thereby kicking off a spiral of mutual arms build-up. In theory, the security dilemma takes place between two "neutral identities," normally two sovereign nation-states. In the world of political realism, security dilemmas occur between "any" states in conditions of anarchy. Security dilemmas, however, rarely occur between two friends as in the case of the United States and Canada. Friends rarely feel threatened by each other's defence measures. In the area of threat perception, identities do matter.

Trust is not social capital that can be shared between two enemies because it rests on some notion of mutual respect and affinity. It is dangerous and naïve to offer trust to enemies since by definition they are always ready to take advantage of such an offer for social, political, and military advantage. In general, trust is defined as "an attitude involving willingness to place the fate of one's interests under the control of others" (Hoffman, 2002: pp. 375–401). Moreover, "this willingness is based on a belief that potential trustees will avoid using their discretion to harm the interests of the first" (Ibid.). But common sense tells us that enemies have every intention of harming the interests of the other. Trust-building, therefore, is challenging between enemies. Likewise, socialists and capitalists have difficulty building trust because they see each other as enemies. For trust to transform into social capital capable of promoting peace and prosperity between and among countries, trust-building needs to be preceded by identity-building. Threatening identities generate a cycle of threats and block trust-building. The whole problem of tension reduction,

trust- and confidence-building, therefore, boils down to ensuring that projected identities are non-threatening and inclusive.

Imagined Identities Pertaining to China

In East Asia, especially among China, Japan, and Korea, there are many “imagined identities,” that can be invoked by certain actions. The dyadic or triadic nature of these imagined identities produces either tension, threat perception and distrust on the one hand, or cooperation, trust, and peace on the other. In the case of Korea, the imagined identities of China reflect a long temporal sequence of Chinese-Korean relations: (1) an empire with a well-developed tributary system; (2) a socialist country with a Communist Party dictatorship; (3) an open market economy in transition; and (4) a rising hegemon.

As will be discussed later, in the Korean discourse on the future of East Asia, reconstituting the Chinese tributary system is a potent way of describing China’s threatening role in the region. At the same time, many Koreans express a deeper concern about socialist elements in China and about China as a potential Cold War enemy. China as an open market economy is a relatively recent imagination, which is shared by the business community in Korea. Yet, an open market China is an opportunity rather than a threat. China as a rising hegemon is an imagined identity of the future, constructed in comparison with US or British hegemony. This hegemonic imaginary is not very worrying as long as it looks similar to the US or British hegemony, with free trade being the backbone of the system.

Japan has images of China that are somewhat different from those of Korea, as Japan has had a much more ambivalent historical relationship with China. Japan has viewed China as: (1) an empire with a highly developed tributary system; (2) a former partial colony that now has a revenge mentality; (3) a socialist country with a Communist Party dictatorship; (4) an open market economy in transition; and finally, (5) a rising hegemon. The first three identities contain threatening images of China, while the fourth and the fifth identities are potentially constructive unless rising Chinese hegemonic power is combined with one of the first three identities. China as a former partial colony with a highly developed revenge mentality is of most concern to the Japanese people because they are nervous that a stronger China may in the future seek revenge for past oppression.

China also has its own imaginaries: (1) a glorious former empire; (2) a former partial colony; (3) an open market economy in transition; and (4) rising hegemon. Of these four identities, that of a glorious former empire may pose threats to neighbouring countries as there is a strong connotation of dominance and hierarchy. The second identity of a former colony could trigger Chinese memories of past trauma at the hands of the Japanese, thereby igniting quite strong reactive behaviours from China in response to recent Japanese political behaviour under the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) administration.

Imagined Identities Pertaining to Japan

Countries in East Asia also have selective memories of Japan, which generate many negative perceptions of Japan. In the minds of Koreans, the Japanese invasion of the Korean peninsula in the late sixteenth century, for example, has affected East Asian international relations debates. In this instance, however, Korea (Chosun at the time) did not lose the war. Much more important, therefore, are the impacts of Japan on Korea from the Japanese colonization of Korea in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. This gave rise to three different images of Japan: as (1) an oppressive imperial power; (2) a democratic market economy; (3) a declining but right-wing leaning country in the twenty-first century. The most threatening image of Japan for most Koreans is that of Imperial Japan. This fuels many discussions about whether today's right-wing leaning Japan is a precursor to a reincarnation of Imperial Japan in the twenty-first century.

China's view of Japanese identity is basically the same as Korea but with a strong bias towards viewing Japan as: (1) an oppressive imperial power; (2) a US ally; (3) a democratic market economy; and (4) a declining but right-wing leaning country. Both Korea and China have a deep anxiety about any return to Japan's imperial past, but they are also worried by Japan being the strongest US ally in the region. Even if US-China relations are not at Cold War levels, there is no ground for complacency since both view the other as potential security threats.

Japan's self-identities are not very different from the others except that many Japanese might not realize with what suspicion they are viewed by China and Korea. The Japanese have three competing images of themselves: (1) as a glorious former empire; (2) a democratic market economy; (3) a country in decline. Many Japanese still retain fond memories of

Imperial Japan, liberating the whole of Asia from the Western colonial rule. When this imperial nostalgia is linked to a perception of a declining Japan, it generates deep anxiety in China and Korea.

Imagined Identities Pertaining to Korea

Compared to China and Japan, Korean imaginaries of their own identity are not as important in Northeast Asia. Nonetheless, Korea has the power to tip the balance in favour of either Japan or China and Korea's foreign policy perspectives also have an important impact on regional threat perception. If Korea's international identity is closely identified with that of the United States, for example, then China may and will perceive Korea as intimidating. Korea, therefore, needs to be sensitive to the ways in which its own imaginaries are perceived by Japan and China. In the eyes of the Chinese, Korea is seen as: (1) a former tributary periphery; (2) a US ally; (3) a democratic market economy; (4) a rising but ambivalent regional power. Of these four identities, if Korea is seen as a loyal ally of the United States, this generates a certain anxiety in Beijing. On the other hand, the other identities are seen as relatively neutral or controllable.

Japan's views of Korea are also strongly affected by Korea's relations with other powers. If Korea leans towards China, Japan feels threatened. In the eyes of Japan, Korea is seen as: (1) a former colony with a possible revenge mentality; (2) a democratic market economy; (3) a rising but China-leaning regional power. The third identity coupled with the first is Japan's worst-case scenario.

Korea's self-identities are relatively defensive and unconfident: (1) a former tributary country to China; (2) a former colony to Japan; (3) a democratic market economy; (4) a rising but ambivalent regional power. These self-identities do not threaten China or Japan and may result in Korea playing a bridging role in the region.

Identity Configurations, Threat Perception, and Trust-Building

From the above array of national identities, one can delineate several configurations that may lead to antagonistic or distrustful relations between all three countries. There has been very little explicit inter-subjective sharing of national imaginaries between all three countries. The result of this is that Korea's imagined identity of China may be different from Japan's imagined identity of China, and China's view of both Japan

and Korea. There are, however, a few identity configurations where trust-building is fundamentally difficult.

First of all, in the three country identity configurations, when any one country is imagined as imperialistic (either in terms of a tributary empire or a normal military empire) or socialist, threat perceptions will undoubtedly rise, and the opportunities for trust-building will drastically decrease.

Second, when one country is viewed as a former (partial) colony with a contemporary desire for revenge, triangular relationships will be unstable and trust-building processes fragile. The instinct for revenge will always generate instability.

Third, negative perceptions of alliance relationships may generate instabilities in both the bilateral and trilateral relationships. If China is seen as a rising hegemon by Korea and Japan, and they in turn are seen by China as allies of the United States, this will generate high levels of regional uncertainty and will need to be addressed in bilateral and trilateral summit meetings.

It is clear from this analysis that national imaginaries in Northeast Asia are not very conducive to trust-building. There is only one shared identity – that of an open market economy. Open market economies rest on a certain degree of trust, regulation, and reciprocity. They do not have any connotations of threats, aggressiveness, domination, or zero-sum mentality. When all three countries are pursuing economic interests through open markets, then their core interest is to maintain the openness and stability of the markets so that they can compete to have positive sum results. They have every reason to cooperate, and every incentive to build trust and regional social capital.

The real task, then, is to construct a world where all three countries realize that they are heading towards a regional order consisting of open market economies. This vision is definitely incompatible with a tributary system, imperial conquest, and a revenge mentality.

WHAT ARE THEY IMAGINING NOW?

On 27 February 2015, the US Undersecretary for Political Affairs of the State Department, Wendy Sherman, made remarks on Northeast Asia at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The speech was a quite positive analysis of the history of Northeast Asia during the past quarter century, underlining the good intentions of American foreign policy in the region. Yet, she also expressed her concern about disputes between China,

Japan, and Korea. Her concern echoes the trust problems that all three countries face in the region. To quote Sherman:

... Relations within Northeast Asia are often less than smooth. In recent years, we have seen tensions heighten over the Senkaku Islands, which Tokyo administers but which Beijing asserts were once part of greater China. Japan is wary of China's rapid and opaque defense buildup. The Koreans and especially the Chinese are sensitive to any change in Japanese defense policy. The Koreans and Chinese have quarreled with Tokyo over so-called comfort women from World War II. There are disagreements about the content of history books and even the names given to various bodies of water. (Sherman, 2015)

Touching upon the spectre of nationalism in Northeast Asia, however, she unwittingly showed her lack of empathy for what is really happening in the region regarding real fear and the perception of threat being felt by many people in the region. Again, to quote Sherman:

... There can be no question that the world would be safer, richer, and more stable if the United States, Japan, China and South Korea were consistently pulling in the same direction, and that's definitely what the majority of the people in the region want. Of course, nationalist feelings can still be exploited, and it's not hard for a political leader anywhere to earn cheap applause by vilifying a former enemy. But such provocations produce paralysis, not progress. To move ahead, we have to see beyond what was to envision what might be.... (Ibid.)³

Even if Wendy Sherman's suggestion is worth taking seriously, it is unfortunate that she gives little weight to the real problems of inter-subjective threat perceptions, precipitated by national pride, humiliation, and antagonism. Her comments on nationalism provoked strong reactions from both conservative and progressive Koreans. Major newspapers criticized her remarks as American collusion with Japan on history issues and an effort to link Korea and Japan in the containment of China. Such reactions by Koreans show how sensitive Koreans are to any Japanese re-interpretation of its colonial history. China, on the other hand, was relatively calm on Sherman's remarks, vindicating China's increasing cautiousness in dealing with the United States as well as Japan.

Sherman's rather careless remarks on the history issues and nationalism may have reflected her lack of understanding with regard to the

relationship between national imaginaries and their implications for trust and security in the region. Her list of problems in Northeast Asia is not followed by any penetrating analysis of the causes.

In this section I will show, through a basic discourse analysis, that the concerns and the threats actually being felt by the people in East Asia have a great deal to do with many of the national imaginaries discussed above. These competitive discourses can be categorized as: (1) reassertion of the Chinese tributary system; (2) return of Japanese militarism and imperialism; and (3) the offensive rise of China, and the emergence of a New Cold War in Northeast Asia.

Chinese Tributary System

The rise of China has often been linked to a wider discourse on the return of the Chinese tributary system. American academia is willing to make this link. Charles Kupchan and Aaron Friedberg, for example, speculated that the rise of China could reactivate the old vision of the Chinese tributary system (Kupchan, 2014: pp. 219–257; Friedberg, 2011). Similarly, David Kang (2004) tried to develop a theory of Asian international relations based upon historical facts relating to stability under the old Chinese tributary system. David Kang's attempt was a response to mainstream international relations scholars, arguing that the rise of China would not create an exploitative and imperialistic international order in East Asia. Zhang Yongjin and Barry Buzan (2012: pp. 1–34) followed suit by interpreting the tributary system within the English International Society School framework. Ji-Young Lee argued that the discourses on the tributary system has been ignited by China's own process of defining its great power identity.⁴

It is not surprising that scholarly debate has tried to give meaning to the rise of China by bringing back the concept of the tributary system, but it is quite striking that many mainstream international relations scholars are comfortable in transplanting the centuries-old past agrarian system directly into the twenty-first century modern international system. A system developed during the era of agrarian empires cannot be easily assimilated into the modern sovereign and liberal market-oriented international system. Nonetheless, as Ji-Young Lee suggests, such an imagination persists because of regional memories of the ancient tribute system.

At the turn of the century, many Koreans commonly feared the return of the new Chinese tributary system when the Chinese government tried

to incorporate the history of an ancient Korean kingdom, Koguryo, into a provincial history of China. The Roh Mu-hyun government in Korea strongly protested against this history and anti-Chinese sentiment expanded. The discourse on the return of the new Chinese tributary system became quite popular, but it was interpreted negatively as an intimidating security message by most Koreans. Tsinghua University professor, Wang Hui's view that the reconstruction of the Chinese tributary system was necessary to overcome the Western sovereign state system was also unfavourably received by Korean intellectuals (Weekly Chosun 2013: pp. 30–33). When the *People's Daily* used Chinese words referring to the tributary system after the closing of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit Meeting in 2014, there were concerns both within and outside of China about regional misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the words.⁵

These are just a few examples of the way in which the Chinese tributary system threatens national and regional stability. Few people will be convinced by scholarly discussions about the peaceful and stable nature of the Chinese tributary system. The historical connotation of an imperialistic, hierarchical tributary system activates painful historic memories and the prospect of its return generates deep national anxiety.

Return of Japanese Militarism and Imperialism

Japan had been highly praised by the international community for its Peace Constitution, especially for Article 9, which caps national defence expenditure and forbids out-of-area military operations. Post-war Japan has been able to claim credit for being a “Pacifist nation” even though the Japanese Self-Defence Force is a formidable military machine. In the post-war period Japan has made official apologies to both China and Korea for its actions during the colonial era, including the Comfort Women (also known as military sex slaves) issue and other war time atrocities. The Kono Statement in 1993 acknowledged direct or indirect involvement of the Japanese military in the establishment and management of the comfort stations, and the Murayama Statement in 1995 includes official apology for the damage and suffering caused by Japan to its Asian neighbours. Without a regular army, and with a pacifist constitution and multiple political apologies, Japan was positively embraced by its neighbours. Korean and Chinese reactions to right-wing revisionist remarks were taken seriously by successive Japanese administrations. But the Japanese

government started to gradually change its position, change led particularly in recent times by the right-wing politicians of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

In 1978, fourteen Class A war criminals, including Tojo Hideki, were enshrined as Martyrs of Showa. This fact was publicized by an *Asahi Shinbun* (Asahi Newspaper) article. In 1980, then-Prime Minister Suzuki Zenko, together with other cabinet members, paid a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, followed by a mass visit by Diet members in 1981. Prime Minister Nakasone visited the shrine in 1985. This visit provoked a flurry of criticisms from China. But the most controversial visit was that made by Prime Minister Koizumi in 2001. The meaning of the visit was amplified by the Japanese Ministry of Education authorizing the “conservative” history textbook in April of that year. The revised textbook justifies Japan’s colonial rule and re-invokes state military ideology. China and Korea fiercely criticized both the visit and the textbook, and the relationship between Japan and the two countries rapidly soured.

The second Abe administration is not following the pacifist path of the previous administrations. It is viewed as: negating the Kono and Murayama Statements; supporting the revisionist history of Japan; planning to change the Peace Constitution so that Japan can have full sovereignty by possessing regular military forces; reinterpreting Japan’s right to “collective self-defence”; and intensifying territorial disputes with both Korea and China. These moves by conservative Japanese governments and politicians are seen by Korea and China as attempts to revive a militaristic and imperialistic Japan. These moves definitely beg the question: why does Japan want to change its previous positions on colonial history if it has neither the intention nor the will to again become a militaristic country?

On China’s Victory Day, 3 September 2014, Xi Jinping urged Japan to learn from its past military aggression. Xi’s following remark clearly shows what kind of identity Xi and his fellow Chinese people imagine in relation to recent Japanese history revisionism: “China will never allow any denial and distortion of this history of aggression or any return to militarism.” Korean Presidents have also repeatedly emphasized similar points every year, especially during National Liberation Day ceremonies, and have urged Japan not to go back to the imperial days of aggression and sufferings. Such an identity of Japan is without doubt a grave potential threat.

Offensive Rise of China and the New Cold War

In an anarchic world, great power transitions are always problematic and can generate political and military tensions. One is never sure whether or not a country's defensive measures will suddenly become offensive measures, especially when "friendship" is problematic. The weapons industry is often called the defence industry, and security policy is also called defence policy. The rise of China was initially economic, but the fungibility of its economic power into military power produces intended and unintended threat perceptions. Expanding economies normally translate into expanded spending on defence. The dynamics of the modern security dilemma then take over. Legitimate defence measures can be perceived as offensive revenge measures in the eyes of the Japanese, or domination measures in the eyes of the Koreans. Then Japan, in response to the increasing defence budget and weapons acquisitions, tries to beef up its defence measures either by changing its Constitution and military postures or by strengthening alliance relations with the United States. Korea may also feel threatened by the Chinese rise in military power, and tries to strengthen its military alliance with the United States. Left unchecked, this will generate a vicious spiral of misperceptions and arms races.

Memory of the Cold War, which is still vivid in the minds of the many in Northeast Asia, habitually connects the rise of China to the rise of a socialist power. This leads to the imagining of a New Cold War in East Asia with the United States, Japan, and Korea being in the capitalist camp, while China, Russia, and North Korea are in the socialist camp. Given the perpetuation of Cold War sentiments, many people do not know how to distinguish between socialist China and authoritarian capitalistic China. As long as the Communist Party rules in China, the profit-pursuing behaviours of Chinese companies and the Chinese people are invisible. The Cold War started out as a competitive system between the capitalist bloc and the socialist bloc, and ended with the victory of the capitalist system over the socialist system. Unless the rise of China is seen as the rise of a socialist China, it is very difficult to name the rivalry between China and Japan or the United States a New Cold War.

But discourses on the offensive rise of China, and the New Cold War are not rare. Abe administration's security strategy is to build a coalition of Democracies centred on the United States, Australia, and India against the offensive rise of China. This "strategic diamond" is Japan's guard against the expansion of the Chinese influence and power in the region.

According to Nam (2012), “Amazon Japan” search results with the search word of China show a clear tendency of the Japanese people to see China as a hegemonic and imperial power. Since 2004, anti-Chinese books have steadily entered the bestseller list. In 2004, a book titled *China Explosion* entered the top twelve, and in 2005, a book titled *How the US and Japan fight against the Chinese Hegemony* entered the top eight. In 2006, the top seller was a book about the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the sixth-best seller was on the Cultural Revolution and Cultural Massacre, the eighth-best on China’s invasion of Japan and the twelfth-best on the US-China War. This trend peaked in 2012 (the year of Nam’s last search) with six anti-China books within the top twelve (Ibid.).

In Korea, discourse on the New Cold War in Northeast Asia is a fad. As of April 2015, the number of results gleamed by a Google Search for “New Cold War in Northeast Asia” was about 53,300, and the majority of the results were expressions of concern about the possible emergence of a new Cold War in Northeast Asia. In a nutshell, many commentators are worried that the United States, Japan, and Korea’s encirclement of or balancing against China, and China’s expansionist policies or responses to the US balancing strategy will end up with the construction of the New Cold War structure in the region. The Cold War still exists on the Korean Peninsula as North and South Korea confront each other across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). But having the largest trade shares with China, and having built many factories there, Korea’s perception of China as a socialist dictatorship is quite contradictory to its investment decisions and calculations.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE? EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY TO ASSESS THE POSSIBILITY OF BACKWARD IDENTITY REALIZATION

The above discussion tells us that the level of threat perception and the level of trust among China, Japan, and Korea are strongly correlated with certain national imaginaries, particularly those between the two Great Powers of China and Japan. When certain actions or policies trigger selective traumatic memories in those countries, the level of threat perception goes up, while the level of trust goes down. Triggering of selective traumatic memories is a security problem in the region because people are intimidated by the possibility of realizing threatening identities of the past. This is what I would call a security problem of “Backward Identity

Realization (BIR).” If the three countries could acknowledge the negative consequences of Backward Identity Realization, then the level of threat perception would drastically decrease, and OSCE-like trust-building among the three countries could become a real possibility.

One way of reaching such a conclusion is to create a three-nation epistemic community composed of credible and respected experts and policy specialists from the three countries in the area of political science, economics, demographics, history, business science, etc. (Haas, 1992: pp. 1–35).⁶ Those experts could gather together and assess the possibility of “Backward Identity Realization” against a list of falsifiable hypotheses. If they could reach a consensual conclusion suggesting that a return to the Chinese Tributary System, a socialist China, or militaristic Japanese imperialism is a remote possibility, and make an official declaration that BIR pertains only to the realm of imagination and worst case scenarios, it would make OSCE-like trust-building and institutionalization much more feasible in Northeast Asia.

No matter what one thinks about the neoliberal development agenda, the reality is that most nations are heading in the direction of liberal market globalization where they can economically acquire what they desire through market transactions. Multilateral institutions have emerged to guarantee transparent transactions and the future benefits of cooperation (Keohane, 1984).⁷ The costs of building an old-style empire, be it a Chinese-style Tributary system or a Japanese-style militaristic empire, outweigh any potential benefits. As Ikenberry (2011) has been arguing, the world may be heading towards a “Liberal International Order” where free markets and multilateral institutions will maintain stability of the international system.⁸ Although China is not a democratic country in this liberal order, market forces and multilateral institutions of the liberal order will socialize China rapidly into a core supporter of the liberal international order. It is the liberal international order itself that helped China rise to the rank of global number two. China since then remains on average as multilateral as any other countries in the world.

An epistemic community of experts and policy specialists among three countries is, of course, hard to emerge unless national leaders find it necessary and useful to heed expert advice and recommendations. However, national leaders as well as technocrats of each government participating in the global or regional governance meetings such as G-20, IMF, APEC, ASEM, ASEAN+3, let alone FTA negotiations, learn the benefits of liberal international order, and understand that any unilateral imperialist or socialist

initiative, be it Chinese or Japanese, will backfire and generate global sanctions and sustained nationalist resistances. It is no exaggeration to say that experts and national leaders in the liberal international order unwittingly have been constructing inter-subjective “market-rational identities” that can rationally calculate the huge cost of colonial conquests and returning back to the socialist, protectionist, or agrarian pasts. An informal epistemic community among three countries is, perhaps, already forming among national leaders and the experts in the region, as BIR has been consistently shadowed by market forces and multilateral norms and principles. No country in the region openly follows protectionist, and socialist policies even after the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the 2008 global financial crisis. All the economies in the region remain open, and they further expanded their markets through numerous Free Trade Agreements and the new Chinese multilateral initiative of Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). A Chinese-style tributary system and imperialism are clearly incompatible with market rationality.

On the basis of this tentative assessment, my conclusion is that the liberal open market peace is working in Northeast Asia. Although nationalist political leaders are utilizing “Backward Identity Realization” to advance their own political purposes, they are nonetheless bound by market forces and multilateral institutions. The current situation, therefore, demands more and more experts and specialists authoritatively declaring that BIR is neither realistic nor possible in the age of postcolonial global market economy.

NOTES

1. Even though Alexander Wendt wrote many articles on the relationship between identity and international relations, his seminal article, “Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics”; and his book, *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999) contain most of his contributions to Social Constructivism and identity theory of International Relations.
2. A “chosen trauma” is defined as “the shared mental representation of a massive trauma that the group’s ancestors suffered at the hand of an enemy.” Vamuk Volkan argues, borrowing from psychoanalytical researches, that “when a large group regresses, its chosen trauma is reactivated in order to support the group’s threatened identity.” Volkan (2001: pp. 79–97).
3. For the full text of her speech, see Sherman (2015) accessible at: <http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/2015/238035.htm>.
4. In this paper, Ji-Young Lee (2014) discusses quite in detail the recent discourse on the relationship between the rise of China and the return of the Chinese Tributary System.

5. On this, a *Global Times* article and a *Wall Street Journal* article show their concerns. See *Global Times* 2014 and; Page 2014.
6. An Epistemic Community is a: “network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area” (Haas, 1992: pp. 1–35).
7. A solid theoretical justification of such an argument is Neoliberal Institutionalism, proposed by Robert Keohane, see Keohane, 1984. On this see: Ikenberry, 2011.
8. On this see: Ikenberry, 2011.

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Identity Tensions and China-Japan-Korea Relations: Can Peace be Maintained in North East Asia?

Rex Li

China, Japan and Korea are important countries in North East Asia sharing similar cultures, traditions and religions. They are also close trade partners with a high degree of economic interaction. Until recently, the three countries were able to maintain relatively stable relationships despite their differences on various historical and security issues. Since 2012, there has been a rising tension in Japan-China relations and, to a lesser extent, Korea-Japan relations, as a result of disputes over historical issues and territorial claims in the East China Sea. The growing China-Japan-Korea tensions are often explained by the Realist logic, in that the three North East Asian nations are involved in a classic political contest and military competition over power, resources and territory. In the case of China and Japan, the two Asian powers are engaging in a strategic rivalry due to the changing balance of power in the region. This paper argues, however, that the roots of the volatile relationships between Japan and China on the one hand and Japan and Korea on the other lie in their changing self-identity and perceived identity of each other.

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In recent years, all three countries have been involved intensely in a process of identity construction that reflects a re-evaluation of their self-identity and the identity of their perceived rivals. They perceive each other's efforts to construct a potent national identity as a challenge to their own identity formation. Some of their responses to the other's foreign and security policies are closely linked to their identity contestation in relation to their current positions and future aspirations.

Given the significance of the three countries in North East Asia, a deteriorating Japan-China relationship or Japan-Korea relationship would have a detrimental impact on the economic and security environment of the region. As Tokyo has strong security ties with the United States, a Japan-China conflict could have unpredictable consequences for regional and global security. Similarly, heightened tensions between Japan and South Korea would complicate their bilateral relations with America, which is a military ally of both countries. Indeed, US foreign policy plays a crucial role in shaping the identity discourses in Japan, China and Korea.

To consider the prospects for peace in North East Asia, this paper focuses on the analysis of the identity dimension of China-Japan and Korea-Japan relations. In particular, it considers how the national identities of these three actors are defined and constructed, and how their changing identity discourses are linked to their foreign policies and security strategies. It can be argued that whether peace can be maintained in North East Asia will to a significant extent depend on how serious the identity tensions among the three nations are and whether and to what extent they may be decreased. To reduce their political tensions, China, Japan and Korea need to make a serious attempt to escape from their "identity dilemma." More important, they must learn to appreciate the sensitivity of historical memory and accommodate each other's distinctive national identity and national aspirations. Only then will they be able to build mutual trust and develop a more positive relationship.

NATIONAL IDENTITY, IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

To understand the role of national identity in shaping China-Japan and Japan-Korea relations, it is important to define the concept of identity in relation to foreign and security policy. National identity is a form of collective identity, whereby the identity of a group of people is defined and shaped by its internal cohesion and external relationship with other groups of people. Anthony Smith believes that "collective identity" is

“perhaps the most fundamental and inclusive” form of identity and it provides “a powerful means of defining and locating individual self in the world through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture” (Smith, 1991: p. 17; p. 143). There are different forms of collective identity. Some collective entities are considered as naturally evolving groups consisting of members with shared emotion or interests, while others may be created for particular purposes and functions.

Of particular relevance to the conceptualization of identity is the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism (Stryker, 2002), which postulates that the interaction among human beings is based on their interpretation of the meaning of each others’ actions. The creation of meaning and interpretation of such meaning through human encounters is important to the construction of the self. In other words, meanings are seen as “social products” and “creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact” (Blumer, 1986: p. 5). The study of identity thus helps elucidate how individuals identify themselves in relation to the presence, perception and action of others. Moreover, the construction of identity and difference is believed to be driven by bio-psychological needs. Without the existence of the other, whether in a positive or negative sense, it is difficult to develop an identity that gives the self a significant meaning. According to social identity theory, the identity of the “self” is intimately linked to its perception of and interaction with the “other” (Abrams and Hogg, 1990).

The scholarly insights into personal identity can be usefully applied to the analysis of national identity and international relations (Neumann, 1992). National identity offers “a cognitive framework for shaping its [a state’s] interests, preferences, worldview and consequent foreign policy actions” (Kim, 2004: p. 41). As Alexander Wendt has rightly pointed out, “[W]ithout interests, identities have no motivational forces, without identities interests have no direction” (Wendt, 1999: p. 231). The constructivists argue that change in a state’s identity can cause considerable changes in its interests, which shapes national security policy. Alternatively, a state may develop interests during the process of forging or maintaining a specific identity, often relying on a “discourse of danger” to construct its identity in the sense that it needs to create a threatening “other” in order to construct a universalized “self” (Campbell, 1998). This process of “othering” involves the demonstration of “the existence or level of hostility presented by other identities” (Abdelal et al., 2009: p. 24), which can be very powerful in asserting national identity. Indeed, the constituting “other” is central to any identity construction. Iver Neumann (1999), for

example, has revealed how “the East” is used as the “other” for the formation of European identity.

“In a state-centric world,” argues Samuel Kim, “the substantive content of national identity is the state, which defines itself as what it is as well as what it does” (Kim, 2004: p. 41). A state (the self) forms its identity in relation to how it evaluates the perception of other states (the other) and their actions. The discursive formulation of the relational content of collective identities is, therefore, significant in shaping state interactions. National identity does not emerge naturally. Rather, it has to be forged through socialization, education and sometimes inculcation. Thus, national identity “should be understood... as an ongoing process or journey rather than a fixed set of boundaries, a relationship rather than a free-standing entity or attribute.” (Dittmer and Kim, 1993: p. 13). This is particularly relevant to our analysis of the process of national identity formation in China, Japan and Korea (Rozman, 2012).

JAPAN: CONSTRUCTING THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF A “NORMAL” GLOBAL POWER IN THE FACE OF THE CHINA CHALLENGE

Ever since the end of the Second World War, Japan has been struggling to find an identity that reflects not only its own self-identity in the light of its defeat in the war but also its changing relations with the outside world. It is not an exaggeration to say that Japan faced an identity crisis after the war. As a defeated country, its national pride was seriously wounded and its room for manoeuvre limited. The rebuilding of the Japanese nation was influenced considerably by America’s political and strategic agenda. It was clear to Japanese political leaders and elites that the path towards the building of a “normal” power would be turbulent. On the one hand, they had to come to terms with what had happened before the war. On the other, they needed to recover from the war tragedy and rebuild their nation. Under the domestic and external constraints, Japan chose to follow a path of economic development, focusing on the development of its economic strength. This led to an enormously successful outcome with the Japanese economy expanding immensely.

Within a short period of time Japan was on its way towards the status of economic superpower. This was of course due largely to a national economic strategy supported by the Japanese state. Japan’s economic developmental model was so successful that it became the role model for other

newly industrializing countries in East Asia, including Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Throughout the years of Japan's economic success however, there was a sense of uncertainty among Japanese elites about their national identity.

Japan's post-war developments led many analysts to believe that Japan had abandoned its military aspirations in favour of a national identity that is based purely on economic pursuit (Hosoya, 2012; Togo, 2012). This is, of course, at odds with the Realist view that an economically powerful country would inevitably utilize its resources to develop military capabilities. That is why Kenneth Waltz refers to Japan as a "structural anomaly" (Waltz, 1993). To many observers, Japan clearly opted for a pacifist national identity, developing norms of anti-militarism originated from the Yoshida doctrine.

However, as a close security ally of the United States, Japan had gradually developed its defence capability, although this was constrained by Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. Japan's defence budget was not supposed to exceed 1% of its gross domestic product, but given the size of the Japanese economy, Japan was able to develop its military power with a budget climbing to third largest in the world. This is not to say that Japan harboured the furtive ambition of augmenting its military power while presenting a pacifist image to the world. But it does reflect an intrinsic tension in Japan's post-war identity formation. Even in the Cold War era, there were voices arguing for a more active role for Japan in international affairs. Some academics believe that Japan's "normalization" agenda is closely related to its "re-militarization" (Hook, 1996; Hughes, 2009).

The end of the Cold War forced the major powers to reconsider their positions in the international system. Not surprisingly, Japan has sought to advance its status in the hierarchy of the emerging international structure. During the period of 1975–1990, according to Takashi Inoguchi, Japan was a systemic supporter (Inoguchi, 2008). But from 1990 to 2005 Japan, along with Germany, was said to become a global civilian power, joining in a range of activities such as peace-keeping, international rescue and relief, and economic reconstruction. As these activities were related to human security concerns, Japan was able to maintain its pacifist national identity. Indeed, as Reinhard Drifte argues, Japan has used its "civilian power" effectively to influence the perceptions and policies of other countries (Drifte, 1996). Since 2005, Inoguchi believes, Japan has chosen the emerging role of a global power. This signifies a transformation of Japan's post-war identity from an economic superpower to an "ordinary

power.” The shift in Japan’s identity is significant as it is now able to deploy its military forces beyond Japanese borders in support of America’s counter-terrorist activities. Meanwhile, there has been much domestic debate in Japan over the issues related to Japan’s wartime behaviour. There has also been a greater demand among the Japanese public for the country to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. More important, the momentum for constitutional revision is building up. This would allow the change of the name of the Self-Defence Forces and a more active role for the Japanese armed forces in regional and international affairs. All this takes place against the background of growing nationalism within Japanese society.

Clearly, Japanese leaders and elites are involved in a process of redefining Japan’s national identity in a changing world. But the construction of the identity of a “normal” international actor is a challenging task for Japan due to the contentious interpretations of Japan’s actions in the Second World War. The problem of war memories is inseparable from Japan’s efforts to construct an identity in a new era. The controversies over history textbooks, apologies for war crimes and politicians’ visits to the Yasukuni Shrine have caused considerable divisions among the Japanese and strong reactions from other East Asian countries, especially China and South Korea. As Stephanie Lawson and Seiko Tannaka have pointed out, “war memories are particularly powerful forces in the construction of national self-imagery and in policy legitimation” (Lawson and Tannaka, 2010: p. 421). This is certainly the case for Japan.

Despite the difficulties in confronting its past, Japan has gradually augmented the scope of its contribution to regional and global security, particularly in the last decade. For many years, Japan’s security activities have been seriously constrained by its security identity of anti-militarism (Oros, 2008). However, there has been an expansion of Japanese security policy which, according to Bhubhinder Singh, indicates a shift in its security identity from a “peace state” to an “international state” (Singh, 2013). This is why Japanese leaders have been assiduously seeking to construct the identity of the country in such a way that would enable it to engage actively and proactively in security affairs in East Asia and beyond. But this has led to tensions with both China and Korea, who are highly suspicious of the Abe government’s efforts to revise Japan’s constitution, extend its rights of collective self-defence and increase its military capabilities. As Linus Hagström has argued persuasively, “how ‘Japan’ is inter-subjectively constructed on a scale between ‘normal’ and

‘abnormal’ has material consequences. The importance of this discourse has to be understood both in terms of how it enables and constrains Japanese action and through the signals that it transmits to other states about what actions are acceptable and unacceptable” (Hagström, 2015: p. 138).

The links between the past, present and future are evident in the construction of the Japanese “self” in relation to the relevant “others.” To Japan, the most significant “other” is undoubtedly China. The Japanese believe that their pursuit of a legitimate “normal power” status has consistently been denied by Beijing, who has criticized Japan’s wartime behaviour through patriotic education and propaganda domestically and anti-Japanese rhetoric in the international arena. They feel resentful that Japan is still not recognized as a “normal” state despite its repeated apologies to China.¹ This lack of recognition is seen to be undermining Japan’s efforts to construct its identity as a normal power. Recognition is of tremendous importance to the creation of a state’s positive self-image, thus enhancing its collective self-esteem (Honneth, 1996: pp. 236–237). In his analysis of Japanese parliamentary debates and newspaper editorials, Karl Gustafsson has found that the Chinese government is held responsible for the denial of Japan’s self-identity as a peaceful state (Gustafsson, 2015). Indeed, China’s reluctance to recognize Japan’s right to be a political great power and a peaceful nation is begrudged by the Japanese who, in turn, have become more apprehensive and critical of China’s own efforts to construct an identity of a peaceful rising power.

Indeed, the growing confidence in China’s identity discourse over the past few years in relation to its role in the international system and its relations with Japan and the United States has led to much anxiety in Japan. The Japanese fear that, as its power grows, China will become more assertive and demanding in dealing with its Asian neighbours, including Japan. Despite China’s reassurance that its rise to a great power status will be peaceful, the Japanese are unconvinced that this is the case. China’s more bellicose posture in its recent territorial disputes with Southeast Asian countries in the South China Sea and its dispute with Japan over the sovereignty of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands has exacerbated Tokyo’s concerns.² Meanwhile, Japan’s identity as an economic superpower has recently been weakened by an economically powerful China, which has overtaken it as the second largest economy in the world (Moore, 2011). There is a strong sense among the Japanese that Japan’s national identity as a peaceful nation has been contested by China at both rhetorical and

practical levels. This explains why they are now more willing to challenge China's endeavour to construct an identity of a peaceful rising power and a responsible member of the international society.

While Japan has normally refrained from criticizing China's domestic political system and human rights record, there is now a greater emphasis on strengthening Japan's security relations with other democratic countries in Asia. This is reflected in Abe's "value diplomacy," which advocates a closer cooperation between Japan and other countries on the basis of their common values such as freedom, democracy and human rights. In a way, the focus of Japan's "value diplomacy" could be construed as an indirect method of highlighting China's lack of commitments to the norms and values of the global community, thus undermining its moral authority as a global power. Meanwhile, Japan has taken a more forceful approach to handling its relations with China, particularly over the territorial disputes in the East China Sea (Kaneko, 2013; Sonoda and Oshima, 2013). This is consistent with Japan's changing identity construction that "foreshadows a political agenda centred on strengthening Japan militarily" (Hagström and Gustafsson, 2015: p. 2). As Linus Hagström and Ulv Hanssen have argued, Japan's discourse on China has been rearticulated to allow the country to maintain its normative commitments to peace while pursuing military normalization or remilitarization. This discourse contributes to the construction of a "peace identity" that is compatible with the expansion of Japanese military power and with the use of force if required in the face of the challenges from an increasingly assertive and belligerent China with an irredentist agenda and an erratic and menacing North Korea (Hagström and Hanssen, 2016).

CHINA'S CHANGING DISCOURSE ON ITS GREAT POWER IDENTITY AND RISING SINO-JAPANESE TENSIONS

Like Japan, the conception of China's national identity is closely related to its historical legacy. As Gilbert Rozman observes, "[A] great power's identity focuses on the country's past, present, and future in international relations, concentrating on its capacity to project power in comparison to other countries with their own ambitions" (Rozman, 1999: p. 384). As a political entity, China was established on the basis of dynasty and culture rather than the nation-state. The Asian order was essentially a Sino-centric order, with China occupying a central role in a hierarchical system until

the collapse of the Qing dynasty in the nineteenth century. Many Chinese leaders are deeply scarred by this “century of national humiliation” (*bainian guochi*), when China was defeated by the superior military might of Western powers and Japan (Wang, 2012). With the demise of the Sino-centric order, China lost not only the control of its territories but also its dominant position in the region. For decades, the shame and humiliation associated with external invasion and domination of China have become a significant part of Chinese identity discourse.

From a psycho-political perspective, perceptions of history are significant for national self-imagery and may “generate powerful needs to avoid past experiences which are felt as humiliating, dangerous, or deadly.” To Chinese intellectuals and policy elites, there is a psychological need to “restore honor, dignity, and strength to the nation” and to “demand and gain respect from the rest of the world (Kaplowitz, 1990: pp. 51–52). Alexander Wendt argues that “collective self-esteem” is often considered by political elites to be a national interest (Wendt, 1999: p. 236). Since the end of the Cold War, Chinese elites have been engaged assiduously in the construction of a great power identity for China. In social identity theory this is known as a socio-cognitive process of “self-enhancement” in that “people have a basic need to see themselves in a positive light in relation to relevant others” (Hogg, Terry and White, 1995: p. 260). Thus, it can be argued that the most important factor shaping the construction of China’s national identity is to achieve a great power status or the “rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” (*Zhonghua minzu fuxing*).

Between the end of the Cold War in 1989 and 2008, Chinese scholars and policy elites engaged in rigorous debate about the path China should follow in pursuing its great power status.³ While many analysts were apprehensive of the security intentions of Japan and the United States, their discourse on China’s position in the international system in relation to these two major powers was rather subdued. During this period of time, the discourse on China’s great power identity focused primarily on its “peaceful rise” (*heping jueqi*), in that it was aiming to become a “responsible great power” (*fuzeren daguo*) and constructive member of the international community. Many analysts recommended a non-confrontational approach to handling China’s relations and territorial disputes with Japan and other Asian countries (Li, 2009). However, this identity discourse began to change in 2008 when the global financial crisis seriously undermined the economic strengths of many of the dominant players in the world economy.

While the United States and other Western powers were still struggling to revive their economies in 2009, China had recovered from the crisis. This was partly due to the introduction of a large economic stimulus package, including a four trillion yuan investment package, tax cuts and consumer subsidies. Basically, China replaced exports with domestic demand, making its economic development less dependent on Western consumers. As a result, the Chinese economy achieved an impressive growth rate of 8.7% in 2009 (Xin and Zhang, 2010; BBC News, 2010). Despite some economic difficulties, the Chinese economy continued to grow. This enabled China to strengthen its trade relations with neighbouring countries and expand its influence to other regions such as Africa and Latin America. China's swift recovery from the global financial crisis has boosted Chinese confidence and led to a reassessment of the global strategic environment. To some Chinese analysts, America's weakened position and China's continued rise were a clear indication of the changing global balance of power.

Consequently, many Chinese scholars and think-tank specialists have argued for the adoption of a more proactive and assertive foreign policy. While controversy over following Deng Xiaoping's advice on "hiding our capabilities and biding our time" (*tao guang yang hui*) has proceeded, there is agreement that China should be more active in "accomplishing something" (*you suo zuo wei*) in a changing international environment that is favourable to China. Following the global economic downturn and the weakening of US power and influence, the trend of multi-polarization is believed to have been strengthened. At the same time, the "China model" has attracted considerable attention in the West and political commentators are beginning to talk about the "Beijing consensus" (Tang, 2010). They maintain that China should take advantage of the propitious strategic environment and historic opportunity to hasten its development as a great power. Instead of merely following the trends of "peace and development," China needs to create the kind of environment that would assist it in fulfilling its great power aspirations. Some Chinese analysts assert that China has been the biggest winner of the financial crisis and that the rise of China is an inevitable trend in international relations.⁴ They believe that China "must not waste the opportunity that has emerged from the crisis" (Yu, 2010: p. 1). The Chinese have become increasingly critical of the American/Western economic system, which is said to be responsible for causing the global financial crisis (Zhan, 2012). At the same time, they are much more confident in arguing for the case of alternative development

models, especially for China and Third World countries. They believe that the China model has proven itself to be successful in withstanding the enormous challenge of the financial crisis which, according to one Chinese analyst, has demonstrated the “failure of market fundamentalism” (Zhang, 2010).

The perceived American decline and China’s rise have led to both official encouragement of a confident response by foreign policy analysts and intellectuals on how China should respond to the changing international environment and to an exuberant reaction from the general public. The publication of popular nationalistic books such as *Unhappy China* (*Zhongguo bu Gaoxing*) and *China Dream* (*Zhongguo Meng*) has fuelled anti-Western/anti-American and anti-Japanese sentiments and shaped the identity discourse in China (Song et. al., 2009; Liu, 2010). Meanwhile, more Chinese policy elites have advocated that China develop itself as a maritime power. To Chinese leaders, the construction of China’s identity as a maritime power (*haiyang daguo*) is an important part of fulfilling their “China dream.” Indeed, both Presidents Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping have advocated the building of China as a maritime power in the twenty-first century (An, 2013; Cao, 2012). Robert Ross believes that China’s maritime policy is driven by what he calls “naval nationalism,” which is a “manifestation of ‘prestige strategies’ pursued by governments seeking greater domestic legitimacy” (Ross, 2009: p. 46). Similarly, Christopher Hughes has used the term “geopolitik nationalism” to describe the link between Chinese nationalism and geopolitical discourse (Hughes, 2011).

China’s reassessment of its strategic environment during the global financial crisis combined with an unprecedented level of confidence has contributed to the formation of a new type of great power identity vis-à-vis Japan and the United States. Much recent discourse indicates that America is a major hindrance to China’s efforts to achieve its great power status. To many Chinese elites, the United States is determined to preserve its unipolar position despite a major economic crisis. America is thought to be pursuing its “hegemonic ambition” and global dominance in the name of freedom and democracy. They maintain that Washington is attempting to shape the Asia-Pacific security environment through various bilateral security arrangements and the US-Japan security alliance in particular. Indeed, Chinese analysts are convinced that the Obama administration used its “pivot” to Asia or rebalancing strategy to perpetuate US dominance in the Asia-Pacific with the specific objective of containing China (He, 2014; Wu, 2012).

It is within this strategic context that Japan's desire to construct the identity of a "normal power" is viewed by Chinese elites. From Japan's perspective, in order to become a normal power or political power it is necessary to strengthen its military capabilities; to the Chinese, this military strengthening allows for active Japanese involvement in the US-led "war on terrorism" and other activities. Japan's "UN diplomacy" is deemed to be an integral part of its attempts to reach the status of a political power and revise its pacifist constitution.

The Chinese assert that the progressives in Japan are no longer in a position to constrain the right-wingers. Most of the "new generation politicians" (*xinshengdai zhengzhijia*) are said to have strong conservative tendencies. Many advocate revision of the constitution, and they are unafraid of voicing their views on sensitive issues and are not restrained by traditional party or factional allegiance. According to the Chinese, this new generation of Japanese has little wartime experience, and so does not have a guilty conscience towards the Asian countries that suffered from Japanese imperialism. This is illustrated by the growing number of incidents in recent years where Japanese politicians have attempted to justify Japan's actions during the Second World War.⁵ Without a historical burden, Japanese nationalists believe that Japan could assume more responsibility in world affairs and make a full contribution to the international community.

China's view is that the conservative tendency has become stronger in the last decade, particularly under the leadership of Shinzō Abe, who is regarded as a staunch supporter of Japan's UN Security Council membership, revision of the Japanese Constitution, expansion of the role of the armed forces and the strengthening of the US-Japan security alliance. The prevalent view among many Chinese is that Japan's efforts to alter its national identity in the direction of a "normal" power is tied to its militarist past, and that its desire to seek a stronger voice at regional and global levels is driven by motives similar to those in the pre-war era. They also believe that Japan is exploiting its close defence relationship with America to challenge China's attempt to develop its great power identity (Zhang, 2012). The emphasis on the "common values" of democracy and freedom in Abe's foreign policy is perceived as a strategy of undermining China's moral authority. As China's economic power grows, it is argued, Japan has treated China as its major rival and has done everything it can to contain China in the region. The Abe administration, accordingly, is willing to confront China over the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute at the cost of a reduction in Sino-Japanese trade (Zhang, 2013).

For many years, the two East Asian powers were able to contain the dispute so that it would not seriously damage their political and economic relations. Their contesting claims, however, have intensified in the past few years, which has led to significant diplomatic strains between them. Indeed, tensions in the East China Sea have escalated since September 2012, when the Japanese government announced its decision to nationalize the disputed islands (Ryall, 2012). With seemingly widespread domestic support, the Chinese and Japanese governments are unwilling to compromise on their territorial claims, and accuse each other of ignoring historical facts and defying international law. Both the Chinese maritime surveillance ships and Japanese Coast Guard vessels have been deployed in the contested area to demonstrate their resolve to defend what they regard as their territorial waters. In January 2014, a Chinese frigate allegedly locked its radar on a Japanese destroyer in the East China Sea.

What most concerns Chinese leaders is the US-Japan security alliance, which has been strengthened substantially since the end of the Cold War. They are deeply anxious about the extension of the scope of US-Japanese security cooperation to include “the situation in Japan’s surrounding areas” (Xiao, 1998). During his visit to Japan in 2014, former US President Barack Obama stated that the US-Japan security treaty “covers all territories under Japan’s administration including [the] Senkaku islands” (BBC, 2014). Not surprisingly, the Chinese government responded by saying that the security alliance is “a bilateral arrangement” that is used to “damage China’s sovereignty and legitimate interest” (Ng, 2014). Indeed, China has long been suspicious of Japan’s strategic intentions despite a high degree of economic interaction between the two countries. Chinese leaders and elites are convinced that Japan is collaborating with the United States in challenging their country’s great power identity.⁶

HISTORICAL MEMORIES, IDENTITY AND TENSIONS IN SOUTH KOREAN-JAPAN RELATIONS

Both Japan and South Korea are democratic countries in North East Asia with an impressive record of economic development since the Second World War. They are also key security allies of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region. Yet the two nations view each other with considerable apprehension and suspicion due mainly to their divergent historical memories.

To the Koreans, colonization and Japanese occupation were a traumatic experience that has left deep and painful scars in their memories. They are enormously proud people with a strong sense of national pride. Traditionally, Korea's national identity is believed to be built on the notion of *minjok*, which focuses on ethnic identity based on shared bloodline, ancestry, history, culture and language (Shin, 2006). However, as Chung-in Moon has noted, *minjok* was arguably created by historiographers in the late 1890s and early 1900s and did not exist prior to the Japanese colonial era. Various empirical studies and recent surveys have indicated that the common bloodline argument on ethnic homogeneity tends to ignore the impact of Korea's long interactions with China, Mongolia, Manchuria and Central and South East Asia (Moon, 2012). Whilst the "embeddedness" of Korean ethnic identity may have been "diluted," language and religion remain the key attributes of *minjok*. In terms of South Korea's policy towards Japan and China, argues Professor Moon, historical identity is still a major ethnic national attribute (Moon, 2012: pp. 224–226). The formation of Korean national identity can also be understood by the notion of *gukmin*, which centres on civic and political identity rooted in the idea of citizenship. Related to this is the concept of *gukga* or state identity that is associated with the changing political situation in the country since the end of Japanese colonial rule.⁷

It must be pointed out that the three notions of national identity in South Korea are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they inform and at times reinforce each other in providing the relevant attributes for constructing a unique yet fluctuating Korean identity in the contemporary world. As discussed earlier, the identity of the "self" is inseparable from the perception of and interaction with the "other." Of all the relevant "others" in South Korea's identity construction, Japan is unquestionably the most prominent other. Japan's occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945 and the persistent Korean resistance to Japanese rule are believed to be a powerful force behind the development of Korean nationalism (Lee, 1963). Indeed, profound resentment over Japanese colonialism seems to have occupied a significant space in Korean collective memory (Lee, 2014).

The South Koreans celebrate their independence from Japanese rule on the 15 August every year. The "Liberation Day of Korea" or *Gwangbokjeol* is a constant reminder of the subjugation and brutal repression suffered by the Koreans at the hands of the Japanese before the Second World War. Sixty years on, anti-Japanese feelings endure in the South Korean national imaginary. Despite an official apology for

Japan's colonial rule from the then Japanese Prime Minister Kan Naoto in 2010, the Japanese "other" continues to shape the construction of South Korean national identity. While Japan tends to look at the dispute over the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands from the perspective of international law, the South Koreans see it as a historical identity issue that symbolizes Korea's right to regain its lost territories. To them, there is no territorial dispute as such between the two countries. Similarly, the "comfort women" sex slavery and history textbooks issues are all parts of the collective memories involving Japan as the aggressive "other" in the formation of Korea's post-war national identity.

From Japan's standpoint, it has been suffering from a major identity crisis since the end of the Cold War (Glosserman and Snyder, 2015: ch. 2). Japan's economic growth rate declined substantially in the 1990s and the global financial crisis has seriously affected its economy. As mentioned earlier, Japan's position as the second largest economy in the world was overtaken by China in 2010. Now, even South Korea is able to rival Japan economically and to outperform it in some areas. As a result of the global economic downturn and poor domestic economic performance, Japan has lost much of its previous confidence associated with its status as an economic superpower and as a role model for other developing states in Asia. Moreover, as Brad Glosserman and Scott Snyder argue, Japan has lost considerable faith in the utility and effectiveness of international law and international organizations in safeguarding its national security and regional and global peace (Glosserman and Snyder, 2015: pp. 24–25). This is believed to have shaken Japan's identity as a "peace state." In the meantime, Japan's contribution to a whole range of international activities does not seem to have improved Koreans' negative perceptions of it. The Japanese resent that they have been unfairly treated as a threatening other by South Korea in its national identity construction.

The prevalence of this sentiment could be explained as a product of the construction of the Japanese self in relation to a backward-looking Korean other. Taku Tamaki argues that Japan's reified image of Korea is based on the dichotomy of three themes, namely the Past, the Future and Backwardness (Tamaki, 2010). The South Koreans are thought to be obsessed with the history of Japan's colonialism and war atrocities in the past, which has prevented them from appreciating the positive contributions of the forward-looking Japanese self. After all, the Japanese were victims of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima or Nagasaki in 1945, yet

they have been able to recover from the tragedy and rebuild a good relationship with America. Taku has identified a hierarchical structure in the conception of Asia—including Korea—held by Japanese policy elites. The Korean otherness is accorded the status of a “junior partner” in assisting Japan to pursue its self-professed leadership role in the promotion of regional peace and economic interdependence. This, according to Tamaki, can be traced back to the immediate aftermath of the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Thus, the “hierarchy” prism through which the Korean imaginary is rearticulated reflects the historical construct of Japan’s identity. Indeed, Asia as a whole has been depicted as “a backward entity against which the modern Japanese self is constructed” (Tamaki, 2010: p. 3).

In many ways, the disputes between South Korea and Japan over the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands and various historical issues in the past few years are the symptoms of their identity tensions. Their mutual perceptions continue to be driven by profoundly different narratives of self and other in their identity construction. According to a major joint Japan-South Korea opinion poll published in May 2015, 52% of Japanese people dislike South Korea, while 78% of South Koreans have the same negative feelings towards Japan. More disturbingly, 40% of Koreans expect that the two countries might go to war in the next few years (Genron-NPO, 2015). There is a widespread belief in South Korea that the Abe administration is pursuing a “revisionist” foreign policy seeking to deny Japan’s wrongdoings in the Second World War and expanding the role of the Japanese military. Another survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (2014) indicates that only 5% of South Koreans have confidence in Abe’s leadership in world affairs and that 94% of South Koreans have no confidence in him. Meanwhile, the Japanese believe that the Park Geun-hye government has exploited the nationalistic sentiment against Japan to increase its popularity. All this has made it difficult for both sides to build a normal and amicable relationship and to tackle issues of common concern.

CONTENDING ISSUES IN THE CHINA-JAPAN-KOREA IDENTITY TENSIONS

The analysis in the preceding sections clearly indicates a growing identity tension between Japan and China as well as South Korea and Japan. Although this tension is rooted in their historical relations and ideological

differences, it has become much more prominent in the past few years. There is ample evidence demonstrating that the gap between their identities has been widening. While some efforts have been made to maintain high-level dialogues among the three countries, the fundamental issues in their volatile relationships remain unresolved.

The three North East Asian countries have become increasingly sceptical and critical of each other's national identity. Recent events show that some of their responses to the other's policies are a result of a re-evaluation of self-identity and the identity of their perceived adversaries. This is particularly the case for China, which has emerged as a more powerful actor after the global financial crisis. Japan has responded to Beijing's more assertive posture in an equally robust manner. Its reactions are based largely on an appraisal of China's changing identity as a rising power and its own national identity in the light of domestic politics and external circumstances.

Indeed, China and Japan have become less tolerant of each other's national identity and more willing to deny the other's moral authority as a peaceful nation in the international community. Similarly, both China and South Korea are convinced that Tokyo has abandoned its post-war pacifist identity. Despite limited public support, the Abe government has pushed through security laws to enable the Japanese Self-Defence Forces to be involved in overseas military operations (Hayashi, 2015; BBC News, 2015a). This is cited as the latest evidence of Japan's identity shift. The problem is that all three countries construct their national identities in relation to what they regard as a significant "threatening" other. This has inevitably led to deep suspicions and mistrust in their interactions.

Moreover, all three nations have a victim mentality and the ways they deal with each other are overshadowed by their unpleasant encounters in the past. They have found it difficult to come to terms with their tragic historical experiences. Instead of confronting the sorrows or guilt associated with earlier eras, they have tended to manipulate history to suit their political needs or present policies (Rose, 1998). At the same time, they have ambitious national goals for the future. China is determined to achieve a great power status, while Japan is aiming to become a "normal" global power. Meanwhile, South Korea is actively pursuing its middle-power diplomacy.

Unfortunately, the future aspirations of all three countries are entangled with their excruciating and controversial past. They tend to view the present and the future from the perspectives of the past.

To make matters worse, their identity tensions are inextricably linked to various complex strategic issues, alliance relations, territorial disputes and economic competition. They are, therefore, inadvertently trapped in what I would call an “identity dilemma” and the way to escape this quandary is not clear. There is a tendency for all three nations to play a “zero-sum game” of identity, in which each sees the failure of the other in constructing its desired national identity as a gain. When their own identity is undermined or impaired by their perceived rivals, they consider this to be a loss which requires an effective response through various means. This is a dangerous game which, if not handled carefully, could result in unintended and unpredictable consequences.

THE WAY FORWARD: BREAKING OUT OF THE IDENTITY DILEMMA IN NORTH EAST ASIA

The clash of identities between China and Japan on the one hand, and Japan and South Korea, on the other, has been exacerbated over the past few years at a time when all three nations are undergoing a process of redefining their national identities. This creates fertile soil for an identity conflict. If the current tensions continue, there is no guarantee that there will not be military confrontations in the region as a result of strategic miscalculations.

Clearly, the formation of national identity is a complicated process that is influenced by history, culture and politics. It is notoriously difficult to change a country’s self-identity and its perception of the identity of other actors. But, as mentioned previously, the state plays an important role in generating and cultivating the purposive content of a national identity, which “helps to define group interests, goals or preferences” (Abdelal et al., 2009: p. 22). This is demonstrated by the experience of identity formation of all three countries in North East Asia. Indeed, the identity discourse in China over the last few years has to a large extent been driven by the Chinese government, although the growing influence of popular nationalism should not be ignored. Similarly, the Japanese government has been vigorously promoting a national identity discourse that reflects its political and security agenda. As for South Korea, its foreign policy is underpinned by the construction of a national identity for an effective middle power.

If identity is a product of social construction, it can be altered through various channels. Given that the state plays a significant role in identity formation, it has a responsibility to make a positive contribution to this process. A country's identity discourse cannot be separated from its material interests, including economic and security interests. As constructivists argue, change in a state's identity can cause considerable changes in its interests, which shapes national security policy. On the other hand, states may develop interests during the process of building or preserving a particular identity (Jepperson et al., 1996: pp. 60–61). Some neo-classical realists would argue that ideas or identity can be driven by human ambitions and that the tensions among China, Japan and South Korea may be seen as a clash of ambitions rather than identities. In their view, it would be futile to persuade elites in these countries to reconstruct their pro-peace identities. However, what Realists fail to appreciate is that identities and ambitions are not mutually exclusive. Shared ambitions can indeed provide a significant social purpose for constructing an identity but ambitions may also be shaped by a specific identity which is historically and socially constructed. It is, therefore, possible for North East Asian leaders to fulfil their national ambitions through the construction of a pro-peace national identity.

For China, Japan and South Korea to break out of their “identity dilemma,” their political leaders and policy elites need to pay more attention to their countries' long-term interests rather than short-term gains in shaping their identity construction. All three countries have a shared interest in maintaining peace and security in North East Asia. It is also in their interest to sustain the high level of economic interactions and trade relations among themselves and within the region.

Certainly, it is not easy to change some deep-seated nationalistic sentiments and historical animosities among nations. But precisely because of this, a greater determination to reduce identity tensions is required. To avoid a possible conflict, the Chinese, Japanese and South Korean elites must try and shape the process of their national identity construction in a positive way that would reduce the concern of their competitors. This would contribute to the deescalation of their tensions. It is important not to allow their national identity sentiment to dictate their policy towards each other. Already, some efforts of rapprochement have been made by their leaders. In March 2015, China and Japan held their first high-level security talks in four years in Tokyo, which was followed by trilateral talks with South Korea (BBC, 2015b, c). And on 1 November 2015, Japanese

Prime Minister Shinzō Abe and former South Korean President Park Geun-hye held their first formal summit since taking office (Reuters, Bloomberg, 2015). As a move to improve Japan-China relations, Prime Minister Abe invited President Xi Jinping to visit Japan in spring 2016 (Kyodo, 2015). While these are encouraging signs in tension reduction, the three countries need to work out a way to accommodate each other's national identities and aspirations. Otherwise, rapprochement could easily be replaced by hostility as it did in the past.

A positive step for the three nations to take is to make their perceived competitor a non-threatening—or at least less-threatening—“other” in their identity construction. Here, the policy elites have a significant role to play in shaping the identity discourse in their countries. More important, the political leaders must not succumb to the pressure of certain domestic constituents such as ultra-nationalist activists and right-wing groups. They must refrain from exploiting nationalistic sentiments to increase their popularity. Playing the “history card” will only inflame already tense and unstable relations. Instead, difficult historical issues should be dealt with by confronting the past rather than escaping from it or exploiting these issues for short-term political and economic advantages.

In this regard, Europe can offer some valuable lessons for North East Asia. Seventy years ago, the Europeans were fighting each other in a bloody war. Today, they are working closely and cooperatively in promoting European peace and prosperity through the European Union and other channels. Certainly, they still have disagreements and arguments over many issues, but it is inconceivable for them to use military means to resolve their differences. During her visit to Tokyo in March 2015, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel urged Japan to confront its wartime conduct as Germany had done after the Second World War. But she added that Germany's “rehabilitation” would not have been possible without the “generous gestures” of its neighbouring countries to accept the German efforts in “facing our history” (McCurry, 2015). This indicates that confronting the past should be a joint effort by all the parties concerned. China, Japan and South Korea may draw on the successful experience of Germany, France, Britain and other European countries.

It is true that Japan has made many attempts to apologize to its Asian neighbours expressing remorse over its wartime behaviour (Togo, 2013). But Japanese apologies do not seem to be sufficient for China and South Korea to accept that Japan will not return to its pre-war militaristic path. Historical memory and resentment remain a

formidable obstacle to building stable peace among them. This is because history continues to play a deleterious role in the identity construction in the three countries, as discussed in this paper. Peace can be maintained in North East Asia only if a greater effort is made to construct national identities that are not underpinned by negative collective memory and a victim mentality. This would, of course, require genuine reconciliation among the countries involved. It is by no means an easy task but neither a denial of historical carnages nor pursuit of retribution offers the way forward. A positive national identity is more likely to lead to a positive future.

NOTES

1. For a perceptive analysis of Japan's apologies, see Yamazaki (2006).
2. See, for example, National Institute for Defense Studies (2013), Ministry of Defence (2016).
3. See Li (2009): chs. 6 and 7.
4. See, for example, Pan (2010), Yu (2010), Cai (2010).
5. See the discussion in Li (2009): ch. 4.
6. See the analysis in Li (1999), Li (2010).
7. For an excellent analysis of the complexity of various notions of Korean national identity, see Moon (2012).

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Historical Analogy and Demonization of Others: Memories of 1930s Japanese Militarism and Its Contemporary Implications

Chung-in Moon and Seung-won Suh

INTRODUCTION

The “East Asian Peace” and “liberal peace” are commonly used terms to describe the period of stability and absence of inter-state wars in East Asia since the early 1980s (Kivimäki, 2014). This liberal thesis gained greater influence following the end of the Cold War with deepening economic interdependence, expanding social and cultural networks, and the institutionalization of official ties among countries in the region. However, such

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liberal anticipation has been severely challenged with old and new regional tensions and hostilities. Although the Korean Peninsula and cross-strait relations still remain precarious, China's sudden rise and disputes over territory and history have surfaced as the core of East Asia's new security dilemma. China-Japan relations have become particularly problematic since their clashes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in 2010 and 2012, with some commentators even speculating about the possibility of war between China and Japan (Bush, 2010; Holms, 2012; Moss, 2013; Milner, 2013).

Joseph Nye, who visited China and Japan in October 2012 as a member of a bipartisan United States delegation following the island clash, used the 1914 analogy in describing the tension between China and Japan. He noted: "I don't think any of the parties want war, but we warned both sides about miscommunications and accidents. Deterrence usually works among rational actors, but the major players in 1914 were also rational actors" (Rachman, 2013). Graham Allison, another member of the delegation, blamed "the hothead nationalists in China and Japan" for such uncertainty (Rachman, 2013). A special issue of *New Perspective Quarterly* (April 2014), in a piece titled "1914 or 1950 in Asia," also alluded to the possibility of another nightmarish 1914 scenario. While observations of this state of heightened uncertainty between China and Japan are well noted, why nationalism and territorial and historical disputes have emerged in such dramatic fashion as the driving forces of such volatility is less clear.

In that regard, some pundits in Beijing and Tokyo see recent developments from a somewhat different angle. They use the analogy of pre-war Japan—particularly that of the 1930s—as a vantage point through which to interpret each other's behaviour, which has contributed to an environment of demonization. Those in Tokyo have increasingly likened China's recent offensive posture to that of Japan's military in the 1930s. The recent naval expansion of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the East and South China Sea, the Chinese Communist Party's waning influence over the military, and the increasing autonomy of the PLA and the military adventurism of its staff—often in defiance of its own party's official guidance—are being compared to the ambitious political moves of the Japanese Kwantung Army in the early 1930s. This portrayal of the PLA as a rebirth of the storied Kwantung Army has cultivated Japan's fear of China's rise. Meanwhile, for those in Beijing, Japan's behaviour under the Abe cabinet is likewise reminiscent of ruthless expansionary

Japanese actions in the 1930s. The revival of right-wing Japanese nationalist movements, continuing visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, Abe's decision to exercise collective self-defence rights, the establishment of the National Security Council, an increase in defence spending, and efforts to amend the Peace Constitution are all seen as signs of a return to pre-war Japanese militarism.

It is interesting to note that such experts in China and Japan aggressively utilize the same memory of what happened in pre-war Japan, namely the rise of militarism and territorial expansion, and yet differ in their imagined memories of the future based on that same past history. Through the prism of the past, both accuse each other of being hostile revisionists, while at the same time aggravating the very conditions of the demonizing rhetoric. In Section One we attempt to recast the irony of this "Siamese twin" analogy of the 1930s episode. Section Two of this paper presents an analytical overview of historical analogy and mutual demonization. Section Three offers a historical overview of the underlying developments in pre-war Japan in the 1930s, and Section Four traces how pundits in Japan and China relate this historical analogy to current circumstances. Section Five delineates the determinants of mutual dehumanization using 1930s narratives from China and Japan and finally, Section Six discusses the implications of such practices for China-Japan bilateral relations.

*Accounting for the "Siamese Twin" Analogy and Mutual
Demonization: Analytical Notes*

We have no memories of the future, but we do have imagined memories of the future. We routinely build scenarios with good or bad outcomes based on the lessons we think we have learned from the past and use them to work our way through life and policy choices or, rhetorically, to try to sell our preferences to others. (Lebow, 2008: p. 39)

Historical disputes dividing China and Japan have always involved contending interpretations. The Yasukuni Shrine, the Nanjing Massacre, the "comfort women" issue, and revision of history textbooks have all become polemical because of contending "interpretations," a typical dilemma of "my truth, your truth, their truth, and truth in itself" à la Jean-Jacques Rousseau. But the case of the 1930s differs from others because both China and Japan have the same interpretation of what happened: domestic unrest, international anarchy, the

rise of militarism, imperial expansion, and war. The issue, however, is that the implications of the analogy have led to wildly divergent perspectives on both sides. A clash of each country's "imagined memory of the future" represents the essence of the current China-Japan confrontation, in which narratives and analogy derived from the history of the 1930s are being used as political and psychological tools to demonize each other. How can we explain this paradoxical phenomenon?

There are both material and psychological drivers of this confrontation. "Shadow projection," for example, may play a contributory role. Shadow refers to hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior and guilt-laden personality, while projection is the unconscious referencing of impulses and feelings to people and objects outside of ourselves (Jung, 1974: p. 266). A nation's collective shadow material may be acted out brutally in repression, war, massacre, or genocide, or it may also appear as missionary work that seeks to civilize the natives such as the American Indians (McGuigan, 2009: pp. 8–10 and p. 256). Likewise, the root cause of war can be found in the unconscious psyche of humanity as human beings have a psychological propensity to project the shadow, our darker half, outside of ourselves, resulting in incredible destruction in the "outer" world (Jung, 1974: p. 266). Shadow projection is itself the unmediated expression, revelation, and playing out of the shadow. It is the process in which "we 'demonize' our enemies, entrancing ourselves into believing that 'they' are inhumane monsters who need to be destroyed. The underlying psychological process which, when collectively mobilized, is the high-octane fuel which feeds the human activity of war".¹ The historical analogy of the 1930s has become a medium through which China and Japan, respectively, engage in a dangerous game of mutual demonization. The Japanese reconstruct and project their shadows of the 1930s onto today's China, where the Kwantung Army is replaced by the PLA, while China points to Japan's revival of 1930s militarism by way of Abe's assertive national security policy.

Scapegoat theory offers another clue, in which political leaders contrive external threats as a scapegoat to manage domestic instability. Greg Cashman argues that "[f]acing deteriorating economic conditions, ethnic divisions, increasing political opposition, or civil strife and rebellion, their leaders will seek to end these internal woes by initiating conflict with an external foe." Thus, "war is undertaken in the belief that it will rally the masses around the flag in the face of a 'foreign threat,' and that a healthy dose of patriotism is the best

medicine for the internal problems facing the government” (Cashman, 1993: p. 146). Richard Ned Lebow also found that most “brinkmanship crises” have resulted from domestic political uncertainty (Lebow, 1981: pp. 57–70). The French decision for war in 1792, Russian provocation in the Russo-Japanese war in 1904, the Austrian and German decisions for the First World War in 1914, the Falklands War in 1982, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 are good supporting examples. The devil then lies in the domestic politics and overall social and economic conditions, irrespective of regime type.

Geopolitical factors can also play a crucial part in shaping mutual demonization. Geopolitical discourse has long been dismissed as a relic of the past, not only because of its negative connotation with the Nazi ideology of *Lebensraum* but also due to pacifist ideals of a “borderless world” shaped by globalization and regionalization. But it is recently re-emerging with newly shifting power configurations. As in the words of Jakub J. Grygiel, “[G]eography has been forgotten, not conquered” (Geygiel, 2011: p. 7). The threat of external danger arising from geopolitical dynamics has been breeding a newly shared sense of vulnerabilities and mutual dehumanization along geographic lines (Agnew and Muscara, 2012: pp. 109–110). In this geopolitical discourse, countries perceived to be weak fall prey to the strong, as was the case in the 1930s. To avoid signs of weakness, countries are willing to strengthen their military power and to be more assertive, fuelling the potential for hostile confrontation between the dyadic pair.

A rising China has become the key factor in this geopolitical equation. Most Western geopolitical thinkers contend that China’s rise cannot be peaceful because it wants to secure land borders as well as sea lanes for trade and the acquisition of resources, both of which are vital to its economic survival (Kaplan, 2010). But such moves are predicated on a zero-sum game. China’s gain would mean a loss to Japan. That is the lesson Japan learned from its own history during the 1930s, justifying its choice of assertive “Abe-geopolitics.” Abe’s new strategic posture aims at not only elevating Japan’s international profile but also countering China’s land and maritime expansion (Inoguchi, 2014: pp. 30–36). Such geopolitical discourse has become a new fad in the national security policy-making community in China and Japan, in which mutual confrontation is viewed as all the more unavoidable.

Finally, status, identity, and nationalism seem to matter. The age of nationalism was thought to have died out with the arrival of

modernization and globalization, however this thesis has proven to be wrong. Nationalism as a “social construct of identity of nation or statehood affecting patterns of national behavior” has been resurfacing in Northeast Asia (Katzenstein, 1996; Leifer, 2000). Two types of nationalism have emerged. One is proactive nationalism that can be defined as a conscious political movement to achieve national goals such as independence, political and territorial integrity, and national unity based on nationalist ideology. The other is reactive nationalism that can be defined as the collective expression of nationalist sentiments triggered by external stimuli that undermine national identity or interests (Moon and Li, 2010). Unlike proactive nationalism, the reactive form lacks corresponding ideologies or movements, and fluctuates over time and across different issue areas. It mostly involves spontaneous and voluntary mass participation but, from time to time, it can be manipulated and amplified by the ruling elite for domestic political purposes.

Japan has exhibited a proactive nationalist posture. A growing number of Japanese nationalists, including Abe, believe that Japan should shed the “self-defeating historical burden” imposed by the American occupation forces. For them, Japan has behaved well as a peace-loving nation, and it is time for Japan to become a “normal state” by amending the Peace Constitution, having a regular army, and being more assertive in its foreign and national security policy. This push is not only due to China’s rise, which undercuts Japan’s international status, but also due to Japan’s internal need to boost national spirit. But Japan’s assertive behaviour triggers and even justifies China’s fierce reactive nationalism. This time China responds from a new position of status and strength, which in turn makes its behaviour more arrogant and ruthless. The Chinese no longer regard Japan as their competitor. Such a stance stokes Japan’s anger and frustration, and Japan’s perception of the “China threat” becomes all the more real and present. The historical analogy of the 1930s serves as a catalyst universalizing the China threat among the Japanese people.

Shadow projection, scapegoat theory, revival of geopolitical discourses, and status, identity, and nationalism have been identified as potential explanatory variables for the mutual demonization between China and Japan. Which perspectives are more convincing in accounting for the contemporary resurgence of 1930s narratives in China and Japan pitting the two against each other? Before we explore this question, let us first examine the rise of Japan’s militarism in the 1930s and subsequent geopolitical dynamics in Northeast Asia.

THE SETTING FOR HISTORICAL MEMORY: JAPAN'S INVASION OF MANCHURIA AND THE RISE OF MILITARISM IN THE 1930s

Following the end of the First World War, Japan underwent a profound transformation. As Japan's capitalism ripened with rapid industrialization and exponential growth in manufactured exports, civil society likewise began to expand. The working class grew with unprecedented speed, and labour movements subsequently became much more active and well organized. Ideological tolerance, coupled with freedom of the press, became robust. The *Daisho* period (1912–1926) brought with it new freedom and ideas, giving birth to the *Daisho democracy* in which social ambiance became permissive, party politics proliferated, and universal suffrage was introduced. In 1924, three liberal parties—*Rikken Seiyukai* (Friends of Constitutional Government), *Kenseikai* (Constitutionalist Association), and *Kakushin Kurabu* (Reform Club)—won a landslide victory in a general election and formed a coalition government. However, their collusive ties with the landlord class, industrialists, and urban dwellers led to widespread inequality and corruption. Moreover, the Great Depression of 1929 produced grave spill-over effects on the Japanese economy. Small and medium-sized firms went bankrupt en masse, unemployment was on the rise, and the frequency of labour strikes dramatically rose. Imports of cheap rice from Taiwan and Korea also dealt a critical blow to Japanese farmers. Leftist forces, including communists, began to expand their political and social influence by taking advantage of this increasingly volatile socio-economic landscape.

Right-wing national socialists, who were threatened by these leftists, staged a massive national campaign to reconstruct Japan. Their leaders, such as Kita Ikki and Okawa Shumei, were extremely critical of party politics, capitalists and the international order dominated by the Western powers (Kita, 1923, 1964; Okawa, 1922, 1941).² They believed that party politics destroyed Japan's social and political fabric through futile debates, whereas capitalism was responsible for causing large-scale inequality and class struggle. Fundamentally, they blamed the Western style of thought for undermining the Japanese spirit. They called for abolition of the aristocratic system, instead advocating for a direct monarchical democracy that would ensure not only a direct link between the Emperor and the people, but also equality among all people. Along with this national reconstruction movement at home, they pushed for aggressive external expansion as a way of jumpstarting the domestic economy and

consolidating a strong state system. According to rightists, realization of socialism at home and external expansion were inseparable because gains from expansion would be equally shared among the people. They also equated Japan's expansion with the emancipation of Asian people from Western influence (Kita, 1964: p. 35; Ogata, 2011: pp. 44–49).

State socialist thinking deeply influenced some radical elements in the military, especially the Kwantung Army, which was in charge of parts of Manchuria. Colonel Itagaki Seishirō, Lieutenant Colonel Ishiwara Kanji, Colonel Doihara Kenji, and Major Tanaka Takayoshi were typical examples of this radical line. In order to cope with offensive Chinese nationalism as well as crises at home (namely, depression, unemployment, and unequal distribution of wealth), they strongly believed it necessary for Japan to conquer all of Manchuria (Ogata, 2011: p. 342).

On 18 September 1931, a small quantity of dynamite detonated close to a railway line owned by Japan's South Manchuria Railway near Mukden (now Shenyang). The explosion was so weak that it failed to destroy the track and a train safely passed over it minutes later (Ogata, 2011: pp. 99–126). But the Imperial Japanese Army, accusing Chinese dissidents of the act, responded with a full invasion that led to the occupation of Manchuria, and within another six months, the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo. However, this outcome was the result of carefully designed moves by those radical officers, who directly defied commanding officers of the Kwantung Army as well as their home government. Their plot was successful, and the Chinese resistance led by Zhang Xueliang was rendered virtually non-existent. Outraged by the incident, Japanese Minister of War Minami Jirō dispatched Major General Tatekawa Yoshitsugu to curb the Kwantung Army's insubordination and militarist behaviour. But he failed and the Japanese government and military leadership eventually endorsed the move, which in turn isolated Japan internationally (Ogata, 2011: pp. 245–246). In March 1933, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations, and thereafter continued towards military expansion.

At that time, Japan was politically divided between the moderate Shidehara Cabinet, which attempted to minimize international pressure and isolation by slowing the pace of Manchurian expansion, and hard-line military forces led by Tanaka Giichi, which sought to separate Manchuria from Japan and to establish an independent Manchurian state. The failure of the army leadership in Tokyo to either discipline its own Kwantung

Army or establish a rational governance system resulted in the creation of an erratic and unpredictable “system of irresponsibility” in Japan (Ogata, 2011: pp. 327–353).

But that proved to be merely the beginning of a new breed of militarism throughout the 1930s (Imai, 1963; Nakamura, 1993; Fujiwara, 2006; Katayama, 2012). In 1932, young Japanese naval officers allied with right-wing civilian forces attacked the residence of Prime Minister Inoue Junnosuke and assassinated him on 15 May. This became known as the “May 15 Incident.” As social unrest escalated amidst protracted economic stagnation, fourteen hundred army officers and soldiers staged a rebellion on 26 February 1933, assassinating Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo, who had insisted on reducing military spending, and threatening other moderate leaders surrounding the Showa Emperor. The rebellion was curtailed by the Emperor’s appeal, but the military gained control of civilian politics. Its war plan for expansion was methodically implemented, first with the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, second with massive military mobilization, and ultimately a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 (Ienaga, 2000: pp. 129–147).

The 1930s can be characterized by a sequence of economic hardships, social and political instability, the rise of right-wing militarism, territorial expansion and related wars, and eventually a general war. While the international landscape was too fragmented and fragile to deter Japan’s expansionist behaviour, civil society under a totalitarian template also failed to protest against such militarist moves. Ironically, the people became accomplices in the new militaristic Japan through their passivity and silence. The 1930s witnessed the age of tragic darkness in East Asia.

TWO CONTENDING NARRATIVES OF THE 1930S

The Japanese Narratives

Up until recently, memory of the 1930s was rarely raised in Japan. While there has been a steady stream of research on Japan’s invasion of Manchuria, the Sino-Japanese War, and the rise of militarism in the 1930s,³ this research has not been subject to any significant public debate. This might be due in part to efforts by the Japanese political and media elites to put the dark pages of Japanese modern history behind them. But China’s rise has rekindled public debates on the 1930s in a convoluted way.

China is now often compared to Wilhelm II's Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century. For example, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo believes that the rivalry between Britain and Germany in the years before the First World War is currently being mirrored between China and Japan. The comparison, he has explained, has its basis in the fact that Britain and Germany—like China and Japan—had a strong trading relationship. Yet in 1914, this ultimately did nothing to prevent strategic tensions from leading to the outbreak of war (Rachman, 2014). Abe's comparison seems inappropriate however—Britain and Germany were vying for hegemonic leadership in Europe, whereas China and Japan are not vying for hegemonic leadership in East Asia. The Chinese believe that the real power rivalry is between China and the United States, not with Japan.

More persuasive seems to be the revival of the 1930s scenario in which China's PLA plays the role of the Japanese Kwantung Army. Several conservative Japanese intellectuals draw similarities between the two based on the PLA taking independent action on the scene, often in defiance of directives from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). This could lead to accidental military clashes and eventually to full-scale armed conflict (Sakurai, 2012; Nakanishi, 2012). This narrative has gained popularity among journalists and intellectuals, regardless of ideological lines, in the wake of the arrest of a Chinese captain for illicit fishing in Japanese territorial waters in September 2010 and the Chinese government's assertive reaction through military demonstration and a ban on exports of rare earth metals. The PLA's offensive posture has become all the more visible after the Japanese government decided to nationalize the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in 2012.

Professor Kitaoka Shinichi, an advisor to Prime Minister Abe, has advanced this line of thinking. In his speech at the 2011 Annual Convention of the Association for Asian Studies in Honolulu, he made the following statement:

My understanding is that while there might be a strategy of the (Chinese) army or navy, there is no comprehensive strategy, or that the grip of the (Chinese) central government is weakening. There is no one who can really control the military. In order to have the support of the military, the top leaders of the government and the party have to allocate sufficient budget for the military and allow them the freedom of action. As a result, the navy wishes to build more submarines and then aircraft carriers and the air force wishes to have jet fighters, and become more active in space. This is possible

because of rapid economic growth. I am now remembering the activities of the Japanese army in the 1930s. They expanded to where they thought expansion was easy. There was not any well-integrated strategy. Expansion of the parts was the characteristic of Japan then. (Kitaoka, 2011: pp. 8–9)

Kitaoka further elaborated this position in his 2014 article, “Why did Japan follow a path to war during the prewar era?” He gave five key reasons: the first was to ensure Japan’s security and prosperity through territorial expansion into Manchuria. It was essential for Japan not only to deter a militarily assertive Soviet Union but also to expand because of the need for a new market and natural resources. The second and third reasons were Japan’s perception of its opponents as weak, and its assessment that international opinion carried no weight. Fourth was a matter of absence of control—the Japanese government was fragile and had little control over the military, unable to rein in an unruly Kwantung Army bent on gaining power and influence. Lastly, the lack of free speech and checks and balances by civil society was yet another factor fuelling the decision to go to war (Kitaoka, 2014: pp. 85–86).

Kitaoka argues that contemporary Japan lacks all five of those elements, rather it is today’s China that should be feared, as expressed for the following reasons:

First, the actions of China in its quest to acquire resources are now a global talking point, and China’s desire to enhance its national prestige is often evident in its military expansion. Second, China has great confidence in its military superiority in East Asia. Third, China sometimes disregards international law and sanctions by the international community. In fact, it is exceedingly difficult to impose sanctions on a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Fourth, government control over the armed forces is weakening, and fifth, it is even now extremely difficult to speak out against the government.

He concludes that “the five conditions that once spurred Japanese military expansion do not hold true for present-day Japan, but it could be said that they do apply in the case of present-day China” (Kitaoka, 2014: pp. 86–87).

Japan’s fear of China is not limited exclusively to right-wing thinkers such as Kitaoka. Moderate intellectuals are also echoing worry over China’s rise.⁴ For example, a renowned diplomatic historian Iokibe

Makoto, who is often touted as a neutral moderate intellectual leader, contends that:

extreme strengthening of military power and associated nationalism have been causing a world-wide anxiety, further isolating China. This international stance has backfired by fostering China's military build-up and reactive nationalism through its perception of "China containment". Such a vicious circle has been amplifying the crisis. This vicious circle scenario should be avoided because it reminds us of the scenarios of late nineteenth century Germany and Japan in the 1930s. (Iokibe, 2011: p. 80)

Kokubun Ryosei, a leading China expert in Japan and President of the National Defence Academy, concurs with this observation. He sees the kernel of truth underlying China's assertive behaviour to be in its domestic political structure, as he believes was the case with Japan of the 1930s. According to him, China is a country with a party-state system, and institutionally speaking, the CCP is supposed to control both the state and the military. In reality, however, the party seems to be losing its tight grip on the PLA. The PLA's political influence is gaining strength, as evidenced by its provocative military behaviour, expansion in defence spending, and lack of transparency in the structure and process of PLA decision-making. Moreover, an uncertain economic future, contradictions embedded in Chinese society, and the growing power of vested interests all portend a possible revival of 1930s Japan in China (Kokubun, 2011: pp. 230–244). Meanwhile, Asano (2011, pp. 72–73) attributes the rise of nationalist passion and irredentism over the East China Sea and South China Sea to China's economic rise, growing self-confidence, and changing status in the international system. The Noda Cabinet's decision to nationalize the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands on 11 September 2012 not only invoked the Chinese memory of Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 but also sparked outrage from what was previously a lingering sentiment of historical humiliation in the last 150 years.

Exacerbating the situation is Japan's perception that China has been intentionally provoking people's historical memory to cope with growing internal social, political, and economic contradictions. Kitaoka charges that the Chinese leadership is now relying on anti-Japanese patriotism, rather than Marxism-Leninism and Maoism, to defuse internal crises and rally national unity (Kitaoka, 2011: p. 6). Prime Minister Abe shared a

similar view in his interview with the *Washington Post*, just before his visit to the United States in February 2013:

Clashes with neighbors, notably Japan, play to popular opinion, given a Chinese education system that emphasizes patriotism and “anti-Japanese sentiment” Abe was implying that China has a “deeply ingrained” need to spar with Japan and other Asian neighbors over territory, because the ruling Communist Party uses the disputes to maintain strong domestic support. (Harlan, 2013)

Of course, both Abe and Kitaoka are inferring China’s recent external behaviour from their understanding of Japan in the 1930s, namely the abuse and misuse of foreign and national security policy for domestic political gain.

The Chinese Narratives

China’s Day of National Humiliation is marked on 18 September, which commemorates the beginning of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931. Until recently, however, the Manchurian Incident did not dominate Chinese anti-Japan discourse. Koizumi’s tribute to the Yasukuni Shrine, denial of the Nanjing Massacre, and revision of Japan’s history textbooks have been the main causes of anti-Japanese zeal. The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands were important but, perhaps in line with Deng Xiaoping’s view to “leave the islands issue to the wisdom of future generations” (Deng, 1978: p. 197), the Chinese government did not overtly provoke it, instead favouring a certain status quo. But the Japanese government’s decision to arrest a drunken Chinese captain on 9 September 2010, a few days before 18 September, precipitated unprecedented public anger and outcry. Responding partly to domestic sentiment, the Beijing government exerted unusually tough measures on Japan, such as the export ban on rare earth metals.

But the worst was yet to come. Prime Minister Noda announced his plan to nationalize the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands on 11 September 2012, thereby aborting then-Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro’s attempt to purchase it. Noda’s “alleged good” intention resulted in a disastrous outcome. The Chinese government and people were furious, and China-Japan relations hit rock bottom. Michael Swaine, a prominent American

observer of Chinese affairs, offers an accurate description of China's reaction in the following manner:

First, it allegedly violated an "understanding" that had supposedly been reached between Beijing and Tokyo in the 1970s to shelve the sovereignty issue. The Japanese purchase involved the exercise of "sovereign rights" and not a mere transfer of "property rights," thus constituting an adverse change in the status quo and hence a violation of the agreement to shelve the sovereignty issue. Second, the decision to purchase the islands occurred one week before the 81st anniversary of the so-called Mukden Incident of September 18, 1931, which marked the beginning of imperial Japan's invasion of China. Many Chinese believe that Tokyo was either irresponsibly unaware or deliberately provocative in choosing such a date for purchasing the islands. Third, the purchase followed several other allegedly "provocative" Japanese actions taken regarding the islands, for example, the naming of some of islands, the conducting of surveys, the holding of a fishing gathering around the waters off Diaoyu Dao, landing on the main island and so on. Fourth, the announcement of the purchase decision occurred almost exactly two years after a sharp Sino-Japanese confrontation over Tokyo's arrest and detainment of the captain of a Chinese fishing trawler who rammed his boat into pursuing Japanese patrol vessels. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the purchase decision was part of what many Chinese see as a larger, very worrisome trend in Japanese politics toward "right-wing" views and policies. (Swaine, 2013: pp. 5–6)

The Chinese government's official response was much firmer than Swaine's observation. Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Zhijun stated that: "The Chinese government has unshakable resolve and will uphold China's territorial sovereignty. We have the confidence and the ability to uphold the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. No amount of foreign threats or pressure will shake, in the slightest, the resolve of the Chinese government and people" (Zhang, 2012). All of a sudden, the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands became a significant territorial dispute issue, one that Tokyo had been trying to avoid. More critical was the deteriorating Chinese perception of the Japanese government. Zhang echoes prevailing sentiments shared by most Chinese:

The "purchase" farce had been orchestrated by right-wing forces in Japan. The Japanese government, instead of doing anything to stop the right-wing

forces from violating China's sovereignty and sabotaging China-Japan relations, has stepped in and "purchased" the islands itself. What the right-wing forces had wanted to do and achieve was finally accomplished by the Japanese government.... The dangerous political tendency of the Japanese right-wing forces had once plunged Asia into a major disaster. Such forces, if not stopped, will become further emboldened and lead Japan further down a dangerous path. If this tendency should continue, it is not impossible that the historical tragedy will be repeated, and that will throw Asia and the entire world into disaster and will cause eventual trouble to Japan. (Zhang, 2012)

The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands/issue has amplified China's negative perception of Japan. Liu Jianguo of Tsinghua University, a hard-line Japan expert in China, even argues that judged on his posture with respect to the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, China policy, and overall military strategy, Abe is a reincarnation of Ito Hirobumi from 120 years ago. He gives seven reasons (Liu, 2013: pp. 36–40). First, both Ito and Abe share a dream of developing a military state. While Ito established the Central Military Command and General Staff in 1886 and was an architect of the Greater Japanese Imperial Constitution in 1889, Abe set up the National Security Council and introduced the Government Secret Protection Act in 2013. Second, while the Japanese General Staff worked out a plan to attack the Qing dynasty, to conquer Taiwan, and to strengthen defence capabilities in five years, the Abe Cabinet is preparing for arms build-up and war capabilities by completing a National Security Strategy, a New Defence Plan Outline, and a Mid-Term Defence Capability Enhancement Plan. Third, like Ito, who laid the foundation for the Meiji Constitution and the Japanese Imperial System, Abe has already amended the Self-Defence Force Law and is planning to revise the Peace Constitution.

Fourth, as a prelude to his military offensive, Ito made an on-site inspection of the front lines, especially the islands of Okinawa where military drills were taking place in March 1886 and November 1887 respectively. Similarly, Abe paid an unprecedented visit to a remote front line in Okinawa. Fifth, there is a parallel between the Nagasaki Incident in 1896 and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands Incident in 2010. Just as a bloody clash between Qing navy sailors and Japanese policemen in the port city of Nagasaki in 1896 provided Imperial Japan with an excuse to build its naval power, so the Abe Cabinet is currently using the tension over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands as a pretext for its

own naval and airpower build-up to counter China. Sixth, as Ito sought multi-front coalition building to balance and contain the Qing dynasty in the late nineteenth century, Abe too is obsessed with countering China by not only strengthening Japan's alliance with the United States and other nations but also by activating collective self-defence rights in the name of proactive pacifism. Seventh, as Ito cultivated pro-Japanese reformists in Korea in the late nineteenth century, so Abe has been trying to expand military cooperation with South Korea by taking advantage of North Korean threats. Of course, Liu refers back to an earlier time in Japanese history prior to the 1930s, but he nevertheless helps to understand how Chinese intellectuals utilize historical analogy as narratives to invoke anti-Japanese sentiments.

Through the memory of the 1930s Japanese political rightward movement, the Chinese see a parallel revival of militarism, the negation of international opinion, and the rise of anti-Chinese sentiments amidst the silence of the Japanese majority. More importantly, China ascribes these trends to Japan's internal problems such as protracted economic recession, low fertility/ageing society, waning international competitiveness, and social frustration. China is no longer weak, and, Japan could not win any war with it. Nevertheless, China believes that the outbreak of war cannot be ruled out if current trends continue. If the history of the 1930s is a guide, the Chinese contend, Japan is likely to reject American influence and pursue unilateral military adventurism once again (Ji, 2014: pp. 1–2). Ultimately, contradictions between Japan and the United States will surface, profoundly undermining regional order (Tang, 2014: p. 23).

As Swaine points out:

[T]his type of characterization of contemporary Japan is reprehensible and derives in part from Beijing's own long-standing propaganda effort to keep the memory of Japan's past misdeeds in the minds of China's population while depicting present-day Japanese conservative groups as closet militarists plotting to resurrect that tragic wartime era. (Swaine, 2013: p. 12)

But China's demonization of Japan will likely continue, as long as Japan seeks to whitewash its past history of aggression and domination without any signs of sincere remorse and apology. Denial of the Nanjing Massacre, denial of "comfort women," disavowal of both the

Murayama and Kono Statements, visits by Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni war shrine, advocacy of military build-up and preparation for war, and abandonment of Japan's peace constitution will all preserve the 1930s image of "a bad Japan" in the minds of the Chinese. "Forgivable, but unforgettable" is the main motto carved on the wall of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall. Narratives of this "unforgettable" memory of the 1930s have become a constant source of dehumanizing Japan in China.

DETERMINANTS OF DEMONIZATION: STATUS DISSONANCE, GEOPOLITICAL FEAR, AND DOMESTIC POLITICS OF NATIONALISM

The memory of the 1930s is an unpleasant one for both China and Japan, and, as discussed above, intellectuals and government officials on each side are now using this narrative to negate and demonize each other, consistent with the premise of "shadow projection." But could this simply be a manifestation of "the unconscious psyche" of China and Japan? We do not think so. Rather than unmediated, spontaneous expressions of their "shadows," these narratives are the product of conscious, intentional, and even contrived acts shaped by changing domestic and external contexts.

A cursory overview of China-Japan bilateral relations reveals this par excellence. Since diplomatic normalization in 1972, Japan has maintained a very good relationship with China. Japan was not only an important source of trade and investment but also one of the largest providers of overseas development assistance (ODA) for China (Suh, 2012: chap 5 & 6). The success of Deng Xiaoping's early leadership and reforms can be attributed in part to the massive inflow of capital and development assistance from Japan. As noted before, Deng avoided the island dispute with Japan for the sake of greater economic gains. The pandas that China donated to Japan as a sign of friendship were so popular in the Ueno Zoo in Tokyo that they virtually became Japanese national mascots throughout the 1980s (Furuya, 1985; Ienaga, 2000).

Bilateral ties worsened following the mid-1990s. On the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, which Beijing termed the victory anniversary, the Chinese government hoped that Japan would come up with a more explicit "no war" statement. Japan responded with its Murayama Statement regarding "apology and repentance of past deeds." Beijing was not satisfied. China's underground nuclear testing

and cross-strait crises in 1995–1996 made Tokyo extremely critical of Beijing’s provocative behaviour. President Jiang Zemin who visited Tokyo in November 1998 was openly critical of Japan’s failure to admit to and apologize for its past historical atrocities, souring their relations. Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro, who was inaugurated in 2001, further aggravated the situation by paying tribute to the Yasukuni Shrine six times during his five-year term. Japan was increasingly sceptical of its relationship with China, and elite networks between the two also sharply eroded. China experts in Japan accused Jiang Zemin and his Shanghaibang of being responsible for the deterioration of bilateral ties (Kokubun, 2013: pp. 199–203). Yet despite these progressively worsening developments, neither China nor Japan utilized narratives of the 1930s to demonize each other.

When President Hu Jintao was inaugurated in 2003, things seemed to improve. President Hu and the first Abe cabinet established a strategic and mutually beneficial relationship, while trying to mend heightened bilateral tensions. Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) adopted a more reconciliatory attitude towards China in 2009, and Beijing was equally receptive. However, following the conflict over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, the clumsy handling of Japan’s arrest of the Chinese fishing captain in September 2010, and the Noda cabinet’s decision to nationalize the islands in September 2012, the rehabilitation of ties between China and Japan collapsed, and it was at this time that the narratives of the 1930s began to emerge, fiercely invoked to deny and demonize each other. Yet, the emergence of narratives at this time was not a simple projection of recent “shadows,” nor merely a reaction to a series of territorial disputes. There were more crucial factors at play, such as cognitive dissonance over status, the revival of geopolitical discourse, and the domestic politics of nationalism.

STATUS DISSONANCE

Beneath the Japanese dislike of China exists its own cognitive dissonance over status. Since the 1970s, Japan emerged as the second largest economic power in the world. As Ezra Vogel aptly put it, Japan as “number one” drew international admiration and respect. It was a remarkable comeback from the ashes of the Pacific War. More importantly, Japan was one of the important sources for China’s trade and investment. Japan’s Official Development Assistance served as a critical source of

capital and technology that enabled a relatively smooth implementation of opening and reform in China (Okada, 2008; Suh, 2012: pp. 2–12). Chinese political leaders including Deng Xiaoping not only admired Japan but also learned much from Japan for its modernization in the 1980s. China respected Japan's status in international society, and a bilateral relationship of benefactor (Japan) and beneficiary (China) was sustained and consolidated.

But major changes came after the late 1990s. Japan was suffering from its bubble economy and the subsequent protracted Heisei recession. The economic downturn coincided with a political lethargy in which one-party dominance by the Liberal Democratic Party suddenly ended, and precarious coalitional politics ensued. Worse was widespread social depression. Japanese society became directionless. As Funabashi Yoichi puts it, a spectre of lost decades has been haunting Japan (Funabashi and Kushner, 2015). Then, a critical moment came in 2009. China exceeded Japan in economic size in that year, forcing Japan into third place behind the United States and China. Along with its growing economic power, China became more influential in international politics, often overshadowing Japan's stature, as evidenced by public discourse on the advent of G-2 characterizing a bigemonic leadership by the United States and China. This was shocking news to Japan, which, hitherto accustomed to its dominant status as benefactor, now seemed to be demoted to the lesser role, not only in the context of direct relations with China but perhaps more damagingly in the eyes of the world. This created dissonance and alarm for Japan over its power and status, and Japan's reaction manifested in the form of its "China threat" thesis. Such status upheaval has influenced intellectual leaders like Kitaoka to recast today's China and the PLA's movements in the narratives of Japan's 1930s militarism.

GEOPOLITICAL FEAR

Japan's fear of China has become all the more real because of the spread of new geopolitical discourse as well as the PLA's assertive behaviour in the East and South China Seas. Since the mid-1990s, Japan has continued to raise questions on the transparency of China's military spending. Although the Chinese government increased its defence spending substantially to match its fast growing economy, it failed to present empirical data to the outside world. Following the maritime incident in September 2010

involving the Chinese fishing boat captain, the PLA Navy and Air Force took an offensive stance, risking military clashes with Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF) by intruding on Japan's airspace and territorial waters. After the Noda cabinet's decision to nationalize the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands two years later, the PLA became even more assertive. In 2013, China imposed its own air defence identification zone (CADIZ) in the East China Sea, most of which overlapped with that of Japan. It was an unprecedented move in the eyes of Japan and the United States, tantamount to challenging existing international law and order (Su, 2015). Japan's suspicion grew all the more evident as China began to build seven artificial islands in the South China Sea as a way of claiming the Nine Dash Line, which is vital to the control of that entire sea.

Kitaoka and others in Japan believe such assertive behaviour signalled the CCP's loss of control over the PLA, reminiscent of Japan in the 1930s (Shambaugh, 2002; Kayahara, 2010; Tsuchiya, 2012; Kotani, 2013). The Japanese leadership and public have also begun to perceive China as an explicit threat. Their concerns are not only limited to its territory, but also extend to freedom of navigation in the East China Sea, South China Sea, and beyond. It is under this Chinese threat perception that Prime Minister Abe has streamlined institutional settings (e.g. exercise of collective defence rights, establishment of a National Security Council, and amendment of the Peace Constitution), and enhanced war-fighting capabilities (e.g., increase in defence spending, expansion and upgrading of intelligence activities, and enlargement of the SDF's military manoeuvres). In addition, departing from the DPJ's lukewarm attitude on the alliance with the United States, Abe actively joined American rebalancing efforts by adopting a new defence guideline. Japan thus has become an undisputable cornerstone of the US alliance in the Asia Pacific. (The US and Japan Security Consultative Committee, April 27, 2015). As noted before, Abe has also initiated extensive geopolitical diplomatic moves to encircle China by consolidating ties with countries surrounding China from Southeast Asia all the way to the Middle East. Finally, his cabinet has started strengthening defence cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam which are under Chinese military pressure. All of these strategic moves have been undertaken in the name of "proactive pacifism," underscoring shifting perceptions of China as a real geopolitical threat.

China has been equally suspicious of the Abe cabinet and critical of Japan's recent moves. Faced with China's continuing rise, Japan needs to build a broad coalition of countries based on common values such as

market economy, democracy, and human rights (Inoguchi, 2014: p. 32). In this vein, then-Foreign Minister Aso Taro first proposed the arc of freedom and democracy in 2006, which was later succeeded by Abe's "democratic security diamond." Beijing perceives this positioning by Japan as a conscious effort to encircle China in concert with the "pivot to Asia" strategy of the United States. China has countered by invoking historical memory and anti-Japanese sentiments. Most Chinese believe a tight Japan-US alliance could pose a threat to their national security by aggravating territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas, as well as undermining China's maritime security from the Indian Ocean all the way to the East China Sea (Malik, 2014; Manicom, 2014). For some Chinese, Japan's moves are seen as more than mere alliance obligations. They argue that by taking advantage of American patronage, Japan will become a normal state with enormous war fighting capabilities, which would eventually undermine strategic stability in the region due to competition over the sphere of influence. In this light, from China's perspective, Abe's assertive moves are construed as efforts to revive the old glory of Japanese militarism of the 1930s (Glaser and Farrar, 2015).

DOMESTIC POLITICS OF NATIONALISM

As a mature democracy, Japan may well seek the status of remilitarization, but revival of 1930s' militarism in today's Japan seems virtually inconceivable. Meanwhile, no matter how authoritarian it might be, China is the number one trading state in the world. Thus, it is quite unimaginable, if not self-damaging, for China to hinder freedom of navigation in the high sea. Why, then, do both China and Japan engage in futile acts of mutual demonization and hostility? It is because domestic politics matters.

On 27 February 2015, Wendy R. Sherman, US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, made a controversial remark in her speech at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace:

There can be no question that the world would be safer, richer, and more stable if the United States, Japan, China, and South Korea were consistently pulling in the same direction, and that's definitely what the majority of the people in the region want. Of course, nationalist feelings can still be exploited, and it's not hard for a political leader anywhere to earn cheap applause by vilifying a former enemy. But such provocations produce paralysis, not progress. To move ahead, we have to see beyond what was to

envision what might be. And in thinking about the possibilities, we don't have to look far for a cautionary tale of a country that has allowed itself to be trapped by its own history. (Sherman, 2015)

Her remarks that “nationalist feelings can still be exploited, and it's not hard for a political leader anywhere to earn cheap applause by vilifying a former enemy” triggered immense uproar in China and South Korea. Her observation seems correct in depicting China's behaviour to the extent that Beijing's political leadership has been demonizing Japan, making it a scapegoat by capitalizing on nationalist sentiments. But Sherman is wrong to assert that this is sought for cheap political applause. China's leadership seems to be driven by genuine efforts to respond to the public's wishes and heal the fractures within their collective memory of past history, especially during the 1930s. The Nanjing Massacre and the brutal Japanese invasion that cost more than thirty million lives are deeply entrenched in the minds of the Chinese people. Their latent memory erupts into immense public anger whenever Japan fails to make an authentic apology by glorifying its past history and whitewashing records of wars of aggression and other atrocities. Certainly, China's leaders should lead rather than follow public opinion, but in the case of anti-Japanese nationalist sentiment, it is the public that is driving the discourse (Wallace and Weiss, 2015).

Wendy Sherman did not address Japan in her remarks, but Japan seems equally burdened because domestic political logic is deeply intermeshed with its foreign policy behaviour. In a speech at the Hudson Institute on 25 September 2013, Prime Minister Abe justified the adoption of its proactive pacifism doctrine as a way of coping with China's rise. He pointed out that China's rapid military build-up along with North Korea's nuclear weapon capabilities are posing a major threat to national security. He even described potential maritime clashes in the East China Sea as “a present and clear crisis” (Abe, 2013). Given its military alliance with the United States as well as China's overall military posture, there seems to be no immediate reason for the fundamental realignment of Japan's defence posture. But China's rise rekindled nationalist sentiments in Japan. Abe is skilfully tapping into them as political capital in steering his dreams. China's rise has emerged as a timely excuse for Japan's military build-up. Abe needs a contrived threat and enemy to broaden his political support, to foster internal cohesion, and to overcome the social and political atrophy that became widespread since the Heisei Recession (Smith, 2015; Nakanishi, 2015). So far, his appeals to nationalist

sentiments have been working. It is in this context that China has become an ideal scapegoat for Abe's domestic political engineering, and a militaristic image of the PLA was invented through the narratives of the 1930s.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

We have examined the process of mutual demonization between China and Japan by looking into contemporary narratives of 1930s' militarism in Japan. Our findings are stark: despite a common interpretation of the 1930s, China and Japan have divergent perspectives on an imagined memory of the future. Thus, the dilemma of the Siamese twin analogy seems more than real, setting up internal dynamics that enable the processes of shadow projection and demonization. For Japan, China is a dangerous challenger with autocratic rule that can pose an immediate threat, as well as jeopardize regional stability, and which should be encircled and contained. For China, Japan is an untrustworthy country that is attempting to revive its old militarism through a revisionist interpretation of past history. If left unchecked, Japan's right-wing ideological tilt would eventually turn the country into a new spoiler in the region, and therefore should be constantly watched. Cognitive dissonance over changing status, the revival of geopolitical discourse, domestic politics and widespread nationalist sentiments further amplify the process of mutual distrust and negation.

The use of these narratives to underscore international and domestic policy-making and posture is particularly worrisome due to its institutionalizing effect on the formation of a transnational coalition among adversaries. Regardless of regime and leadership type, political leadership in China and Japan has been abusing and misusing nationalist sentiments, aggravating bilateral relations. Just as Chinese political leadership has taken advantage of anti-Japanese sentiment for domestic political gain, Japan's leadership has been equally proactive in exploiting the China threat thesis as a political tool in reshaping the public mood, setting new agendas, and ultimately enhancing its domestic standing. Interestingly, such leadership behaviour creates transnational chain reactions that bind adversarial nationalists together. For example, Abe's tribute to the Yasukuni Shrine triggered immense public anger in China, which in turn precipitated anti-Chinese sentiments in Japan. Albeit mutually hostile, they become contributing members of an adversarial transnational coalition. Consequently, the collective memory and politicized narratives of the 1930s have produced a negative spiralling of imagined memory of the future and its resulting mutual hostility. In view

of the above, the current cross-threat perception between China and Japan is more socially constructed than real.

It should also be pointed out that those who politicize the 1930s narratives of Japanese militarism do not yet constitute the majority of foreign policy and national security pundits in China and Japan. Given the scapegoat-seeking behaviour of domestic politics, however, we cannot rule out the possibility of the wider diffusion of such lines of thinking, and we should make every effort to prevent the machinations of wild imagination from becoming a working reality. Such a development could bring a nightmarish situation for China, Japan, and the region as a whole.

The narratives of the 1930s seem to be very much confined to the China-Japan relationship. However, it is true that since the advent of the Abe cabinet, a growing number of South Koreans have begun to echo a fear of the revival of 1930s militarism in Japan. There are some worrisome signs of mutual demonization as can be seen in the hatred movements in both countries (*kenkan* in Japan, *byeomil* in South Korea). Although such hatred movements have been rejected by the majority of people in both countries, they can easily ignite parochial nationalist sentiments and worsen bilateral relations between Japan and South Korea when and if bad times comes.

What should be done? First, open and liberal leaderships are needed. They should play a leading role in shaping new and healthy public opinion against mutually destructive parochial nationalist sentiments, while calling for much closer cooperation among nations in the region. Enlightened civil society and liberal transnational networks among non-governmental organizations are another crucial prerequisite for the mitigation and termination of mutual demonization and hostilities. Promotion of mutual understanding and sharing through expanded exchange and cooperation among non-governmental actors could serve as the most effective tool to tackle the collusive ties among adversarial, but mutually dependent, parochial nationalists. Finally, mass media should no longer engage in sensational journalism that pits one against the other by appealing to nationalist sentiments. Self-discipline should be restored across all participants in the transnational political dialogue.

NOTES

1. "Shadow Projection: The Fuel of War," www.awakeninthedream.com/shadow-projection-the-fuelof-war.
2. See the English translated version of Ikki's "General Outline of Measures for the Reorganization of Japan" at the following site:1.

<http://www.milestonedocuments.com/documents/view/kita-ikki-general-outline-of-measures-for-the-reorganization-of-japan>.

3. See, for example, the *Iwanami Koza Asia-Pacific War Series* of eight brilliant books published in 2005–2006.
4. See our interviews with Yoshihide Soeya, Yoichi Funabashi, Ryosei Kokubun, Takashi Shiraishi, Masao Okonogi, Hajime Izumi and others for the detail (Moon and Suh, 2013).

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The “Abnormal” State: Identity, Norm/Exception and Japan

Linus Hagström

INTRODUCTION

Michel Foucault devoted his lecture series at the College de France in 1975 to scrutinizing the notion of “abnormal individuals” and its function in modern judicial systems. He demonstrated how people accused of crimes were subjected to medico-legal investigations and how their branding as “abnormal” made them resemble their crimes even before they had committed them (Foucault, 1999: p. 19). In his introduction to the volume in which Foucault’s lectures are published, Arnold Davidson (1999) writes:

“abnormality” has entered our everyday discourse with a conceptual force that seems both natural and inevitable. One can only hope that the next time we are tempted to invoke the label “abnormal”, rather than appearing familiar, this gesture will become problematic, even difficult. (p. xxv)

Davidson’s expression of hope notwithstanding, the label “abnormal” continues to be invoked quite unwittingly in many different contexts. States and policies, for instance, are sometimes referred to as “abnormal,”

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and in International Relations (IR) research, the label has been used most persistently to describe post-war Japan and its foreign and security policy.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the social construction of Japan's "abnormality" and the deeply interconnected notion that it is "normalizing," or should have to "normalize," in the face of security challenges defined in terms of structural and material threats. How is Japan socially constructed as "abnormal" and in what sense is it deemed in need of "normalization?" Moreover, how can one understand the persistence of this "abnormality–normalization nexus," which is ubiquitous both in IR scholarship on Japan and in Japanese foreign and security policy debates? Finally, what are the consequences of this discourse; how does it enable and constrain action?

The continued reproduction of this abnormality–normalization nexus is particularly puzzling as Japan has continued to maintain significant economic and military capabilities—themselves often-used indicators of "normality" in international politics—and appears to use those capabilities in ways that are not fundamentally unlike other comparable states. Moreover, Japan is a fully fledged member of international society, and it makes significant contributions to the international organizations where it has membership.

This chapter argues that the reproduction of the abnormality–normalization nexus has to be understood as an identity discourse, which produces: (1) Japan as an Other in the international system; (2) the Japanese Self as an Other—at the same time illegitimately "abnormal" and legitimately "exceptional"; and (3) Japanese Othering both of its own alleged "abnormality" and of China/Asia, as a way to secure a more "normal" Japanese Self. Since the nexus is not based on an objective, absolute standard of "normality"—indeed, since no such standard exists outside "modes of inquiry" (Foucault, 2000)—ideational factors clearly override structural and material ones in conditioning how Japanese foreign and security policy has continuously been understood.

The chapter investigates the construction and implications of this nexus by employing a relational concept of identity, whereby identity emerges as an effect of boundary production vis-a-vis difference or distinctions between Self and Other (Connolly, 1991; Campbell, 1994, 1998 [1992]; Rumelili, 2004; Wodak et al., 2009 [1999]). It moves beyond the constructivist commonplace that identities and norms are mutually constitutive by elaborating on the way in which norms and exceptions are involved in the construction of "abnormality" and "normalization." This

discussion introduces three processes whereby Self is differentiated from Other: socialization, exceptionalization and securitization.

The next three sections serve to establish the understanding that Japan is “abnormal,” which again is dominant both in IR scholarship on Japan and in Japanese foreign and security policy debates. The subsequent section reviews the thesis that Japan is finally “normalizing.” It thereby demonstrates, yet again, that Japan has not been regarded as quite “normal,” and it elucidates the inter-subjective, but relative, standard of “normality” according to which it seems reasonable and even necessary for Japan to “normalize” its foreign and security policy.

The journey into the academic and political function of the abnormality–normalization nexus is then followed by a critical discussion of the concept of “normality,” and finally by an analysis of how the nexus, and a Japanese desire for “normality,” has been constructed continuously (since the nineteenth century) through Japan’s differentiation from imaginations of the United States/the West on the one hand and from China/Asia on the other; the former process being defined as a case of socialization, the latter as a case of securitization; and with aspects of exceptionalization—namely, the process whereby Self imagines itself as “exceptional”—entwined in both.

As a by-product of this analysis, a significant part of the literature on Japan’s foreign and security policy is critically reviewed and synthesized. Indeed, this literature serves as the main material for the chapter, and the chapter thus aims to contribute through a meta-analysis.

“ABNORMALITY,” IDENTITY AND NORM/EXCEPTION

To Foucault, the construction and diffusion of the category of the “abnormal” reflects the dividing practice whereby ideas about what is “normal” get established and become dominant. In other words, the “normal” is defined through differentiation, and turned into something identifiable and indeed desirable and even coercive, precisely by invoking the “abnormal,” and the same logic applies when the “mad,” the “sick” and “criminals” are differentiated from the “sane,” the “healthy” and the “good boys” (Foucault, 2000: p. 326). The reproduction and internalization of these categories ultimately constitute interpretative dispositions; they define what is conceivable and what is inconceivable, and therefore underlie processes whereby human beings fashion themselves and others into subjects. To Foucault (2000), these kinds of dividing practices are the

essence of power defined as “productive,” but they are clearly also fundamental to identity construction (see also Digeser, 1992).

In fact, constructivist and poststructuralist research in IR tends to conceptualize identity in a highly related fashion. States are believed to be formed, maintained and transformed most fundamentally through discursive dividing practices (Williams, 1998: p. 205). As Bahar Rumelili (2004) succinctly argues, “Identities are always constituted in relation to difference because a thing can only be known by what it is not” (p. 29). To David Campbell (1994), this is the gist of “foreign policy,” which is then “understood as referring to all relationships of otherness, practices of differentiation, or modes of exclusion that constitute their objects as foreign in the process of dealing with them” (p. 150). Since the presumed “normal” is constituted importantly through differentiation vis-a-vis the presumed “abnormal,” and since the branding of some states as “abnormal” and others as “normal” epitomizes Campbell’s “foreign policy,” it seems both reasonable and meaningful to try to transpose Foucault’s gaze of the “abnormal” to the realm of IR. Yet, are states not rather different from Foucault’s individuals? It is true that states seem more difficult to discipline and appear to have more room for manoeuvre than individuals, but both are ultimately *social* actors, which are produced and sustained through inter-subjective meanings and practices (Jackson, 2004; Epstein, 2010). The rest of this section will theorize three discrete, yet highly interrelated, processes whereby the distinction between the “normal” and the “abnormal” is socially constructed. It does so by drawing on twentieth-century German legal scholar Carl Schmitt’s closely related distinction between “norm” and “exception.”

First, the concomitant reproduction of inter-subjective standards of “normality,” and desires and pressures to be “normal,” could be conceptualized as a process of “socialization”—socialization in IR being defined as “the process by which states internalize norms originating elsewhere in the international system” (Alderson, 2001: p. 417; see also Flockhart, 2006). Defined in such terms, with a clear focus on the diffusion of norms, socialization is compatible with the notion that norms constitute identities (Katzenstein, 1996a), or that the two are “mutually constitutive” (Wendt, 1992). Yet, one could argue that this definition of socialization focuses too much on norms, and too little on exceptions, at least to be fully compatible with the relational understanding of identity. Schmitt (2004 [1922/1934]) argued: “The exception is more interesting than the rule. The rule proves nothing;

the exception proves everything: It confirms not only the rule but also its existence, which derives only from the exception” (p. 15). Admittedly, Schmitt’s primary interest was exceptions that *repeal* norms, while in Foucauldian terms, the implication is rather that exceptions *confirm* norms. Hence, even norms that constitute identities are dependent on the prior invocation of exceptions. Socialization is a case in point, because the norms or standards of “normality” that states “internalize” (Alderson, 2001) require a constitutive “outside”—importantly, the presumed “abnormal.”

Second, Schmitt argued that the capacity to decide on the exception defines state sovereignty. In a similar vein, exceptionalism ultimately characterizes the production of boundaries *between* states (nations, groups, etc.). By establishing what the state “is” and what it “is not,” it appears in all its supposed exceptionality. Indeed, exceptionalism, or a sense of “positive uniqueness,” is a defining characteristic of nationalism (Smith, 1991). This is clearly a key aspect of the relational concept of identity; again, identity is known crucially by what it “is not,” that is, by difference. R.B.J. Walker (2006) notes: “subjectivity . . . produces its own exteriority as object” (p. 58). Indeed, he argues that “there must be no reduction of (legitimate) differences in order to attain universality, for otherwise we arrive not at a states system, an international, but at an empire, whether understood as ‘humanity’ or ‘imperium’” (p. 61). The reproduction of “diversity within unity” (p. 61)—of “positive”/“legitimate” uniqueness or exceptionalism—is a process referred to here as “exceptionalization.” The category of the “abnormal,” in contrast, exemplifies “illegitimate” difference, or “diversity without unity.”

Third, this “illegitimate” or “negative” difference is defined as “a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the state, or the like” (Schmitt, 2004 [1922/1934]: p. 6), or, in Schmitt’s terminology, as “the exception” (2004 [1922/1934]: p. 6), or as “enemy” in contrast to “friend” (1996 [1932]: pp. 26–27). Schmitt’s idea that “he” “who decides on the exception” is “sovereign” (1996 [1932]: p. 5) means that “he” both “decides whether there is an extreme emergency” and “what must be done to eliminate it” (1996 [1932]: p. 7). The social construction of threats and enemies to legitimize exceptions—“emergency measures” or “actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure”—is precisely the gist of “securitization” (Buzan et al., 1998: pp. 23–24). However, enemies, exceptions and difference stand in “double relation” to friends, norms and identity, in

that they both threaten and constitute them. As William Connolly (1991) argues:

madness or unreason or . . . severe abnormality is doubly entangled with the identity of the rational agent and the normal individual: it helps to constitute practical reason and normality by providing a set of abnormal conducts and “vehement passions” against which each is defined, but it also threatens them by embodying characteristics that would destabilize the normal if they were to proliferate. (p. 67)

By expanding on the relationship between norm and exception, the preceding paragraphs illuminate three processes whereby Japan’s abnormality–normalization nexus, and identities more generally, are relationally constituted: (1) socialization operates through Self’s emulation of dominant norms—norms which fundamentally depend on prior exceptions; (2) exceptionalization operates through Self’s production of “legitimate” differences vis-a-vis Others; and (3) securitization operates through Self’s attempts to protect itself from “illegitimate” or “threatening” difference.

The relational concept of identity is thus fundamental, but the study of foreign and security policy often sets out from another, rather different, plane—if it takes identity seriously at all, that is. Instead of problematizing the objects of study by delving into their processes of becoming, many studies simply take them for granted and further reify them by treating their foreign and security policies as the courses of action of secure and ahistorical, or at least well-confined and highly resilient, entities, and logically posterior to their existence. As such, identity is believed to define national interests, which in turn help shape foreign and security policy. In other words, identity is treated as the independent variable, and behaviour as the dependent one. This understanding of identity has arguably become a “necessary routine in constructivist writings” (Berenskoetter, 2010; see also Katzenstein, 1996a; Wendt, 1999; Hopf, 2002).¹

Although the relational concept of identity has tended to play an analytical role reminiscent of a dependent variable, nothing prevents it from being linked to the primary mission of identity in the other sense, namely, to ascertain what foreign and security policies become more or less likely, given certain identity constructions, or what courses of action processes of differentiation enable and constrain (Doty, 1993; Milliken, 1999). Thus, even if states are constructions of the imagination that come

into “being” through inter-subjective meanings and practices of differentiation, for example, “foreign and security policy,” on another level, it is perfectly reasonable to enquire what policies become conceivable, communicable and coercive in the light of such differentiation (Holland, 2013). Different constructions of identity are thus believed to correlate with distinct ranges of “imaginable conduct” (Doty, 1993: p. 299); a Japan understood as “abnormal” or “pacifist” is believed to have different propensities for action from one that is understood as “normalizing” or “normal.”

THE IR DEBATE: “PACIFIST” JAPAN, “ABNORMAL” JAPAN

With Japan’s agglomeration of economic capability in the post-war period, it was dubbed an economic “great power” or “superpower.” Since realists believe that the anarchical international system moulds security- or power-maximizing “territorial states,” a great number of observers more or less explicitly influenced by realism expected Japan to exercise commensurate political and military power, or to become a fully fledged great power. However, since, in the estimation of the realists, Japan continued to punch below its weight, the notion spread that it was an “anomaly” or simply “abnormal” (Layne, 1993; Waltz, 1993; Kennedy, 1994; Waltz, 2000).

Japan’s “abnormality” is epitomized by Article 9 of the post-war constitution, in which the state famously relinquishes its sovereign right to wage wars and to use force or the threat of force “as means of settling international disputes,” and establishes that it will not maintain “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential” (Constitution of Japan, 1946). In Schmittean terms, the inability “to declare an exception” is exactly what makes Japan “abnormal”; indeed, to Schmitt (2004 [1922/1934]: p. 11), it would even disqualify Japan from enjoying the status of a state.

When Japan seemed to defy realism, it became obvious how dominant realist assumptions are in scholarly, media and policy discourses on Japan’s foreign and security policy. The evidence is that Japan began to be ascribed several *other* identities than the “normal” one prompted by realism—to name just a few, those of a “trading state” (Rosecrance, 1986), an “economic” and a “civilian” power (Maull, 1990/1991; Funabashi, 1991/1992), and a “reactive” and “defensive” state (Calder, 1988; Pharr, 1993; Calder, 2003). Also, many observers—not all self-proclaimed realists—continued to reproduce the image of Japan as an

economic “giant” and a political and military “pygmy” (Funabashi, 1991/1992: p. 65; Inoguchi, 1991: p. 1). Moreover, in more recent years, Japan has been called, among other names, an “aikido state” (Hook et al., 2001), a “soft power superpower” (Watanabe and McConnell, 2008) and a “cultural power” (Otmazgin, 2008).

Some observers have attempted to “normalize” Japan’s allegedly one-sided pursuit of “economic” or “civilian” power, claiming for instance that it is the result of economic rationality (Rosecrance, 1986). Identity first became the explicit focus in such attempts in the 1990s. Thomas Berger and Peter Katzenstein tried to resolve the “abnormality” allegedly at the heart of Japan’s international relations by attributing a “pacifist” or “anti-militarist” identity to it, either directly or through a focus on what is believed to be that identity’s constitutive parts, namely, an “antimilitarist culture” in Berger’s (1993, 1996, 1998) version and “peaceful cultural norms” in Katzenstein’s (1996b) version (see also Katzenstein and Okawara, 1993). The (mostly US) scholars associated with this literature have become known as constructivists for their emphasis on norms and culture as factors shaping Japan’s foreign and security policy. Arguably, the most important example is, again, Article 9 of the constitution (Katzenstein, 1996b; Berger, 1998; Katzenstein, 2008; Tadokoro, 2011; Tsuchiyama, 2007).

The constructivist approach to Japan has lately encountered criticism from scholars whose aim is to save realism (albeit not necessarily Kenneth Waltz’s version of *neorealism*). In short, this heterogeneous group contends that post-war Japan’s foreign and security policy can be readily explained from the perspectives of “mercantile realism” (Heginbotham and Samuels, 1998), “postclassical realism” (Kawasaki, 2001) and “defensive realism” (Twomey, 2000; Midford, 2002; Lind, 2004). The aim of each of these accounts is to argue that Japan, in fact, labours under the same structural and material constraints as other states, albeit with some atypical implications. However, the ascription to Japan of new identities, such as that of a “circumscribed balancer” (Twomey, 2000) and a “buck-passer” (Lind, 2004), shows that these realists also do not consider the country completely “normal.”

Others have accepted the notion of Japanese “pacifism” or “antimilitarism,” while explicitly arguing that such ideational factors have structural and material bases. Yasuhiro Izumikawa (2010), for instance, holds that Berger’s “antimilitarism” really has three other constitutive elements than “an antimilitarist norm,” that is, “pacifism,” “antitraditionalism” and “fear

of entrapment.” In particular, the latter (together with “fear of abandonment”—although the term is absent in Izumikawa’s analytical framework) is found to be most congruent with Japan’s post-war security policy. Akitoshi Miyashita (2007) also tries to turn the tables on constructivism by arguing that the sustainability of antimilitarist norms in Japan can be explained to a large degree by “structural and material factors,” such as “threat perceptions,” Japan’s “economic prosperity,” “political stability” and particularly the security alliance with the United States. However, the importance that these two accounts attach to “fears” and “perceptions” is problematic, unless they view such states of mind as direct effects of structural and material factors.

In fact, even the US constructivists attributed importance to structural and material factors. Although they believed norms and culture to transform very slowly, and thus saw them as unlikely to bring about radical change in Japan’s foreign and security policy in the short to medium term (e.g. Berger, 1993; Katzenstein and Okawara, 1993; Berger 1998), they still predicted that change would eventually come about as a result of changing structural and material conditions. Berger (1993: p. 120; 1998: p. 209), for instance, held that any potential change that might occur in the future would have to take place as the result of an external “shock,” such as a weakened alliance with the United States and/or the emergence of a serious regional security threat. Katzenstein and Okawara (1993), in turn, argued that potential change in the future might rather be explained by “domestic determinants,” but they also assigned some explanatory force to “discontinuities in the international system” (p. 117). In more recent years, Andrew Oros (2007) has claimed that the medium- to long-term sustainability of Japanese antimilitarism is “determined in part by the security environment in East Asia and the world” (p. 4; see also Friman et al. 2006; Soeya et al. 2011). Hence, even if ideational factors were seen as temporarily playing a role in Japanese foreign and security policy, these constructivists believed that Japan would ultimately have to conform—more “normally”—to structural and material factors.

The debate between the US constructivists and their critics is often framed in terms of a tug of war between ideational factors and structural/material ones, but this section serves to note the similarity between the two positions—indeed, to emphasize how they share the notion that Japan will eventually have to remilitarize as a result of structural and material factors.

JAPANESE IDENTITY POLITICS: “ABNORMAL” VERSUS “EXCEPTIONAL” JAPAN

As noted above, post-war Japan has often been ascribed a “pacifist” or “antimilitarist” identity. Many works emphasize that the Japanese people started to adopt a rather inward-looking “one-country pacifism” (*ikkoku heiwa shugi*) after the war. To the incumbent centre-right Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Japan was already a “peace state” (*heiwa kokka*), and to parties on the political left centring on the (now defunct) Japan Socialist Party (JSP), it should become one, although these parties constantly complained that political practice strayed problematically from the pacifist constitution. According to James Orr (2001), the peace movement was founded on two other identity-related pillars, namely, “the victim experience arising from wartime suffering” and “the victimizer experience as supporters of the war of aggression” (p. 3), although by the 1960s the victim identity had allegedly become dominant (see also Igarashi, 2000; Buruma, 2009 [1994]).

In the pacifist narrative, “pacifism” would make post-war Japan exceptional—a conviction that arguably underlay the emergence of a certain “peace nationalism,” or “a new sense of national purpose” in the post-war era (McVeigh, 2004: p. 207). It also resonated with the vast *nihonjinron* (“theory of the Japanese”) discourse, which constructs the Japanese people as inherently “harmonious” and “peaceful” (Befu, 2001; Dale, 1986; Oguma, 2002). To the centre-left, pacifism was thus exceptionalized into something that would make Japan legitimately different from other countries.

To the radical parts of the political right, in contrast, the “pacifist identity” made Japan illegitimately different and dangerously “abnormal.” The term “abnormal” (*ijō* or *futsū de wa nai*) is not always used in Japan² but “abnormality” is implied; for instance, when politicians and pundits call Article 9 a “big obstacle” (*shōgai* or *ōkina shishō*) (Kitaoka, 2000: p. 271; Yachi, 2009: p. 124), and when they criticize Japan’s security policy for being “insufficient” (*fujūbun*) (Kitaoka, 2000: p. 11; Yachi, 2009: p. 123). Although governments formed by the long-reigning LDP have tended to pay lip service to a notion of “pacifism,” throughout the post-war period, party manifestos continued to argue that Japanese security could only be safeguarded by revising Japan’s constitution (Hook, 1996; Ryu, 2007; Soeya, Tadokoro and Welch, 2011).

This serves to problematize the reasonableness of ascribing Japan a “pacifist” identity in the first place. The lowest common denominator of different political agendas instead appears to be a narrative of difference; Japan is portrayed as an Other in the international system, albeit with totally different connotations and implications—exceptionalization of Japan’s “pacifism” on the political centre-left, and securitization of Japan’s threatening “abnormality” on the political right. Moreover, the “Peace Constitution” epitomizes Japan’s difference in both contexts and calls for the country to “normalize” and typically focus on the issue of revision of the constitution (Hagström, 2010).

Glenn Hook’s (1988, 1996) research is often grouped together with Berger’s and Katzenstein’s as “constructivist,”³ but it actually takes a more flexible approach to Japanese demilitarization and remilitarization. It finds that Japan began to remilitarize as early as during the Allied occupation (1945–1952), and that many antimilitaristic principles eroded in the 1980s as a result of external and internal pressures. In fact, the Japanese foreign and security policy debate has been divided in rather the same way as IR research as regards how to understand Japan’s role in the world. In Soeya Yoshihide’s (2005) account, the lingering antagonism between two opposing identities—one “pacifist” (*heiwa shugi*) and one “traditional statist” (*dentōteki kokka shugi*)—has given Japan a “dual identity” (*nijū aidentitī*) and resulted in a prolonged identity crisis. The notion that contradictory forces have been operating in post-war Japan is also at the root of the idea that Japan’s post-war identity has been “ambiguous” (Tamamoto, 2003: p. 195).

Feeding the division within the realm of Japan’s foreign and security policy, moreover, has been profound contestation over how Japan should deal with its militaristic and imperialistic past (Shibuichi, 2005; Bukh, 2007; Buruma, 2009 [1994]). In right-wing narratives, a “normal” Japan, and to an even greater extent a *super-normal*—militarily “normal” but culturally exceptional—“beautiful” (*utsukushii*) (Abe, 2006), “correct” (*tadashii*) (Hiranuma, 2007) or “strong” (*tsuyoi*) (Tamogami, 2011) country, is defined both in terms of remilitarization *and* of having nothing of which to be ashamed or for which to apologize. In fact, the latter is arguably what enables the former. Yet, these goals are not necessarily compatible, because recurring attempts on the part of some actors to make Japan more “normal” in the second sense are what makes it difficult for the world to accept a more “normal” Japan in the first sense (Zarakol, 2010; Lawson and Tannaka, 2011).

The bottom line is to reinforce the point that the post-war era has seen a constant tug of war between parallel forces working towards the strengthening versus the abolishing of “pacifism.” Although narratives of “exceptionalism” and “abnormality” are diametrically opposed, they are both conditioned on a notion of Japanese “difference,” and so is the political right’s replacement idea that Japan should become “beautiful,” “correct” and “strong.”

THE TENDENCY: JAPAN’S “NORMALIZATION” OR “REMILITARIZATION?”

As seen above, Japan’s political right has long had the ambition to fundamentally alter the country’s foreign and security policy—and this position was further strengthened after the near-extinction of the political left in the 1990s. There has been an equally resilient prophecy among scholars that such radical change would, or must occur. Yet, it was not until the early 2000s that a critical mass of Japan-watchers started to argue in rather bold terms that Japan had begun to “normalize” its foreign and security policy, or to “remilitarize” (McCormack, 2004; Tanter, 2005; Arase, 2007; Pyle, 2007; Samuels, 2007; Tsuchiyama, 2007; Hughes, 2009a; Tadokoro, 2011).

Katzenstein and Okawara contended in 1993 that:

normative constraints have made it impossible to revise Article 9 of the Constitution; to build nuclear weapons or to agree to their deployment on Japanese soil; to dispatch Japanese troops abroad in combatant roles even as part of an international peacekeeping force; to sell weapons abroad; or to raise the JDA [Japan Defence Agency] to ministerial status. (p. 104)

Yet, twenty years later, one can discern some change in each of these issue areas (Hagström and Williamsson, 2009).

Furthermore, in 1996, Berger (1996) wrote that Japan “eschewed obtaining weapons systems that might be construed as being offensive in character, such as aerial refueling capacity or helicopter carriers” (p. 351). This has also changed in the 2000s, as the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) have recently procured two 13,500-tonne Hyuga-class helicopter destroyers and one 20,000-tonne DDH-22 helicopter carrier, and have acquired in-flight refuelling capability by purchasing four multipurpose Boeing KC-767 tankers (Hagström and Williamsson, 2009).

Japan’s “normalization” or “remilitarization” has been explained most importantly with reference to the necessity of countering a North Korean “threat,” balancing a “rising China” and avoiding “US abandonment” (Pyle, 2007; Samuels, 2007). This again implies the long-overdue comeback of structural and material factors to “limit the impact of other, more idealist, and value-based role identities” on Japanese foreign and security policy (Catalinac, 2007: p. 91). Yet, this explanatory model presupposes and reproduces a certain standard of “normality” in IR, and each of its components could be criticized and alternative interpretations proposed.

First, while new goals and problems have been articulated in Japan’s foreign and security policy in the past decades, and more advanced policy instruments have been obtained, these changes have seemed to occur within a hitherto stable core interpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, and without big shifts in the Japan–US alliance. In other words, since this means that Japan’s international orientation has remained largely intact throughout the post-war period, the interpretation that the country has “remilitarized” does not seem reasonable (Hagström and Williamsson, 2009; see also Oros, 2007; Soeya, 2011).

Second, North Korea does not appear to fit realist criteria for “objectively” measuring threats. Although over one million people serve in the North Korean armed forces, as far as is known, its military aircraft and naval ships have enjoyed few improvements in the past few decades (Smith, 2007; Hagström and Turesson, 2009; Hughes, 2009b). The possible exception to this state of stagnation is North Korea’s notorious missile and nuclear programmes. However, tests thus far have not definitively proved the quality of these weapon systems (Crail and Kimball, 2012), and it is as yet unclear how far Pyongyang is from developing the technology to miniaturize nuclear payloads (Richardson, 2013). Moreover, although the North Korean rhetoric sounds belligerent, it could also be interpreted as strongly defensive (Hagström and Turesson, 2009). Interestingly, the Japanese construction of North Korea as a threat also does not primarily invoke North Korea’s development of weapons systems, but rather Pyongyang’s abduction of some seventeen Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s—what is known as the “abduction issue” (Hagström and Hanssen, 2015).

Third, the interpretation of China’s “rise” is most commonly based on the enormous increases in its gross domestic product (GDP) and defence spending since the 1970s. However, Brendan Howe (2010: p. 1326) argues that the threat “objectively” posed to Japan by the Soviet Union

was far greater than that currently posed by the “rising China.” Moreover, although Japanese policymakers tend to construct China’s “rise” as a threat (Hagström, 2008/2009; Hagström and Jerdén, 2010), it does not seem reasonable to interpret Japan’s China policy over the period 1978–2011 as a case of “balancing.” Tokyo could rather be interpreted as having facilitated the successful implementation of China’s grand strategy, and hence as having “accommodated” the rise of China (Jerdén and Hagström, 2012).

Masaru Tamamoto (2004) has commented that “radical change in the Japanese public attitude toward military security seems disproportionate to the threat” (p. 12). Hence, the persistent reproduction in various discourses in the past decade of the image that North Korea and China are threats to Japan has to be understood as a case of securitization. As Roxanne Lynn Doty (1993) argued in a different but parallel case, “the attributes attached to the subjects of this discourse are not reflections of ‘reality’ but rather illustrations of the inextricable linkages between the discursive production of ‘knowledge’ and the power inherent in that production” (p. 316). In other words, “structural and material factors” do not have extra-discursive meaning but are attributed meaning through the involvement of ideational factors. Now, this is not to argue that armed conflict in East Asia is inconceivable; it is only to caution against the logic that threats can be deduced unproblematically from a configuration of capabilities, plus an ascription of intentions (Buzan et al., 1998). Rather the contrary, the *conceivability* of armed conflict depends on how reality and knowledge are socially constructed.

That a Japanese identity change might be in the offing, and affect both how “threats” are socially constructed within Japan and how scholars interpret Japan’s foreign and security policy, is suggested by Amy Catalinac’s (2007: pp. 82–86) findings. She demonstrates that the number of Japanese Diet members who hold “pacifist” and “pragmatic multilateralist” role conceptions decreased between the Gulf War in 1991 and the US War in Iraq in 2003, from 46% to 16%, and from 40% to 29%, respectively. Over the same period, the proportion of those with a “centrist” role conception increased from 14% to 55%, and this is essentially a “role identity [that] prescribes realpolitik behavior for Japan” (Catalinac, 2007: p. 91). Other scholars have similarly argued that the role conceptions of “global player,” “global ordinary power” or “international state” have gained momentum in the post-Cold War period and superseded the

“peace state” or “pacifist” security identity (Inoguchi and Bacon, 2006; Ryu, 2007; Singh, 2008; Singh, 2011). Soeya’s devising of a “middle power” identity for Japan is a case in point. It could be interpreted as envisioning a compromise between competing “pacifist” and “traditional statist” identities (Soeya, 2005).

This section has served to problematize the notion that Japan has “remilitarized” to the extent suggested by the scholarly debate in the 2000s. Yet, that debate has presupposed and reproduced a worldview according to which it seems reasonable and even necessary for Japan to remilitarize. The power of this worldview is suggested by the observation that an identity change appears to be underway. Constitutional revision, for one, is the linchpin of current Prime Minister Abe Shinzō’s political agenda.

ON “NORMALITY” AND JAPANESE IDENTITY

The preceding sections have demonstrated the centrality of the abnormality–normalization nexus to discourses on Japan’s international relations. David Welch (2011) recently wrote that the debate about whether Japan is or should become a “normal” state is “fundamentally about national strategy” (p. 18). Yet, one contribution of this article is to demonstrate that it is a discourse through which Japanese identity is formed, maintained and transformed, both as Self and as Other. Hook (1996: p. 76) is one of few previous scholars who have discussed a connection between identity and “normality,” but since he took “identity” to mean “*antimilitarist* identity,” he basically construed a relationship characterized by contradiction. Since Japan’s “antimilitarist” or “pacifist” identity continues to be securitized as dangerously “abnormal” among the growing Japanese political right, and to be exceptionalized as positively different on the shrinking centre-left, it seems more fruitful to consider the relationship between “normality” and identity as one of constitution. As discussed above, inter-subjectively held ideas about the former constitute the latter as either contradicting or emulating the norm, and contradicting the norm either by threatening it or by surpassing it.

But what then is the norm—what is the inter-subjectively held standard of “normality?” Political heavyweight Ozawa Ichirō, who is often credited with having popularized the term “normal country” (*futsū no kuni*) in the Japanese context (Kitaoka, 2000: p. 10), has suggested that Japan could only become “normal” by: (1) revising Article 9, and thereby retrieving

the ability to exercise the right of collective self-defence; (2) dispatching the SDF to participate in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations; and (3) gaining a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (Ozawa, 1993). In more recent years, a “normal country” has been defined by scholars as one that is constitutionally able and prepared to deploy military force for national and international security ends, in particular, for the purpose of collective self-defence (Hirata, 2008; Kitaoka, 2000; Soeya, 2011; Soeya, Tadokoro and Welch, 2011; Tadokoro, 2011; Tanter, 2005). Oros (2007) defines “normal” as an “independent fully armed great power” (p. 3), and Richard Samuels (2007) clarifies that “stripped to its essence, the idea of a ‘normal nation’ simply means a nation that can go to war” (p. 111; see also Lummis 2007). In the last resort, “normality” usually hinges on the possession of nuclear weapons (Tanter, 2005; Waltz, 1993). And the United Kingdom is often alluded to as a model of sorts (Inoguchi and Bacon, 2006; see also Hughes, 2007).

This article argues that any standard of “normality” is a social construction, which requires the “abnormal” to demarcate the limits of its own domain. The article represents the first consistent critique of the dominant standard of “normality” in the context of Japan’s foreign and security policy, although bits and pieces of this criticism have previously appeared elsewhere. Most importantly, scholars have tried to problematize this standard of “normality” by arguing: (1) that the (rest of the) world should not necessarily be seen as “normal” (Hook, 1996); (2) that a “nationalism-as-normal model of state identity” underlies most ascriptions of “normality” and that “Japan’s problem in becoming ‘normal’ is at least partly due to the continuing prevalence of this model” (Lawson and Tannaka, 2011: p. 421); (3) that Japanese pacifism should rather be regarded as the model “for others to emulate” (Lawson and Tannaka, 2011: pp. 421–422; see also Lummis, 2007); (4) that most “normal,” or average, states are in fact poor and weak and lose whatever wars they engage in (Lummis, 2007); and (5) that the Japanese foreign and security policy could—in a sense (and for what it is worth)—be considered “normal” already, because it is similar to that of other comparable states (Hagström, 2005a, 2006, 2009; Howe, 2010).

By arguing that “[t]he question is not what is ‘normal’ in the abstract, but what is considered normal by Japan, and by Japanese,” Oros (2007: p. 3) might also seem to challenge dominant standards of “normality.” However, unlike the works quoted in the previous paragraph, his observation lacks an understanding that what is “considered normal by Japan, and

by Japanese” is a product of social construction, and hence an effect of productive power. While it is true that “‘normality’ is what states make of it” (Lawson and Tannaka, 2011: p. 421), the implication is not that the Japanese are free to choose whatever they want. There are strong systemic pressures precisely for Japan to “deviate from what has been ‘normal’ for itself in terms of its pacifist credentials” (Lawson and Tannaka, 2011: p. 421) because, as noted above, that “normality” is socially constructed as deviancy—both in IR scholarship and in Japanese foreign and security policy debates.

According to Harumi Befu (2001), there is also a more general Japanese tendency towards self-castigation through the acceptance of a “Western-centric scheme of the universe” and an embrace of “Westerners’” value judgments of Japan’s backwardness—what he calls “auto-Orientalism” (p. 128; see also Yoshino, 1992). The next section explores this matter further by returning to the question of how to understand the persistence of Japan’s nexus of abnormality–normalization, in particular, by analysing how it is constructed through Japan’s differentiation from imaginations of the United States/West and China/Asia—the former defined as a case of socialization and the latter as a case of securitization.

JAPANESE IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

Many works, transcending the realm of foreign and security policy, agree that Japanese identity has been inter-subjectively constructed against the backdrop of two rather different imaginations of difference: one of the United States/West and the other of China/Asia (Yoshino, 1992; Oguma, 2002; Hosoya, 2012). This is arguably another source of its alleged “ambiguity” (Oguma, 2002; Tamamoto, 2003; Kosebalaban, 2008; see also Zarakol, 2010).

Observers outside the field of IR argue that up until the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japanese identity was constructed primarily by differentiating Japan from Asia, and particularly China. The *kokugaku* (literally, “the study of [our] country”) of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is one prominent body of literature which contrasted a “masculine” and “superior” Japan with a “feminine” and “inferior” China (Tanaka, 1993: p. 3; Igarashi, 2000: pp. 35–36; Befu, 2001: pp. 123–125). Kazuki Sato (1997) describes how a representation of the Chinese as “poor, dirty and penny-pinching” (p. 122) started to spread in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and how it played a role in the

growth of Japanese nationalism. The notion of “civilization” (*bunmei*) gained importance around this time, and Tessa Morris-Suzuki (1998) points out that it “allowed difference to be transposed from the realm of space to the realm of time, so that ‘foreignness’ increasingly came to be interpreted as ‘underdevelopment’” (p. 28).

After the Meiji Restoration, as Japanese leaders aspired to catch up with and get recognition from European powers and the United States, the “civilized West” replaced China as the main object of differentiation (Guillaume, 2011: p. 86). This change of focus is often represented by the spread of slogans such as “Leave Asia, Enter Europe” (*datsua nyūō*) from 1885 (Tanaka, 1993: p. 55). Eiji Oguma (2002: p. 71) notes that Britain, in particular, functioned as role model in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Around the time of Japan’s aggression in China in the early twentieth century, however, Japanese discourses again began to focus on the neighbour. China was now being viewed as Japan’s past—the “idealized space and time from which Japan [had] developed” (Tanaka, 1993: p. 12)—and new concepts, such as “Same Script/Culture, Same Race” (*dōbun dōshu*), were coined to emphasize similarities between the two. Yet, Sato (1997) argues that the notion of *dōbun dōshu* was contested at the popular level from the very beginning, and that the portrayal of the Chinese as “a strange, different and inferior race” (p. 131) continued to contrast with presumably superior Japanese qualities. The tension between the conflicting goals of Japanese superiority and Pan-Asianism was arguably dissolved through the notion that Japan should “express its paternal compassion and guidance” (Tanaka, 1993: p. 108), or “raise Asia” (*kōa*).

While many agree that Japanese discourses in the early twentieth century positioned Japan between the West and Asia, Kuniko Ashizawa (2008) argues that Japan’s “eventual choice was Asia in an extreme manner in the 1930s and 1940s, which resulted in the country entering into a devastating war and experiencing complete defeat” (p. 589). However, it seems more plausible, perhaps, to interpret Japan’s war as part of the aspiration to become a Western imperialistic power—that is, a “normal, civilized great power” by the yardstick of the time— and, hence, that Japan “chose” the West. In other words, Japanese notions of “civilization” and “normality” were by-products of Japan’s encounter with, or socialization into, “international society,” or “modernity” more generally (Suzuki 2005; Bukh, 2009; Suzuki, 2009; Bukh, 2010; Zarakol 2010, 2011). At the same time, Ashizawa is correct to the extent that Japan’s war

was enabled by the notion that Asia was somehow substandard, or illegitimately different, and therefore in need of guidance.

After the defeat in 1945, the United States continued to play the role of idealized difference against which Japanese identity was defined (Igarashi, 2000; Befu, 2001; Tamamoto, 2003; Bukh, 2010; Guillaume, 2011). According to Yoshikuni Igarashi’s (2000: pp. 35–36) analysis, the narration of relations was again gendered, but Japan had now been displaced by the United States as performing the “male role,” and it had succeeded Asia as playing the “female” one. Hence, the imagined United States/West continued to function as a mirror image against which Japanese identity (or rather *difference*) appeared in both a positive and a negative light—again, as “exceptional” and “abnormal,” respectively (cf. Befu, 2001). The desire for “Western normality,” moreover, also surfaced in societal realms other than foreign and security policy, for example, the politics of leisure (Leheny, 2003).

Although Japan has remained an important Other in Chinese (and Taiwanese) narratives in the post-war period—not least ones related to history (Suzuki, 2007; Hwang, 2010; Gustafsson, 2011; Sejrup, 2012)—very few works speak of China as an object of collective Japanese imagination in the post-war period (Kano, 1976, is one exception). Only when it began to appear obvious that the Chinese modernization drive from 1978 onwards had succeeded did China again start to loom larger in Japanese discourses (Hosoya, 2012; Togo, 2012).⁴ Although the overarching differentiation mechanism has remained within the framework of emphasizing Japanese superiority and Chinese inferiority, Kai Schulze (2013) argues that the concrete expressions of that differentiation changed as the Chinese economy grew stronger and eventually surpassed the Japanese as second biggest in the world in 2010. Hence, when China was perceived to enter Japan’s domain of economic power, that very same quality ceased to be a unique marker of Japan, and so Japanese discourses instead began to emphasize Japan’s pre-eminence in terms of ideas and values.

Rumi Sakamoto (2007: p. 85) finds a frequent juxtaposition of Japan’s “mature democracy” and “healthy nationalism” with China’s “lack of democracy” and “childish nationalism,” and notes that it is essentially a modern version of the old contrast between “civilized” Japan and “uncivilized” China. Other authors demonstrate that even opposing positions in the Japanese political discourse on China share an understanding of China as opaque, unstable and potentially threatening (Hagström and Jerdén, 2010). In particular, the securitization of China as increasingly

“aggressive” and “assertive” in recent years has come to be used in arguments for the further “normalization” of Japanese foreign and security policy (Hagström, 2012), and so has the image of China as being “anti-Japanese” (Gustafsson, 2015).

Just as in the Meiji era (1868–1912), rather different processes of differentiation thus appear central to the construction of Japanese identity in the present. On the one hand, there is a lingering ideational hierarchy where the imagined United States/West continues to be ascribed the “normality” against which Japan’s “positive uniqueness” is exceptionalized and its “negative abnormality” securitized—a “normality” which Japan is under constant pressure to emulate through a process of socialization. On the other hand, there is the “undemocratic,” “modern” and “aggressive” China (and North Korea, for that matter), which underscores Japan’s own “normality” as a “Western,” “democratic,” “postmodern” and “peaceful” state (Hagström and Hanssen, 2015). However, China is also curiously “normal” in the neo-Bismarckian sense (and so is North Korea)—the securitization of which further enables the securitization of Japan’s own “abnormality” or “weakness,” that is, the securitization of Self—thereby making the political agenda to further “normalize” or “remilitarize” Japan conceivable, communicable and indeed coercive (Hagström, 2012).

Despite their very different ontologies, Taku Tamaki and Xavier Guillaume agree that the notion of *kokutai* (“national polity”)—namely, a hierarchical worldview and the associated sense of Japanese “uniqueness,” which is also the gist of *nihonjinron*—is a more resilient or institutionalized aspect of Japanese identity (Tamaki, 2010), or a “key narrative matrix” (Guillaume, 2011). However, in my view, this notion risks overemphasizing the aspect of “megalomania” or “superiority complex” in the way that Japanese identity has been constructed through its differentiation from Others understood to be inferior, and it risks underemphasizing the aspect of “inferiority complex,” which has also been a recurring element in processes of differentiation in Japan vis-a-vis the imagined “West.” Hence, it misses the perhaps inevitably narcissistic swings between the two extremes in the boundary production between Self and Others involving Japan.⁵ Indeed, this is arguably why Japanese identity can be constructed almost simultaneously as both “legitimately exceptional” and “illegitimately abnormal”/“in need of normalization,” and why it is sometimes difficult to distinguish proponents of “normalization” from advocates of super-normalization, that is, another kind of exceptionalization.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In the post-war period, Japan has continuously been portrayed as “the abnormal state,” both in IR scholarship and in Japanese foreign and security policy debates. Other states have probably been similarly described from time to time (Doty 1993, 315), but it is no exaggeration to suggest that Japan has been viewed as the “the abnormal state” par excellence, and particularly in the context of its foreign and security policy. Japan actually resembles Foucault’s “abnormal individuals,” because just like them, its alleged “abnormality” continues to be “measured against an optimum level of development” (Foucault, 1999: p. 16)—that is, a norm or standard of “normality.” Just like them, moreover, Japan is commonly viewed as “incapable of integrating . . . [itself] in the world” (Foucault, 1999: p. 17). Indeed, Japanese foreign and security policy has continuously been criticized, domestically and by the United States, for not “contributing” enough, “taking responsibility” or “sharing the burden” (Hagström, 2005b). And, just as with Foucault’s “abnormal individuals,” Japan’s alleged “abnormality” is constructed through the invocation of “‘failure’, ‘inferiority’ . . . ‘immaturity’, [and] ‘defective development’” (Foucault, 1999: p. 21). Variations of this narrative have, in fact, been reproduced since the nineteenth century and recently resurfaced again with much force, revolving especially around former Prime Minister Hatoyama’s attempt to renegotiate an accord for the relocation of the US Marine Corps Station Futenma in 2009–2010 (Berkofsky and Hagström, 2010), and Japanese interaction with China over the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in the 2010s (Hagström, 2012). Indeed, the 2012 Armitage–Nye Report famously warned that Japan is “drifting” into “tier-two status” and asked rhetorically whether Japan is “content” with this (Armitage and Nye, 2012)—a question which Prime Minister Abe (2013) dismissed very clearly: “Japan is not, and will never be, a Tier-two country.”

Yet, just as Foucault’s individuals were defined as “abnormal” on the basis of traits that were actually rather widespread, one could problematize the notion of Japan’s “abnormality” for overlooking important similarities between Japan and other states. And, just as Foucault’s delinquent individuals were constantly subjected to “techniques of normalization,” or the “power of normalization,” so too are strong forces deployed to “normalize” Japan. The discourse on Japan’s sometimes looming and sometimes long-overdue “normalization” is one of the clearest indicators that the

country has been viewed as ultimately “abnormal,” and the discourse on Japan’s “abnormality” can itself be regarded as a technique of normalization. This article has argued that Japan’s abnormality–normalization nexus can be understood as an identity discourse. Drawing on a relational concept of identity and particularly the distinction between norm and exception, it has understood the nexus in terms of three identity-producing processes.

First, there is socialization, or the process whereby the Japanese Self internalizes dominant norms, which are also reflected and reproduced in IR theories such as realism. However, these norms typically presuppose prior exceptions, and it is safe to conclude that Japan has been defined as such. This is the gist of the notion that Japan is “abnormal,” which has been reproduced in scholarly, media and policy discourses on Japan’s foreign and security policy. These discourses at the same time produce Japan as Other in the international system and the United States as norm—hence, they are central to the construction of a US Self (cf. Campbell, 1994).

Second, there is exceptionalization, or the process whereby the Japanese Self imagines itself as “positively” or “legitimately” different, that is, unique or exceptional. This is how “pacifism” has been constructed centring on Japan’s political left—as a quality making Japan positively different from modern Western territorial states, particularly the United States. To large parts of the political right, in contrast, “pacifism” is what has made Japan “negatively” or “illegitimately” different, that is, “abnormal.” The goal of the political right, however, is not necessarily to make Japan “normal”; many of its advocates seem rather to strive for a super-normal—“beautiful,” “correct” or “strong”—Japan. In fact, failure to maintain or form “positive” or “legitimate” differences, or uniqueness, would in a sense be even more detrimental to the reproduction of Japanese identity than a prolonging of “negative,” “illegitimate” or “threatening” differences, because without the former, it would be unclear how Japan and Japanese identity could continue to be reproduced (cf. Walker, 2006).

Third, there is securitization, or the process whereby the Japanese Self tries to protect itself from “negative,” “illegitimate” or “threatening” difference. A prominent example is the attempts by the political right to secure Japan from its own alleged “abnormality.” Moreover, this “abnormality” has been epitomized not primarily by Japan’s military shortcomings (as often implied) but—actually quite in line with Schmitt (2004 [1922/1934]: p. 11)—rather by its inability to declare a state of exception, or go to war. The evidence is that both scholars and

Japan’s political right have viewed constitutional revision as the ultimate solution of its own “abnormality” (cf. Huysmans, 2006: p. 139). This is also seen as the only way to handle the allegedly structural and material threats from China and North Korea, which also materialize through a process of securitization. Securitization is usually defined as the social construction of threats to legitimize exceptions “outside the normal bounds of political procedure” (Buzan et al., 1998: pp. 23–24), but in Japan’s case, it is “normality”—or again super-normality—which is to be restored through an exceptional decision.

In sum, IR research and Japanese foreign and security policy debates have agreed that Japan is “abnormal” because it has not responded adequately to structural and material factors in the international system. This article, in contrast, has argued that the abnormality–normalization nexus has to be understood as a discourse through which Japanese identity is constructed as both Self and Other; and through which the Japanese Self is securitized as Other. The implication is that ideational factors have overruled structural and material ones, because it is on the basis of the former that the latter have been interpreted.

Furthermore, how “Japan” is inter-subjectively constructed on a scale between “normal” and “abnormal” has material consequences. The importance of this discourse has to be understood both in terms of how it enables and constrains Japanese action and through the signals that it transmits to other states about what actions are acceptable and unacceptable—signals which, if they gain resonance and become dominant, define what is conceivable or possible (cf. Digeser, 1992). This is why Davidson’s (1999) expression of hope quoted in the Introduction—that “the next time we are tempted to invoke the label ‘abnormal’, rather than appearing familiar, this gesture will become problematic, even difficult” (p. xxv)—also has an important bearing on discourses related to Japan.

Although Japan has not remilitarized nearly as much in the 2000s as some observers claim, the way in which the country is currently being positioned vis-a-vis some imaginations of China and North Korea and other imaginations of the United States/West might very well forebode more significant steps towards remilitarization. In terms of foreign and security policy, the imagined United States/West clearly remains the norm, against which Japan is differentiated. China’s agglomeration of military capability in recent years could be construed as an attempt to live up to the very same norm, and so in fact could North Korea’s development of weapons of mass destruction. Yet, China’s security policy

is increasingly understood as a problem, and its values and culture are differentiated as “undemocratic,” “modern” and “aggressive,” and thus “inferior,” thereby emphasizing Japan’s “normality” as a “democratic,” “postmodern” and “peaceful” state. Indeed, both China and North Korea are often represented as dangerously “abnormal” in their own right (cf. Shim and Nabers, 2013; e.g. Huang, 2013). The securitization of China and North Korea as threats on such terms concurrently underscores Japan’s own “abnormality” and “weakness,” but it also becomes a powerful argument to further “normalize” Japanese foreign and security policy through exceptional decisions.

It is quite ironic that Japan’s alleged “peacefulness” in this way becomes an important facet of its “superiority,” which might in the end enable the rescinding of Article 9.⁶

NOTES

1. For a critique see Zehfuss (2001).
2. Although examples of its use include Araki (2005) and Kitaoka (2000).
3. See for example Izumikawa (2010).
4. Quite as predicted by Oe (1995) and Befu (2001).
5. This is a recurring theme in Morris-Suzuki (1998; see also Dale, 1986).
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Basic Human Needs: Identity and Intractable Conflict

History and Identity in South Korea's Intractable Conflicts with Japan and China

Ajin Choi and Jihwan Hwang

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic transformation of the regional order in East Asia is generating new opportunities for both regional conflict and cooperation. There are a number of intractable conflicts that have persisted despite the end of Cold War which are hindering cooperation in this region. We argue that structural factors are only one element in these negative dynamics and that ideational factors also have impacts on these processes.

Based on Karl Deutsch's seminal work, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (1988) claim that the existence of core values and a collective identity are essential for the development of security communities. They

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also argue that trust is developed within communities through positive perceptions of other community members Jonathan Mercer (2010) also concludes that favourable feelings can be a source of trust and a way out of normal realist calculations of incentives and risks.

Although an ideational perspective cannot explain all the issues and trends in the dynamic processes of regional affairs, it can significantly enhance the understanding of the source of conflict and the possibilities for cooperation in the region (Peou, 2010). This chapter aims to explain the occurrence of regional conflict by focusing on the impacts of ideational variables, including perceptions, experiences and emotions. In doing so, it first elaborates why ideational factors are important. Second, it explores how Koreans perceive Japan and China, as well as themselves. Next, it shows how their perceptions and images are actually associated with Korea's intractable conflict with the two neighbouring countries, and pulls together these threads in a concluding chapter.

THE IMPORTANCE OF IMAGES AND PERCEPTIONS

Korea is involved in a variety of intractable conflicts with Japan and China. Intractable conflicts are those conflicts which are of long-standing and concern issues of identity, values and beliefs – issues which tend to generate strife and cause conflict to be protracted (Bercovitch, 2003). Under intractable conflicts, “deep feelings of fear and hostility coupled with destructive behaviour make these conflicts very difficult to deal with, let alone resolve.”¹ Korea's intractable conflicts with Japan and China are enmeshed in negative interactions and hostile orientations and are therefore very difficult to manage.

Different perspectives in the field of foreign policy and international relations have provided their own explanations about the sources of the conflicts between Korea and its neighbours. In order to understand the sources of the tensions and conflicts between Korea and Japan and between Korea and China, we will look into the images and perceptions the Korean people have towards Japan and China. Realism argues that these ideational elements have no importance in understanding international conflicts, and furthermore states that public perceptions and opinions are likely to be fickle and easily manipulated by political authority and media. Therefore, they cannot be a reliable lens through which to examine international conflicts. The liberal tradition believes that human beings are able to rationally pursue their ends and,

therefore, the preferences of the majority or public opinion can be a useful barometer for understanding international conflict. The constructivist school has criticized both realist and liberal perspectives, arguing that neither power based on material elements nor the exclusive focus on the benefits and costs based on material incentives provides long-term analytical explanations of deep-rooted conflict. The constructivist school emphasizes the causal significance of ideational factors, and urges that social and historical contexts should be considered in understanding international conflict. Through these distinctive historical and social experiences, states have shaped differing identities and the clash or convergence of those cognitive factors can influence their choices in the international arena.

The constructivist school claims that a security community requires its members to “possess compatible core values, mutual identity and loyalty and a sense of we-ness . . . and are integrated to the point that they entertain dependable expectations of peaceful changes” (Deutsch et al., 1957: pp. 5–6). Although Deutsch did not clearly distinguish between bilateral and multilateral contexts when he proposed the concept of a security community, his followers have not only strongly advocated multilateral approaches but also hold much more ambitious expectations about multilateralism.

Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett argue that, in the process of achieving security cooperation to reach a security community, “the compatibility of core values and a collective identity are necessary . . . and the values and identities are not static but are susceptible to change . . . Therefore, many of the same social processes that encourage and serve to reproduce the security community are also associated with its decline. Most important, of course, is the loss of mutual trust” (1998: p. 58). In this sense, trust is a critical barometer for the creation and sustainability of a security community. This school presents the concept of trust based on a non-strategic dimension and therefore beyond structural constraint and calculated interest. According to this view, “trust and identity are reciprocal and reinforcing” (Adler and Barnett, 1998: p. 45). That is, the elements of collective identity such as shared values, expectations and experiences can also be sources of trust. In other words, trust can be built through the “positive” appreciation of certain qualities and behaviours of member states.

This constructivist school further expands its scope of study by encompassing emotion. It argues that emotion matters in all spheres and levels of

relationships and that cognition and emotion cannot be distinguished in the mental process because the latter constitutes and strengthens beliefs such as trust, justice and nationalism (Crawford, 2000; Mercer, 2010). In particular, Jonathan Mercer articulates that feelings of warmth and affection can be the basis of trust and it “allows one to go beyond the incentives or evidence and to risk being wrong” (2010: p. 6).

Suggesting a collective security system for a post-Cold War order in Europe, Charles Kupchan and Cliff Kupchan (1991) emphasize that in order to make this system effective, member states need to reach a consensus on the conditions and directions of regional order and peace. As mentioned earlier, regarding the origins of security architecture of the post-World War II era, Christopher Hemmer and Peter Katzenstein (2002) explain that a higher level of shared identity helped United States foreign policy makers to form a multilateral institution in Europe, whereas the lack of shared identity prevented such a multilateral arrangement in Asia. This, in turn, meant that the United States chose bilateral arrangements instead. We are arguing that a lack of shared identity results in tensions and conflicts continuing and security cooperation being challenged in Northeast Asia.

According to elite survey results from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, about 81% of the respondents support the concept of an “East Asia Community” and agree that its goals should be “promoting confidence and mutual understanding” and “preventing interstate conflict” (Gill et al., 2009: pp. 8–9). At the same time, however, the majority of respondents answered that their country should rely far more on military self-sufficiency or alliances than multilateral regimes to prevent future attacks (Gill et al., 2009: p. 13). These results show that although individual states pursue regional peace and cooperation for the future, they do not yet trust each other as true security partners. This distrust among East Asian countries can best be explained by the historical memories of bitter experience about each other rather than structural or material elements. In particular, the colonial experience of imperial Japan in the twentieth century has remained prominent in the national memories and public mind of East Asian countries. Further, the effect of the collective memory of the colonial experience has been exacerbated, as political leaders have exploited it for their own political gains.

Interstate perceptions or images of each other may not be by themselves the direct causes of interstate conflict. They do, however, help each state to interpret the situation in a certain way and therefore can explain

the behaviour of one state towards another and the choices they are likely to make. Most of the current conflicts among the three countries in Northeast Asia are significantly associated with ideational features such as identity, self-esteem, historical memories and so on. The perceptions and images these states have about others as well as about themselves in this region are very complex and often bitter. This situation partly explains why Northeast Asian countries have not been able to form a security regime and tensions and conflicts have continued.

Due to the development of research technology and the mass media, the impact of the public's identity and perception on foreign policy has been an important research subject and its findings have provided significant implications for state foreign policy. Korea is a case that largely conforms to what is described here; most of its recent conflicts with Japan and China are related to historical memories and identity issues. This implies that the future of this region depends on the level of congruence or compatibility of ideational elements as much as the convergence of interests. In the following section we examine how the Korean public perceives itself and what kinds of images it has developed about the two neighbouring countries, Japan and China.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF KOREAN IDENTITY AND CONTEMPORARY KOREAN IMAGES OF SELF

Korea has had a challenging history due to its unique geopolitical position and internal political changes. Korea has frequently been invaded by neighbouring countries, primarily China and Japan. In particular, during the Japanese colonial period of the early twentieth century, Koreans were even forced to assimilate into Japanese imperial culture. The historical memories of these invasions and colonial experiences, in conjunction with state policy, significantly affected the development of Korean identity resulting in both strong nationalism and, simultaneously, a feeling of victimization.

The first Republic of Korea government emphasized anti-communist ideology in the face of the North Korean threat and at the same time reinforced anti-Japanese sentiments. President Rhee boosted anti-Japanese feeling by saying that Korean people were worried more about Japan than about the Soviet Union because Japanese policies were designed to revive their old colonial ideas (Lee and Sato, 1982: p. 26).

He also said during the Korean War that he would not ask the Japanese for support even if South Korea were defeated by North Korea. The military government that followed continued to promote anti-communism and nationalism to legitimize its position and mobilize the public. In this process a specific type of Korean identity was developed. For example, General Yi Sunsin, who fought hard and defeated Japan in the late sixteenth century, was invoked by the government as an ideal Korean patriot, and subsequently was recognized as such (So, Kim and Lee, 2012).

While the national identity of Koreans was crafted and propagated by state policy under the authoritarian regime, democratization in Korea in the late 1980s not only changed this pattern but also fostered a new feature of their identity; successful economic development and democratization strongly boosted the pride of the Korean people. Political leaders also had to compete for popular legitimacy by appealing to bottom-up national identity. Koreans began to perceive that South Korea and North Korea shared an ethnic national community despite the division on the Korean Peninsula. Due to the spread of this ethnic nationalism, South Korea leaned towards engagement with North Korea, which strained the ROK/US alliance in the early 2000s (Steinberg, 2005). On the other hand, the national identity that each government had promoted in the post-colonial context further ingrained anti-Japanese sentiment in the minds of Koreans and was maintained as a representation of Korean national identity. Political leaders, therefore, have often taken advantage of this anti-Japanese sentiment to gain political support from the Korean public (Park, 2010).

With respect to the Korean perception of China, in the context of the Cold War, China joined the Korean War to help North Korea, which resulted in South Korea perceiving China as an enemy in the communist bloc. As the Cold War came to a close, South Korea started to develop a new relationship with China by establishing diplomatic relations and increasing economic exchanges. Due to the recent Chinese claim that the ancient Kingdom of Koguryo was a part of the Chinese empire, a large number of South Koreans have begun to view China with renewed suspicion (Gries, 2005). And many Koreans have recently begun to think that China has neither been active in tackling the issue of the North Korean nuclear programme nor in supporting unification of the Korean Peninsula, much like Japan.

More recently, due to rapid globalization, Koreans are more exposed to universal norms and values. At the same time, increasing polarization of political perspectives and economic wealth has appeared as a serious barrier

against the integration of Korean society. Military incidents provoked by North Korea combined with conservative government policies have influenced Koreans' perceptions about North-South Korean relations.

Based on this historical experience and changing social environment, Koreans have developed a unique identity and distinctive perceptions about themselves. Recent surveys demonstrate that, first, Koreans increasingly define themselves not by bloodline, but official nationality (citizenship). Further, 79.5% of the respondents answered that South Korea is the only legitimate government on the Korean Peninsula compared to 68% in 2010. With respect to North Korea, despite the fact that respondents were more likely to view it as part of "us," a "brother," or "neighbour" than as the "other" or "enemy," unfavourable attitudes toward North Korea have increased over the last ten years. With respect to the issue of unification, while 16.3% of respondents expressed the importance of speedy unification, 12.5% suggested that unification was not necessary, with the majority expressing a prudent approach to unification. (EAI, 2014)

According to a 2013 survey about national pride, despite complex historical experiences and new challenges, 92% of respondents answered that they were proud to be Korean, and this trend has significantly increased since 2000, as shown in Fig. 6.1. This survey also shows that although high levels of national pride are associated with economic achievement, the majority of Koreans are not proud of current levels of welfare, their international status or national security. More than 70% of Koreans expressed concerns about

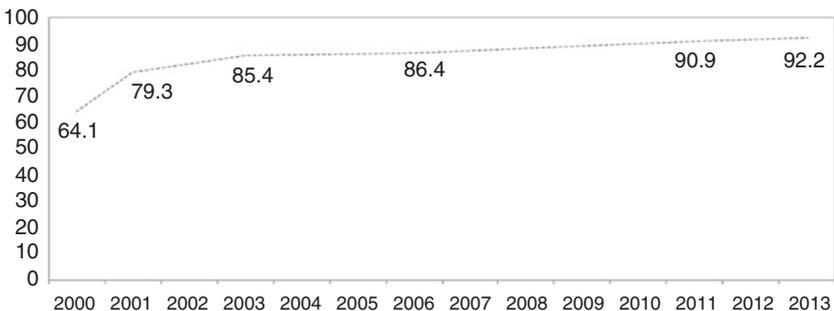


Fig. 6.1 Change in the pride of Koreans

Source: EAI (2013: p. 5)

national security and 52% of the respondents think that the military capability of North Korea is stronger than that of South Korea, especially if the US forces are excluded from the count. Concerns about their national security as well as military capability led the majority of Koreans (66%) to want to strengthen the military alliance with the United States, opposing the withdrawal or reduction of US Forces in Korea. On the other hand, although Koreans prefer the Six Party Talks (51.3%) to economic sanctions (28%) or military options (7.6%) to solve the North Korean nuclear issue, 73% of respondents answered that Korea should develop its own nuclear weapon in the face of the nuclearized North Korea (EAI, 2013). This survey shows that the Korean public is not consistent in their preferences for security goals and strategies. Koreans want to maintain a military alliance with the United States and acquire their own nuclear weapons.

Although Koreans are proud of the economic development, they are at present pessimistic about their own economic situation. Almost 60% of the respondents felt relatively deprived in relation to the middle class as compared to 35% in 2010 (EAI, 2010). More recently, 87.9% of respondents were concerned that the unequal distribution of income was serious and a major source of conflict in Korean society. They also pointed out that the government should address this economic inequality (EAI, 2015). Regarding the current and future situation of Korea, only 28% of the respondents answer that they were satisfied with the way things are going in Korea and 70% of the respondents think that their economic situation will not improve in the short term future (Pew, 2014).

HOW DO KOREANS PERCEIVE JAPAN?

Since the normalization of relations in 1965, South Korea and Japan have dramatically increased their trade volumes and deepened their economic interdependence. In the 1990s, Korea opened and expanded its cultural market with Japan. The overall perception of Koreans towards Japan has been very negative: Whereas only 12.2%, 17.5%, 15.7% and 21.3% of Korean respondents expressed a favourable image towards Japan, 76.6%, 70.9%, 72.5% and 61.0% expressed negative views about Japan from 2013 to 2016 (Genron NPO and EAI, 2016). As shown in Fig. 6.2, compared to neighbouring countries, Koreans have recently even identified Japan as the least favourable country followed by North Korea, which had long been viewed as least favourable (Asan, 2015).

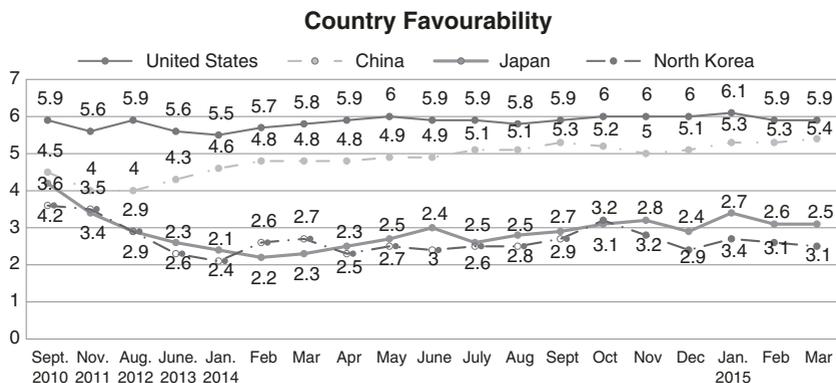


Fig. 6.2 Favourable opinions of Koreans towards neighbours

Source: Asan Institute (2015: p. 8)

Koreans point to historical and territorial issues as the most important sources of their negative perceptions. Their negative images about Japan are associated with the lack of apology about the colonial period (76.3%), the Dok-Do Islands dispute (70.1%) and inappropriate statements by politicians (14.6%).² Almost 95% of Koreans received information about Japan or Korea-Japan relations from the mass media, but 58.9% responded that media reports are not objective or impartial and contribute to their negative perceptions (Genron NPO and EAI, 2016).

With respect to the current situation and future direction of relations, the majority of Koreans think that the relationship between their two countries is currently bitter (62.3%) and that it will worsen or not improve in the future (70.6%). However, 86.9% of Korean respondents considered Japan to be important to their country and hope that the relationship can be improved (Genron NPO and EAI, 2016). Furthermore, there is a view that as China rises, security cooperation with Japan is necessary (Asan, 2014a). Regarding ways of improving the relationship, 42.8% of the Korean respondents think that without solving the historical issues it will be difficult, but 32.9% of them answer that if the relationship improves, the historical issues will gradually be resolved (Genron NPO and EAI, 2016). Although Koreans are concerned about the current relationship with Japan and consider Japan as a potential security partner, Koreans perceive that

Japan is the least favourable among their neighbours and historical and territorial issues are at the centre of their negative perception and image of Japan.

HOW DO KOREANS PERCEIVE CHINA?

Although Koreans have more favourable perceptions of China than they do of Japan, they have expressed a complicated position towards China.³ First, Koreans think that, compared to Japan, China is more important to Korea and, therefore, they have more friendly feelings towards China. In relation to conflict between China and Japan, although the majority of Koreans (79%) believe that Korea should take a neutral position, 18% prefer to side with China compared to 3% who would prefer to side with Japan (EAI, 2013). Figure 6.2 confirms this pattern by showing that China records a consistently higher score than Japan in the favourable opinion of Koreans towards their neighbouring countries (Asan, 2015).

Second, despite considering China an important economic partner, the Korean public distrusts China. Of those surveyed, 66% support the Free Trade Agreement between Korea and China and 49% believe it will benefit both countries, although of the two they think it will benefit China more than Korea (Asan, 2014b). Furthermore, the majority of Koreans believe that China is the most important economic partner for their country (Asan, 2015). Despite its economic importance, Koreans distrust China and do not consider it a potential security partner. According to the same survey, 59% of Koreans prefer Korea-Japan-US security cooperation while only 27% support security cooperation with China (Asan, 2014b). The Korean public also thinks that China will take sides with North Korea in the case of a military clash between the two Koreas. Furthermore, if North Korea were to collapse, more than 50% of Koreans express a positive position about a US intervention while only 13% express a positive opinion about a Chinese intervention (EAI, 2013). These survey results show that although Koreans think China is an important economic partner, they do not trust China on the security issues of the Korean Peninsula.

Third, while Koreans' favourable perception towards the United States has increased, perceptions towards China have declined over the last ten years. In the 2013 survey, the difference in the favourable perceptions that Koreans have of the United States and China increased: the United States earned 71 points and China earned 53 points (EAI, 2013). The 2014 survey by the Pew Foundation Global Attitude Project Survey also shows a

similar trend: 66% of Koreans expressed a favourable opinion of China in 2002, but that dropped to 38% in 2010. However, since then, Koreans' perception towards China and the Chinese leadership started to improve to 56% and 57% in 2014. Still, the substantive difference in the view between Koreans of China and the United States (82%) has persisted (Pew, 2014). In the case of conflict between the United States and China, although 50% prefer a neutral position, 46% think that Korea should side with the United States while only 3% wish to support China (EAI, 2013). Furthermore, if the competition between the United States and China continues, 58.7% of Korean respondents think that Korea should strengthen ties with the United States and 30.5% with China (Asan, 2015). According to the surveys about Korea's relations with the United States and China, Koreans consistently have a more positive perception towards the United States and consider the United States to be a more reliable partner despite the fact that the majority of Koreans expressed that Korea should not become involved in conflict between the United States and China.

Fourth, for the questions regarding the change in power distribution and international leadership, Koreans who responded that the United States is the leading economic power decreased from 80% in 2009 to 60% in 2014. In this survey, 42% of Koreans think that China will eventually replace the United States as the leading economic power (Pew, 2014). With respect to the international influence of these two powers, negative opinions surpass positive ones for both nations, although the influence of the United States is considered slightly more positive. Among those who responded, 35% do not agree with the statement that both powers exert positive power while 23% agree (EAI, 2008: p. 23). We earlier mentioned that leadership is critical in achieving security cooperation or creating a security community. From the viewpoint of the Korean public, neither China nor the United States is viewed positively as a world leader.

INTRACTABLE CONFLICT BETWEEN KOREA AND JAPAN

South Korea and Japan are geographically close but perceptually distant. Due to their historical and emotional relationship, Korean-Japanese relations have continuously suffered from mutual distrust and friction. Following World War II, the United States has been a bridge linking the two countries and has tried to ease the tensions and to push the two

nations to normalize their relations after 1965. Because of strong US commitments to East Asia during the Cold War, South Korea and Japan could sustain security links with the United States, but they have never formed a bilateral security alliance. Rather, they have shared common security perspectives with the United States rather than with each other, though they share common military and political threats from the Soviet Union, China and North Korea. Both South Korea and Japan have related to each other largely through the United States (Duffield, 2001; Ahn, 1983: pp. 137–138). Such an unstable relationship has been reproduced from generation to generation and certainly negatively affects their relationships with each other (Hwang, 2003).

From ancient times, the Korean Peninsula has played the role of a buffer between China and Japan. Japan often invaded the Korean peninsula with the ambition of conquering China, but always failed. From the late nineteenth century to the end of World War II, however, the Korean Peninsula was under Japanese influence and from 1910 to 1945, the Korean Peninsula was a Japanese colony. It was, indeed, during this colonial period that the Japanese Empire enacted a number of severe colonial policies. Japanese imperial rule on the Korean Peninsula ruthlessly suppressed the Korean people and their national identity in terms of language, culture and religion (Lee, 1985: Ch. 1). In particular, during World War II, more than one million Koreans were forced to work in Japanese mines and military bases in order to support the Japanese war effort. Many young Korean women were labelled “comfort women,” and forcibly brought to battlefields to serve Japanese soldiers as sex slaves.

After World War II, South Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule and regained independence, but the historical legacy did not disappear. For example, it was not until 1965, twenty years after Japanese rule ended, that South Korea and Japan were able to realize diplomatic normalization. Even after normalization, however, neither the Koreans nor the Japanese viewed each other with any affection because of the negative heritage of the colonial history. Indeed, not only did older Korean people still remember the suffering they experienced under Japanese colonial rule, but younger generations also learned about it through the media and history education. This historical antagonism towards Japan has become deeply embedded in the Korean people and society and become a primary part of Korean self-identity and nationalism (Cha, 1999: p. 20).

While deep-seated historical antagonism has been the primary cause of friction between the two countries, it could be eased and a new

cooperative relationship built. Historical antagonism, however, has not disappeared due to the continuous influence of colonial history. East Asian nations often compare Japanese imperialism during the first half of the last century with that of Nazi Germany, and criticize the Japanese failure to accept its responsibility for World War II and harsh colonial rule. The Japanese response, however, has been completely different from that of post-war Germany, which has openly accepted responsibility and apologized for its wartime behaviour (Christensen, 1999: pp. 53–54; Kristof, 1998). However, the Japanese do not like to be compared to Germany. South Korean and Japanese impressions of each other have been dominated by negative images. South Koreans tend to focus on Japanese colonial rule and continue to see Japanese people as untrustworthy and unrepentant, while the Japanese see the Koreans as overly emotional and inferior (Cha, 1999: p. 21; Bridges, 1993: p. 23). As a result, Korean and Japanese people view each other very ambivalently. The Korean perception of the Japanese has steadily deteriorated as a result of these continuing tensions over colonial history and its legacy. South Korean people claim that the refusal of the Japanese to admit to its colonial behaviour reflects a lack of repentance for aggression and the desire to pursue only economic interests. Conversely, by emphasizing the emotional outbursts of Koreans, the Japanese complain that Koreans always attempt to use Japanese colonialism to win economic concessions.

It is also true that these negative images partly result from mutual indifference and ignorance. Indeed, most Japanese do not try to understand the feelings of Koreans and are insensitive to them. Equally, the levels of Korean knowledge of Japan and the desire to understand Japan are also very low. The current South Korean antagonism, however, has resulted from the perception gap of colonial history and its legacy rather than from mutual indifference. The perception gap has been widening as a result of a series of disputes over bilateral issues, many of which reflect the colonial legacy. Such intrinsic historical antagonism has been invoked repeatedly whenever bilateral issues regarding the colonial history rise to the surface.

One of the main sources of friction has been the revision of history textbooks by the Japanese Education Ministry, which describe Japanese colonial rule and aggression in an uncritical fashion (Saburo, 1993/1994). Since the early 1980s, Japan has been entangled in history textbook disputes with South Korea. The first dispute in 1982 concerned the content of Japanese history textbooks, which were officially approved for

use in its secondary schools. East Asian countries such as North and South Korea, China and Taiwan accused the Japanese government of avoiding their responsibility for World War II and trying to soften the representation of its brutal behaviour to the younger generation (Sanger, 1992). Particularly in South Korea, public outrage over the Japanese Education Ministry's revision in 1982 led to the South Korean government's formal protest and even the suspension of bilateral loan negotiations in progress at the time (Kim, 1987). Such extreme sensitivity over history textbook content reveals the depth of old wounds and the extent to which they still remain unhealed in East Asia (Friedberg, 1993: p. 11). The South Koreans think that the disputes over Japanese history textbooks demonstrate very clearly the Japanese efforts to avoid responsibility for its colonial misdeeds (Longman, 2002). The history textbooks certainly intensified contemporary Korean concerns about Japanese motivations and intentions because the distorted narrative they presented greatly affected Japanese youth: those young people who were educated with these textbooks were led to misunderstand Japan's history and to insensitivity regarding the fear of Japan held by neighbouring countries (Christensen, 1999: pp. 52–53). Thus, the history textbook issue has been and will continue to be a main source of friction between the two countries and will negatively affect the bilateral relationship.

Japanese leaders' remarks attempting to justify the Japanese occupation and colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula is a second source of friction that has fuelled Korean outrage. Although Koreans have regularly sought apologies from Japan, Japanese government officials continue to articulate nationalistic remarks, which seem to justify Japanese colonial rule and wartime behaviour. Nationalist remarks by various Japanese cabinet officials have always elicited negative public reactions and government protests from South Korea causing the Korean-Japanese relationship to deteriorate (Cha, 1999: pp. 21–22). The regular visits made by Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine, a traditional centre of Japanese militarism commemorating Japan's war dead including war criminals such as wartime Prime Minister Tojo Hideki are also disturbing to Korea. When Japanese leaders such as Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have visited the Yasukuni Shrine, South Korea has protested and argued that their visits suggest a revival of militarism and Japanese imperialism. Despite these protests, the visits have continued. Although the aversion to Japan sprang largely from its brutal colonial rule, it has been reinforced by insensitive Japanese remarks and the veneration of war

criminals. An additional impediment to reconciliation is the Japanese government's involvement in the conscription of Korean "comfort women." These women were forcibly drafted into sexual service for Japanese troops during World War II. The Japanese government is reluctant to officially admit their culpability in the wartime enslavement of Korean women, just as they are in regard to other historical issues, for fear that they may be entangled in another dispute, be criticized for the serious violations of human rights, and be forced to pay compensation. Nevertheless, this issue has already served to increase tensions between South Korea and Japan.

In summary, deep-seated historical antagonism based on the events of colonial history and repeated disputes over this historical legacy has strongly affected the policy-making of both countries (Hwang, 2003). This historical antagonism has resulted in bias and distrust among government officials and the general public, and this has undoubtedly had a negative effect on bilateral relations.

Due to this historical antagonism, the South Koreans do not trust Japanese foreign policy towards the Korean Peninsula and are not certain whether Japan sincerely supports Korean unification. The South Koreans are somewhat concerned about how Japan will respond to potential unification on the Korean Peninsula, be it a German-style early unification or a long-term gradual unification by agreement between the two Koreas.

The Korean Peninsula is surrounded by four great powers: the United States, China, Japan and Russia. South Koreans perceive that these four neighbouring powers are critical of unification, but no major power seems to give strong support to Korean unification due to the serious conflict of interest among them (Hwang, 2014: pp. 63–68). In particular, the Koreans believe that Japan has a status quo strategy in this region much as China does. Even when the United States chooses to support unification on the Korean peninsula, the Koreans think that Japan is less likely to support it due to its historical legacy. Japan is likely to reject early unification because of the destabilizing factors in Northeast Asia that unification may cause. Furthermore, many Koreans believe that the Japanese are concerned about the possibility that a unified Korea may move closer to China and tilt against Japan. Even if a unified Korea were closer to the Chinese while maintaining an alliance with the United States, the Japanese may feel uncomfortable and see a serious strategic challenge, given the intractable conflicts that exist. Moreover, a unified Korea

may emerge as a rival against Japan given the past history between two countries. In this sense, the Koreans believe that the Japanese prefer the status quo to unification on the Korean Peninsula.

INTRACTABLE CONFLICT BETWEEN KOREA AND CHINA

Korea's intractable conflicts with China are mostly centred on North Korea and Korean unification. Korea and China are now interdependent both diplomatically and economically, but because of North Korean and Korean unification issues, Koreans have ambivalent and complex feelings of friendship and hostility towards China. First of all, South Koreans feel uncomfortable with China's policy towards North Korea, which is seen to be unhelpful for South Korea's security. North Korea and China sustain a valid alliance treaty, which the two nations concluded in July 1961. It may be unreasonable for the South Korean people to expect China to put strong pressure on North Korea and force it to give up its nuclear weapons programme and dictatorship given the alliance. This relationship echoes a classic case of entrapment and abandonment (Snyder, 1984). In an asymmetric alliance between China and North Korea, one may seek not to be entrapped by the other, while the latter will make every effort not to be abandoned by the former.

Most scholars predict that China's policy towards North Korea will not change under the Xi Jinping government. After its third nuclear test in February 2013, China began to warn more strongly than before of North Korea's provocations. North Korea's fourth nuclear test in January 2016 pushed China to impose much harsher sanctions. However, North Korea is still regarded as a strategic asset to China as well as a burden in Northeast Asia. Because of this duality China does not make use of its political and economic leverage on North Korea in the way the United States and South Korea might hope, fearing the possibility that the North Korean regime may be destabilized or even collapse. While China does not want North Korea-China relations to be seen as overly close, nor does it wish to see the North Korean regime become suddenly destabilized, because such a destabilization would seriously harm Chinese interests in Northeast Asia. So, China appears to seek a status quo strategy that helps North Korea sustain its regime and hopes to persuade it to denuclearize in the future. Thus, the Koreans are less likely to trust the Chinese although Korea needs to cooperate with China.

Table 6.1 North Korea's trade with South Korea (million US dollars)

<i>Year</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
Exports	765	932	934	1,044	914	1,074	615	1,206
Imports	1,032	888	745	868	800	897	521	1,136
Total	1,798	1,820	1,679	1,912	1,714	1,971	1,136	2,342

Source: Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea

Table 6.2 North Korea's trade with China (million US dollars)

<i>Year</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
Exports	581	754	1,887	1,187	2,464	2,485	2,914	2,841
Imports	1,392	2,033	793	2,277	3,165	3,528	3,633	4,023
Total	1,973	2,787	2,680	3,465	5,629	6,012	6,547	6,864

Source: Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA)

South Korea has always believed that China is the only nation that has the political and economic leverage on North Korea to persuade it to give up its nuclear weapons programme and change its course of action. This is a well-founded belief in that North Korea's trade with China was more than 6.8 billion US dollars in 2014, which was almost three times North Korea's trade with South Korea. [Table 6.1](#) indicates that North Korea's economic dependence on South Korea has recently been decreasing. While North Korea's trade with South Korea has been fluctuating, it has stagnated overall since 2008. It increased greatly in 2014 mainly due to the Kaesong Industrial Complex, but the complex has been shut down since February 2016 due to North Korea's fourth nuclear test. These data clearly indicate that North Korea is now economically less dependent on South Korea than before, which implies that South Korea's economic influence on North Korea is weakening. Conversely, [Table 6.2](#) shows that North Korea's economic dependence on China is growing quickly. North Korea's trade with China has more than doubled over the last five years, and is likely to continue to increase. In reality, North Korea has recently made up for the decrement from South Korea with an increment from China. North Korea is thus now economically much more dependent on China than on South Korea, which will lead to a difference in economic influence on North Korea.

This perception is also shared by top US government officials such as Secretary of State John Kerry, who mentioned in a hearing of the US House of Representatives in April 2013 that only China can pressure North Korea to change its course of action, especially regarding the nuclear weapons programme. Many South Koreans believe that China has the capability, but not the will, to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. This is why the United States and South Korea are seriously interested in how the Chinese government uses its energy and food supply when it deals with the North Korean issue. In this sense, most South Korean people disagree with China's foreign policy towards North Korea. They believe that China is able to either enforce or persuade the North to give up its nuclear weapons programme but chooses not to do so.

Moreover, some South Koreans are concerned about the possibility that a rising China gives the South a strategic challenge in dealing with North Korea. Global and East Asian power relations are now driven by China's economic, military, and diplomatic rise and America's decline (Martin, 2009; Ross and Zhu, 2008; Layne, 2012). While US-China relations represent a set of the most important variables in world politics, the importance of China's rise is much greater in the East Asian regional order. The Korean Peninsula, of course, cannot escape from the influence of its strong neighbours (Hwang, 2013). In this vein, the Koreans welcome the rise of China in the economic sphere, but are very concerned about its rise in the strategic sphere, especially with regard to North Korea. In reality, China's rise has presented South Korea with a complex and difficult challenge in dealing with North Korea, although China still appears to show its peaceful intention and behaviour as a status quo power (Johnston, 2013). Most of all, South Korea's approach towards North Korea has so far been based on a post-Cold War regional security framework, given that North Korea cannot depend on its two Cold War patrons, the Soviet Union and China, as much as it did during the Cold War. It is isolated and surrounded by an unfavourable security environment (Oberdorfer, 2001). The South Korean government has so far made good use of its favourable security environment and pursued a strong and determined policy towards North Korea. As a result of the rise of China and changes in Chinese-North Korean relations, the North Korean problem can no longer be seen from the post-Cold War framework of the 1990s. North Korea is now a nation strongly dependent on and supported by a rising China (Snyder, 2009: Ch. 4). What embarrasses South Korea most is that as North Korea's dependence on China increases, its

dependence on South Korea decreases (Hwang, 2013: pp. 81–84). In this sense, South Korea may be faced with a situation where China will have stronger leverage over the South in dealing with North Korea, a situation with which the South Korean people feel intensely uncomfortable. In this sense, Koreans feel that China is not only an economic partner but also a strategic burden, making the Chinese a difficult party with which to negotiate.

Second, as is the case with Japan, South Koreans believe that China does not support Korean unification (Hwang, 2014). It appears that China would not support unification as long as the Korea-US alliance is strongly maintained. China may act as a veto power in this case. Although the Soviet Union finally agreed to German unification due to its own domestic troubles, China is in a completely different situation. China is gaining political strength and will behave according to its strategic interest in the region rather than be persuaded by other powers. In this sense, China appears to prefer the status quo in Northeast Asia rather than a sudden change in the regional environment (Johnston, 2013). Moreover, China's situation is good: it is rapidly increasing both its economic and military might, and so there is no reason to believe that it would like to see any sudden changes in the region which might alter the environment which has led to this success. Instead, China is more likely to choose the status quo with the current North Korean regime rather than the unpredictable situation that Korean unification may generate. Chinese leaders perceive that Korean unification would not be very helpful for its strategic and national interest. The Koreans know that Korea needs China's support for unification but also know that China does not want unification.

China is now rising and building its own sphere of influence. China does not want a major military conflict with the United States, but it is strengthening its military power in East Asia and pushing the United States out of the region (Office of the Secretary of Defence, 2013). Because such a situation will become ever more serious as Chinese power grows, there is increasing concern that US-China relations may produce crisis-level instability in the future (Goldstein, 2013). Under such a situation, with the Korea-US alliance still in effect, there is no possibility that China will accept early Korean unification. This is why the South Koreans welcome the rise of China economically but do not feel comfortable with the rise of China strategically. The Koreans have ambivalent and complex feelings about China, and this is why Korea's intractable conflicts with China continue.

CONCLUSION: IDENTITY AND PERCEPTION AS INTERVENING VARIABLES

In order to understand the intensity and direction of conflicts between Korea and Japan and between Korea and China, we first reviewed the theoretical importance of ideational factors and investigated how people who are either directly or indirectly involved in the conflicts have perceived others as well as themselves. This approach articulates that role of the sense of “we-ness,” the sharing of core values, the convergence of expectations, as well as emotion in achieving security cooperation and creating a security community. Then, we applied those theories and actual public perceptions to Korea’s conflicting relations with Japan and China.

According to our investigation, while Koreans have developed a complex identity based on historical experience, they have recently become extremely proud of themselves and their achievements. With respect to Japan and China, Koreans think that both North and South Korea are important. Koreans consider China an important economic partner and Japan as a potential security partner as China rises. However, Koreans have an unfavourable or at best complicated perception towards these two neighbours. Koreans do not like or trust either Japan or China. In the case of Japan, Koreans have expressed the least favourability towards Japan among their neighbours; and recent territorial and historical issues are severely aggravating their negative feelings. In the case of China, Koreans do not trust China on security issues related to the Korean Peninsula or for international leadership.

According to our analysis, these negative perceptions and images held by Koreans towards Japan and China have actually made it more difficult to disentangle complicated relations and have exacerbated ongoing tensions and conflicts. To make things worse, the political leaders of each country have often exploited the negative memories and sentiments about each other for their own political interests. If these negative elements continue or do not improve in the near future, the three countries are unlikely to cooperate despite their convergence of interests. This does not augur well for the future of stable peace in Northeast Asia.

NOTES

1. Please see <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/characteristics-ic>.
2. The survey asks respondents to choose two answers for these questions.

3. Moon and Li (2010) show that reactive nationalism is involved in the negative perceptions of Koreans toward Japan and China and the interplay of issue, leadership and public opinion together has contributed to the different responses of Koreans to their bilateral relations with Japan and China.

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Historical Memory and Northeast Asian Regional Politics: from a Chinese Perspective

Xiaoming Zhang

Northeast Asia is a very special region in the world. On the one hand, China, Japan, the two Koreas and Mongolia are very closely linked through geographical proximity, economic complementarity, interdependence and cultural ties. On the other hand, the mistrust between or among the Northeast Asian countries has been so deep and long-lasting that the region has so far resisted regional integration, although the leaders of China, South Korea (ROK) and Japan since 2008 have been making tentative efforts to promote trilateral cooperation by hosting annual summits, establishing the China-Korea-Japan Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (based in Seoul, ROK) and negotiating a China-Korea-Japan Free Trade Agreement. Political mistrust, military conflicts, bilateral alliances and balance of power politics, all characterize the prevailing reality and influence rules of conduct in the region's international relations. In the context of China's rise, power politics (such as the strengthening of the United States-led military alliances in the region) have definitely played a critical role in Northeast Asian regional politics.

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Among other factors are the North Korean nuclear issue, and territorial disputes between China and Japan and between South Korea and Japan.

This chapter focuses on the negative impact of historical memory on the development of international relations in Northeast Asia in the early twenty-first century. Although this is not the most important or critical factor in Northeast Asian regional politics, memory of traumatic events has had an influence on politics and identity in this region and has functioned as a barrier to regional reconciliation and cooperation in Northeast Asia.

HISTORICAL MEMORIES IN CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES IN NORTHEAST ASIA

The long history of China's interactions with its neighbours, especially with Japan and the countries on the Korean Peninsula, has been basically negative. The remembered or imagined past figures prominently in all the current bilateral relations. After these countries entered the community of sovereign states, and especially since the end of World War II, interpreting the past has played an important role in all Northeast Asian nation-building processes. This practice of consolidating and treating memories as social facts has heavily influenced international relations in Northeast Asia. Divergent historical memories have the potential to disrupt China's bilateral relations with its Northeast Asian neighbouring countries, and within the region as a whole.

The disputes between China and its Northeast Asian neighbours in the post-Cold War era, especially in the early twenty-first century, provide solid evidence of the negative impact of historical memories on China's relations with its neighbours in Northeast Asian regional politics. Yoichi Funabashi, the chief diplomatic correspondent of the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*, wrote the following: "It appears that history, which used to play a supportive role, has become the leading player on the East Asian international political scene where the past is more unpredictable than the future" (Funabashi, 2005). Choi Woon-do, a research fellow at the Northeast Asian History Foundation in Seoul, South Korea, pointed out:

The world is now witnessing the advent of the Asian era, after going through the era of the Atlantic and then that of the Pacific. Korea, China and Japan will be at the center of cooperation and conflicts in this new era. The future of Asia will depend on whether the three nations move toward cooperation or not, under a trilateral regional framework or on a bilateral basis. Collaboration between the three is totally dependent on how they realize reconciliation over history. (Choi, 2011)

He further argued that “Reconciliation is indispensable in reducing uncertainties and moving toward cooperation and harmony in Asia. What East Asia needs most is political leadership that will revive the Joint History Research Committee, not reconfirm conflicts but initiate reconciliation” (Ibid.).

There are widely divergent memories of historical issues such as the Korean War, Sino-Japanese wars and the China-centred tributary system, which have had an impact on Northeast Asian regional politics. Memories of the Korean War (1950–1953) in which China, the two Koreas, the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan and other countries were involved directly or indirectly, have always played an important role in Northeast Asian regional politics. They have been especially influential in the bilateral relations between North and South Korea, between North Korea and the United States, between China and the two Koreas, and between China and the United States (Oberdorfer, 2001; Chang, 1990). For instance, current mutual mistrust between the two Koreas, and between North Korea and the United States, is heavily influenced by their conflicting memories of North Korea’s bloody and unforgettable war with South Korea and its ally the United States. Such traumatic memories are reinforced by the existence of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and the US troops stationed in the Republic of Korea. The origins of the North Korean nuclear threat, which has jeopardized Northeast Asian regional peace and stability since the early 1990s, can be traced to experiences during the Korean War. The North Korean leadership decided to develop nuclear weapons after the armistice of the Korean War. This is likely to have been a direct reaction to the threats of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations to use nuclear bombs against the Chinese and North Korean troops on the Korean Peninsula. The Chinese and North Korean leaders were so incensed by the American nuclear threats that they decided to make their own nuclear bombs (Zhang, 2006: pp. 129–138; Zhang, 2007: pp. 53–61).

The painful memory of the Korean War has had a great impact on China’s bilateral relations with the two Koreas, especially with South Korea, until the time of the normalization of bilateral relations between Beijing and Seoul in 1992. Since then, the negative effect of past memories of the Korean War on China-ROK relations has considerably reduced. Because of this, it is not fruitful now to focus on the Korean War. Instead, using Chinese references and taking a Chinese perspective, this analysis will concentrate on the negative impacts of the Sino-Japanese

wars and the China-centred East Asian tributary system. These two aspects are not only historical: they also affect the psychological, cultural and political domains.

SINO-JAPANESE WARS

The problematic history between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Japan has coloured their relationship over the past several decades (Cheung, 2010). Much of this derives from the historical memories and narratives of the Sino-Japanese wars of the late nineteenth century, and in the 1930s and 1940s. These have proved to be the most thorny historical memory issues in the Sino-Japanese relationship, and have had a negative impact on bilateral relations and on East Asian regional cooperation as a whole.

From the Chinese perspective, after the Meiji Restoration, Japan soon joined Western colonial powers in posing a challenge to the defunct China-centred East Asian regional order (the tributary system) and the security of China itself. The Korean Peninsula became an “invasion corridor,” once Japan, strengthened by the Meiji Restoration, opened the “Hermit Kingdom” by force in 1876. Japan annexed the Ryukyu Islands, a tributary state of China, in the late 1870s, and claimed sovereignty over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands shortly after the annexation. The Sino-Japanese rivalry over the Korean Peninsula developed into a war during 1894 and 1895. Japan defeated China and forced it to recognize “the full and complete independence and autonomy” of Korea. The war had inflicted much human suffering and humiliation on China and resulted in its substantially diminishing influence on the peninsula for more than half a century (Lee, 1996: p. 3). In January 1895, just before the end of the war, Japan formally claimed the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands as a part of its territory. The current Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute reminds the Chinese people of the 1894–1895 Sino-Japanese War, as those uninhabited and rocky islets are perfect symbols of the memory wars (Kim, 2012). On 18 October 2012, then Japanese Foreign Minister, Koichiro Gamba, told the *Financial Times* in London, “I think the Senkaku Islands issue should not be linked with the historical issue” (Michele, 2012). But to the Chinese, the Diaoyu Islands could not be decoupled from the historical issue of Japanese military invasion and territorial expansion in East Asia (Zhang, 2012: p. 30). The Diaoyu/

Senkaku Islands at the centre of the dispute are claimed by both countries, though historically China has the stronger claim (Westad, 2012: p. 417).

The 1931–1945 Sino-Japanese War was a brutal invasion of China by the Japanese militarists, resulting in more atrocities and more severe humiliation to the Chinese than the violence of the previous century. The memory of the more recent war has since played a crucial role in the Chinese perception of Japan. Deng Xiaoping, the late Chinese leader and founding father of Reform and the Open Door Policy, once said, “The harm which Japan inflicted upon China is not able to be measured, only in terms of casualties, tens of millions of Chinese people lost their lives. As a result, Japan is a country which owns most of the historical debt to China” (Deng, 2002: pp. 292–293).

In the 1972 joint communiqué between China and Japan, the end of war was finally announced: China gave up the right for war reparations, the Japanese government expressed its apology for the invasion, and the bilateral diplomatic relationship between Beijing and Tokyo was established. The Chinese people, however, have begun to question the sincerity of the Japanese government’s apology and are concerned about Japanese politicians’ frequent visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. The shrine is a war memorial dedicated to 2.5 million Japanese war dead, including those from World War II. Its most contentious aspect has been the enshrinement of fourteen Japanese Class-A war criminals after 1978. The Yasukuni Shrine is viewed by most Chinese people as a symbol of Japan’s militarism and wartime aggression in Asia (Kang, 2013). During the past few decades, related problematic issues, such as the Nanjing Massacre, the comfort women and the revision of the Japanese history textbooks have repeatedly emerged, disturbing Sino-Japanese relations. The annual visits by the Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, to the Yasukuni Shrine between 2001 and 2006 resulted in large-scale anti-Japan demonstrations in the larger Chinese cities, including Beijing. More disturbing was the visit paid to the shrine by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on 26 December 2013. It was the first visit by a sitting prime minister since Junichiro Koizumi went to mark the end of World War II in 2006. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang issued a strong rebuke in a statement posted on the ministry’s website, and he called the visits to Yasukuni “an effort to glorify the Japanese militaristic history of external invasion and colonial rule . . . and to challenge the outcome of World War II” (Yamaguchi and Wong, 2013). In response to a Japanese proposition

that Prime Minister Abe wished to have summit talks with his Chinese counterpart, the Chinese Foreign Ministry, in a blunt public statement, said that Beijing did not welcome him. This amounted to branding the top Japanese leader as *persona non grata*. Meanwhile, Chinese ambassadors started a public relations war against Japan in countries outside the region by calling the Abe regime an “evil force.” Japanese ambassadors undertook tit-for-tat tactics against the Chinese government. On 27 February 2015 at the bi-monthly session of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPC), the Chinese legislature designated two national days to mark victory in the Anti-Japanese War and to commemorate victims of the Nanjing Massacre: 3 September was set as Victory Day and 13 December as Memorial Day.

The Chinese media has been reporting on the so-called “rightist” tendency in current Japanese politics, especially under the Abe administration. They itemize the following signs of Japanese militarism: the nationalization of the Diaoyu Islands by the Japanese Government in 2010; the conservative Shinzo Abe’s visits to the Yasukuni Shrine shortly before he was elected to be Japanese Prime Minister at the end of 2012; the Japanese Government’s decision to provide non-combat military equipment (including patrol boats) to some Southeast Asian countries which have territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea; the desire of Prime Minister Abe and the Liberal Democratic Party to amend Japan’s pacifist constitution (including the war-renouncing Article 9); Abe’s conservative calls to revoke or change the 1993 Kono Statement of apology for Japan’s wartime use of “comfort women” and his provocative remarks on the definition of invasion (Zheng and Zhang, 2012; Miller and Yokota, 2013). On 12 May 2013, Abe was seen giving a thumbs-up from inside the cockpit of a Self-Defence Forces fighter jet that had the number 731 emblazoned on it. This was seen by some (especially by Chinese and Koreans), as a very insensitive, if not provocative gesture. Japan’s Unit 731, a notorious chemical and biological research unit that conducted medical experiments on living humans during World War II, had been responsible for the deaths of between 3,000 and 12,000 people, mostly Chinese (Park, 2013). The conservative leader’s gesture was interpreted as another sign of Japan’s dangerous regression to its militarist past. On 29 July 2013, Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Taro Aso caused another international stir by urging Japanese politicians bent on revising the Constitution to learn from the way that Nazi Germany had amended the Weimar charter: “[The

Nazis] did it in a ‘let’s-keep-it-quiet’ manner, and the Weimar Constitution was changed before most people realized it. Why don’t we learn from that method?” (Yoshida, 2013). A spokesperson for China’s Foreign Ministry said on 31 July 2013 that Japanese Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso’s Nazi remarks had alarmed Japan’s neighbours and the international community about the country’s future trajectory. *People’s Daily*, a Chinese flagship newspaper, also criticized Aso’s remark on “Nazi-style” constitutional revision as an assault on the conscience of mankind (Liu et al., 2013). The Chinese media harshly criticized Prime Minister Abe’s visit to the Yasukuni Shrine on 26 December 2013 (Guo, 2013). Much more coverage in the Chinese media on the “rightist” tendency in Japanese politics emerged in 2014, as this year marked the 120th anniversary of the Sino-Japanese War that had broken out on the Korean Peninsula.

It is obvious that the historical memory of Sino-Japanese wars is going to be a great barrier to the future improvement of Sino-Japanese relations and East Asian regional cooperation, in the context of the Sino-Japanese geopolitical competition (imagined or real) in the early twenty-first century. Historical memory matters a lot in Sino-Japanese relations, as one analyst commented:

The Asia-Pacific War (1931–1945) was a pivotal moment in history partly because its violence awakened dormant feelings about earlier humiliations. Japan’s atrocities precipitated memories of nineteenth-century colonial invasions, collaboration with the West and earlier aggression against Asia. (Kim, 2012)

And *The Japan Times*, a Japanese-English newspaper recently pointed out:

Asia’s two biggest economies have long endured a difficult relationship characterized by disagreements on a wide range of issues, many of which are connected to bitter memories of the violence and atrocities waged in Asia by Imperial Japanese soldiers before and during World War II. (Hiyama, 2014)

Contentious historical memory will continue to be an important issue in the Sino-Japanese relationship in the near future. The history problem is and will continue to be a hard nut for the Chinese and Japanese governments to crack.

TRIBUTARY SYSTEM

Historical memories of the China-centred East Asian tributary system are also an important factor in China's relations with its neighbouring countries in Northeast Asia. It may be the most long-lasting example of clashing memories and an important source of anxiety among some of China's neighbouring countries over China's rise. As one scholar pointed out, "China's re-emergence as the central power in Asia has rightly raised the question of the possible relevance of its pre-modern patterns of external diplomacy to the country's current situation" (Womack, 2012). Another analyst stated, "All of these nations live adjacent to China (and vice versa), and memories of China's historical 'tribute' relationships still run deep for all parties. These factors will continue to simultaneously bind and divide China and its Asian neighbors" (Shambaugh, 2013: p. 105).

From the first unification of China by Emperor Qin Shihuang in 211 BC until the outbreak of the Opium War in 1840, China had been the so-called "Middle Kingdom." For about 2000 years, it had been the most developed and powerful country in East Asia. Its rulers regarded China as the only "civilized" entity or civilization in the world and considered its neighbours to be "barbarians" or so-called *si yi* (four tribes), namely *man*, *yi*, *di* and *rong*. Because of its real and perceived material and cultural superiority, China was at the centre of the East Asian regional international system, over which it often dominated. Most of the neighbouring countries paid tributes to the Chinese emperors from time to time, thus forming a tributary system lasting for about 2000 years. The China-centred tributary relationship prevented China's neighbouring states from developing normal relations between or among themselves. Their most important external contacts related to the regular payment of tribute to the Chinese emperors, at intervals from once a year to once every ten years. China's relationships with its neighbours could thus be described as unequal and vertical, being a dominant centre which treated the peripheral neighbouring countries as inferiors.

The Sino-centric tributary system was also unique in its own organizing principles, rules, norms and institutions, different from the anarchical international system of sovereign states. A caveat is that China as the centre could not be categorized simply as a hierarchical empire. Within the tributary system, China was no doubt the leading power, or to use the current term, a regional "hegemon," because to some degree it led and controlled the foreign relations with the neighbouring countries. But in

sharp contrast to Western hegemony and empires, China did not establish direct control over its vassals. Neither were the tributary states China's colonies. China's influence on its neighbouring countries was mostly cultural and political in nature, without exercising direct control by means of territorial annexation and military occupation. Accommodating China did not involve "a significant loss of national independence, as nearby states were largely free to conduct their domestic and foreign policy independent of China" (Kang, 2003/2004). One American analyst even asserts that the China-centred East Asian international relations "emphasized formal hierarchy among nations while allowing considerable informal equality" (Kang, 2007: p. 25). In economic terms, the tributary system was a form of international trade in East Asia (Hamashita, 1999: p. 35). The envoys of the vassal states used to bring their home countries' products to China and trade them with those offered by Chinese businessmen. The value of the Chinese emperors' return "gifts" to the tributary states was often much higher than that of the paid tributes. To some extent, the Chinese emperors used the tributary system to maintain good relationships with its neighbours and therefore ensure China's own security. Fairbank and Reischauer argue that the tributary system was basically a defensive system, based on Confucian morality and cultural superiority rather than on legal treaties and military dominance (Fairbank and Reischauer, 1996: p. 349). On the other hand, from time to time, the Chinese empires did use force to establish and maintain a tributary relationship with a neighbouring country, especially on the Korean Peninsula and in Indochina. Occasionally, China even launched military attacks abroad, such as when the Mongols, after overrunning the Chinese Empire, attempted to invade Japan by sending troops against it in 1274 and again in 1281. They were the greatest maritime expeditions the world had then seen, and the troops were turned back more by the adverse weather—the great typhoon, or "divine wind" as the Japanese called it—rather than by the relatively small groups of Japanese knights who tried to fight them off (Reischauer and Jansen, 1995: pp. 55–56).

China's relationship with the Korean Peninsula is a typical example of the centre-peripheral relationship characteristic of the tributary system. For centuries, China was the dominant power on the Korean Peninsula and maintained a relatively stable and close relationship with the countries in that area. They were basically autonomous in handling their domestic affairs and paid tributes to the Chinese emperors on a regular basis, although at times the Chinese rulers did send troops to invade or even

temporarily occupy parts of the peninsula in order to maintain the tributary relationship. At the invitation of the Korean ruler, China also sent troops to the peninsula to assist him against the Japanese invasions from 1592 to 1598, and it paid a high price. Korea was treated by China as a younger brother according to the Confucian worldview and the bilateral relationship was surely unequal and hierarchical. However, some researchers maintained that the Sino-centric tributary system differed from territorial absorption and outright political domination, because that system, based less on force and more on persuasion and emulation, was as much cultural as it was political. It also promoted bilateral commercial and cultural exchanges (Lee, 1996: pp. 1–2; Choe, 1998). In the late sixteenth century, China's position on the Korean Peninsula began to face challenges from other powers, primarily Japan. But before the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, the Sino-Korean tributary relationship remained essentially intact.

The China-centred tributary system did not collapse until the outbreak of the Opium War in 1840. Until then, the Qing Dynasty government regarded even the Western European countries as its tributary states (Cui, 1992: p. 29). However, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, the Western colonial powers gradually opened up China and its neighbours by using force or the threat of force. The Opium Wars forced a shift in Sino-Western relations, smashing China's arrogance and cultural self-confidence. It was compelled by superior British military force to accept unequal treaty provisions, first with Britain, then with France and the United States, followed by a series of other such treaties. At the same time, most of China's neighbouring countries, including its tributary states, became colonies or semi-colonies of Western powers. As a result, the Western-centred international system expanded into East Asia and replaced the China-centred tributary system as the legitimate regional order. Since the end of the Opium Wars until almost the end of World War II, China has thus been recognized not as a sovereign state and a full member of the international society, but as a semi-colonial and semi-independent country. At about the same time, such neighbouring countries as the Ryukyu Islands, Vietnam, Burma and Korea were colonized by Western powers (including Japan after the Meiji Restoration). With the end of World War II, China and its neighbouring countries, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and the two Koreas, emerged as modern nation states, joining the international

society of sovereign countries. China's relations with its neighbours thereby entered a new era. Ever since, China has had to base its relations with all its neighbouring countries on respect for their independence and sovereignty.

The China-centred East Asian tributary system, as a pre-modern regional international system, had already collapsed and disappeared more than a 100 years ago. And there is no doubt that it could not survive in the modern international system of sovereign states. As a country which has been in the process of integration into international society, China has neither the will nor the capability to revive the tributary system and dominate its neighbouring countries in the future. Clearly, none of its neighbouring countries would welcome the return of the unequal and hierarchical relationship. China's neighbours would seem to fear rather than favour a hierarchical regional order centred on a hegemonic power. The American political scientist, David C. Kang, would be an exception in arguing that Asian countries might wish to return to a China-centred hierarchical order quite similar to the old Sino-centric tributary system. But on the other hand, it is too early to say that the historical memory of the China-centred East Asian tributary system will not influence or do harm to the future development of China's relations with its neighbouring countries, including its relations with the countries in the Northeast Asia.

In fact, as China has been rising on the world stage, the historical memory of unequal tributary relations has had a negative impact on China's relations with its neighbours. Although Chinese leaders have reiterated Beijing's commitment to the strategy of "peaceful rise" as an opportunity for, rather than as a threat to, its neighbours, China's growing power and influence nevertheless has aroused fear and anxiety among some of its neighbours. They are suspicious of China's regional policy. China has to reassure its neighbours that it is a responsible and benign power (Yue, 2004: p. 52). But it might not be easy for China and its neighbouring countries to overcome the legacies and the historical memory of the tributary system in the context of China's rise.

CONCLUSION

Collective historical memories are socially constructed facts. The past is constantly interpreted and reinterpreted by the historians, public intellectuals, mass media and politicians to serve their respective purposes and

meet their current needs. As a result, historical memory is a mixture of truth and myth, and it is difficult to find a truly neutral and objective historical text. As one scholar comments:

It is hard to find a well-written history book. All history books are biased in one way or another, reflecting the level and angle of the author's view. But we always want to read a "good history book" that at the very least does not distort facts that are deemed unfavorable or turn a blind eye to what seems uncomfortable. (Ham, 2011)

Ever since the Northeast Asian countries became independent states, narration of the past has played a very special and important role in the nation-building and identity-constructing processes. Interpreting and reinterpreting the past has mobilized the people and strengthened their nationalist sentiments. In other words, domestic politics has always been one of the key factors in the construction of collective historical memory within each of the countries in this region. In the early twenty-first century, China's so-called "rise" and power transition in East Asia has contributed a great deal to the steady rise of nationalist sentiment both in China and within its neighbouring countries in Northeast Asia. This has been relevant to the historical and territorial disputes between China and some of its neighbouring countries in that region.

As socially constructed facts, historical memories hold particular significance for China's relations with its neighbouring countries in Northeast Asia, since such memories have often served as barriers to the healthy development of bilateral relations and regional cooperation in this region. In this regard, particular attention must be paid to the two categories of historical memory analysed in this chapter, the Sino-Japanese wars and the China-centred tributary system. Given their differences in content and impact, different solutions need to be found for each category.

Reconciliation is an urgent imperative in the Sino-Japanese relationship, although it may not be so easy. A significant part of the problem lies no doubt with Japan's unwillingness to apologize resolutely for its past wrongs in World War II. This is in stark contrast to Germany's behaviour. In Japan, the current government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has embraced a distinctly nationalist posture, adding salt to festering historical wounds (Kupchan, 2013). China also needs to make changes to its history education programmes and improve its media coverage of historical events

And the future policy orientation of a rising China and its neighbours' responses and adaptations to the change are conditioned by lingering memories of the East Asian tributary system. China and its neighbouring countries in Northeast Asia need to put great effort into finding appropriate approaches for dealing with one another. China especially needs to act with determination to assure neighbouring countries in the region that its rise is peaceful and will not lead to the return of its regional domination in East Asia. Other countries in the area need to make it clear that in the global international system, it is impossible for an increasingly powerful China to revive the tributary system and re-establish a Sino-centric empire in the future. As Hedley Bull comments:

Opposition to the ascendancy of a single nation or race can so readily be mobilized that it is difficult to conceive that an imperial or hierarchical system could be established, or if established, could be other than short-lived, as was Hitler's New Order in Europe. Ours is an age of the disintegration of empires, and the prospects for universal monarchy have never seemed more bleak. (Bull, 2012: p. 254)

That will be one of the ways to prepare for a more peaceful future.

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Towards True Independence: Abe Shinzo's Nationalism

Masaru Tamamoto

Nationalism is on the rise in Japan, but this does not lend itself to any obvious explanation. While nationalism commonly serves to distinguish a nation from other nations, Japanese nationalism today does not have a national other, and nor does it need one. The other of Japanese nationalism is itself, its own contemporary history which began on 15 August 1945, the day Japan surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Powers in the Second World War. The nationalist other is Japan's post-war (the Japanese word for post-war, *sengo*, is both an adjective and a noun). For seven decades, the long post-war has endured, as Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's political slogan to "slough off the post-war regime" attests¹—with the rise of Abe to the premiership in December 2012, post-war Japan is dead or dying.

At the heart of Abe's nationalism is the passion to restore sovereignty to Japan. He abhors the post-war agreement for its lack of "true independence." He points to the nation's constitution, authored by the American army of occupation and imposed upon the vanquished Japanese in 1947, as the source of Japan's compromised sovereignty. The original intent of this foreign constitution, Abe reminds us, was to prevent Japan from ever again rising as a great power. The post-war embrace of the constitution

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meant that not a single word has been amended to date. So, for national pride and confidence and to finally regain national independence, Abe is set on forging a constitution written by and for the Japanese (Abe, 2006: pp. 28–29).

A Japanese desire to write a new constitution in itself should be benign. But Abe's nationalist programme is not just about writing a new constitution; it is also about showing that the post-war constitution is illegitimate, which drives him to revisit the history of the Second World War. Abe sees the post-war constitution as the ultimate symbol of victor's justice, as punishment for Japan's wartime transgressions, and he is incapable of letting that be and moving on. He is intent on clearing Japan of what he sees as wrongful accusations from the Allied Powers, which charged Japanese leaders with crimes against peace and humanity as determined by the Tokyo war crimes tribunal, and subsequently internalized during the post-war period. When asked in parliament in 2013 how he understood the meaning of aggression, he responded that there is no consensus in international law on the definition of aggression, insinuating that the Japanese military march into China and Southeast Asia in the Second World War was something other than aggression (Abe and Ibuki, 2013). Such hollow utterance merits no serious analysis, except to note that it incurs the wrath of Beijing, whose foreign ministry has been urging the Japanese government to be honest and sincere about the history of Japanese imperialism. In this way, what is essentially a Japanese domestic debate on the constitution and national identity acquires the element of competitive nationalism between Japan and China, leading to sour relations between Tokyo and Beijing and warnings about a possible military conflict over disputed islets in the East China Sea. To be sure, Japan's deteriorating relationship with China bolsters Abe's push for constitutional revision by surfacing such traditional drivers of nationalism as territorial conflict, military expansion and negative feelings about the national other: by the summer of 2014, 97% of the Japanese public and 87% of the Chinese felt negatively about the other country (Kato, 2014).

Abe holds acute historical revisionist views on Japan's war and empire. But why does he insist on revisiting history and breaking the post-war consensus on Japan's war guilt in the pursuit of a new constitution? His well-known denials of the "Nanjing Massacre" and Korean "comfort women" have led to international condemnation not only from Beijing and Seoul but also Washington. It would seem politically expedient to

drop the history issue. But he cannot, for he deeply believes that Japan needs a new constitution because the post-war American-authored constitution is the symbol of national humiliation. Abe is making surprising headway; he is poised to fundamentally alter Japan's national identity.

ACCIDENTAL PRIME MINISTER

It was not popular support of Abe's nationalism that brought him to power. His rise was accidental. The Japanese were so disillusioned with the three-year rule of the Democratic Party that in the 2012 parliamentary election votes shifted massively to the first opposition Liberal Democratic Party of which Abe happened to be president. And there was no great popular expectation of Abe, for he had just a few years earlier served as Prime Minister for one dismal year and abruptly resigned complaining of a stomach ailment. The 2012 election was a vote to ouster the Democratic Party just as the earlier election that brought the Democratic Party to government power was a vote to ouster the Liberal Democratic Party; there is a growing penchant of the Japanese people for voting against a party rather than in support of one. Voter turnout has been declining over the last two decades and that decline was marked in the December 2014 snap election that Abe called, which he dubbed a referendum of his policies, and which his Liberal Democratic Party won, losing just two seats (*Yomiuri Online*, 2014). But there is growing popular alienation from and cynicism about politics generally, and about Abe in particular. The issue of nuclear power is key here and symbolic. Following the Fukushima reactor meltdowns in 2011, the vast majority of the Japanese, in one public opinion poll after another, have called for the end of nuclear power, but the Abe government has been pushing hard to restart as many nuclear power plants as possible (all fifty-four reactors were shut down soon after Fukushima but, by August 2016, five reactors were back on line with more pending) and to export nuclear reactors around the world, even as the Tokyo Electric Power Company struggles to contain nuclear fallout at Fukushima. Fukushima is a source of deep existential fear for many Japanese, and the government's assurance of nuclear safety convinces few. Still, it is obvious that nuclear power has not become an election issue, thus allowing the government's pursuit of nuclear revitalization. The people tend to feel helpless in the face of government power. The voter is hardly imbued with the sense of political efficacy. "It cannot be helped (*shikataganai*)," is a common refrain in reaction to the tragic

and absurd. This sense of helplessness and powerlessness translates into a feeling in Tokyo, just 230 kilometres or 140 miles from the melted-down nuclear reactors, that Fukushima is a foreign country, distant and uncaring, even while 100,000 fellow citizens continue to live as refugees five years after the disaster.

Political alienation and cynicism works for Abe, for that helps him stay in power. It is better that the floating voters, the largest bloc of voters without set party loyalty, stay home on election day, for Abe's Liberal Democratic Party commands the most organized votes among political parties. New Komeito, the junior coalition partner in government, is also highly organized. Together, the two ruling parties hold 326 of the 475 seats in the lower house of parliament after the December 2014 election, which marked the lowest voter turnout ever at 53%. The possibility of Abe's long tenure is enhanced by the weakness of the opposition parties, which are likely to remain in complete disarray for some years. The first opposition Democratic Party commands just seventy-three seats, and this party is so internally divided that it is incapable of clearly outlining its policies, including its position on constitutional amendment. There is only a vague criticism of the procedure and not substance of the Liberal Democrats move to revise the constitution. Furthermore, the three years of Democratic government (2009–2012), during which there were three Prime Ministers, proved so disastrous that it is hard to fathom what it would take for the Democratic Party to regain the people's confidence. There is no doubt about popular disillusion. It did not help that the triple disaster of the earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima nuclear meltdown occurred under the watch of the Democratic government. In the landslide victory in the 2009 lower house parliamentary election, the Democratic Party won 308 seats in the 475-member chamber but, in the following 2012 election, the party managed to cling to just fifty-seven seats. Even if the electorate were ready to ouster Abe's Liberal Democratic Party from government power, the Democratic Party no longer serves as a viable recipient of votes cast against the Liberal Democratic Party. There is one political party that stands in clear opposition to the Liberal Democrats: the Communist Party says "no" to constitutional amendment and nuclear power. The Communists in a remarkable feat almost trebled their number of seats in the December 2014 election, from eight to twenty-one. Still, for historical reasons, the Communist Party is an unlikely vehicle to turn popular cynicism into serious political opposition. New Komeito also embraces the constitution, but its partnership with the Liberal

Democrats in government has led to the abandonment of the party's founding ideals.

More than the weakness of the opposition parties, the possibility of Abe's extended tenure lies within his own party. There is now a remarkable lack of jostling for power by Prime Ministerial hopefuls in the Liberal Democratic Party, whereas such jostling had been an essential feature of Liberal Democratic politics and Japan's one-party rule. The party has ruled Japan almost continuously since its founding in 1955. The party was out of power for less than a year in 1993–1994 as a result of a large defection of its parliamentarians from the party. And in 2009, the people voted against the Liberal Democrats putting the Democrats in government power. The ensuing three years in opposition for the Liberal Democratic Party and for the many who lost their parliamentary seats was clearly a deeply bitter experience and not to be repeated. Now, back in government power, the point is to stay in power, and the would be Prime Ministerial hopefuls, some with obviously different policy agendas from Abe including the constitution, tame their political ambitions for fear of dividing the party and weakening its hold on government power. There is now a degree of solidarity which is unknown in the party's history. In the past, intense factional struggle marked the Liberal Democratic Party, and so fierce was the jostling for the Prime Minister's post that, since 1972, the tenure of all Liberal Democratic Prime Ministers, except two,² was no longer than two years. Today, the party seems poised to stand behind Abe so long as his leadership continues to win elections.

“Is Abe to blame for the decline of democratic quality in Japan?” Abe is poised to become the most powerful Prime Minister under the present constitutional arrangement, if judged by the time spent in office. The office of Prime Minister wields tremendous power, and the point for the incumbent is how to remain in office. Abe's likely longevity as Prime Minister can be explained by the change in Japan's political structure, not by the popularity of his policies and ideas. The 1996 electoral reform transformed the manner of lower house parliamentary election. Single seat electoral districts replaced multiple seat districts. In multiple seat districts, two to five parliamentarians, depending on population size, were chosen from one electoral district. There is only one winner in the new single seat district. The point of the reform was to enhance Japanese democracy by creating a competitive two-party system in which voters have a clear choice and the ruling party can be readily changed. The old way had ensured Liberal Democratic Party dominance, so it is remarkable that the party

passed the reform bill carrying the possibility of its own demise, but then there was enough concern about the health of Japanese democracy under a system that apparently perpetuated Liberal Democratic one-party rule. And so, in 2009 the Democratic Party ousted the Liberal Democrats but, as we have seen, the political scene is now far from a viable two-party competition and Liberal Democratic dominance has returned.

More than the sorry condition of the Democratic Party, what matters in explaining the longevity of Prime Minister Abe is how the electoral reform transformed the structure and working of the Liberal Democratic Party. The electoral reform destroyed the system of factions of the Liberal Democratic Party. There had been on average five factions or so over the decades. Each faction operated as if it were an independent political party, each with its own finances; and each faction leader was an aspirant for party presidency and therefore Prime Minister. The key to Japanese politics was intra-Liberal Democratic Party factional struggle. Even as the Liberal Democratic Party dominated, there arose a political culture that equated the change of Liberal Democratic Prime Ministers, that is the rise and fall of factions, with something akin to a democratic process. The logic of the faction was the multiple seat electoral district. In a five-person electoral district, for example, typically the Liberal Democratic Party won two to three seats, while the other political parties split the remainder. The real election battle among the five or so factions was to win the party's nomination for the faction's candidate, for if all factions fielded candidates in the same district that would cannibalize Liberal Democratic support. The multiple seat district ensured Liberal Democratic dominance as well as representation for lesser political parties imbuing a strange sense of fairness.

With the introduction of first past the post single seat districts, money began to flow to the Liberal Democratic Party headquarters and not to the factions. It is now party headquarters that doles out money to parliamentarians and not faction leaders. It is party headquarters that chooses candidates for election and not internecine factional struggle. The party headquarters makes political appointments with much less care about balance among factions. The party is unified and its presidency is paramount in a way that it never was when faction leaders held sway. Abe clearly understands the power the control of money, electoral candidacy and political appointments bestows, and he has a tightened grip that enforces party discipline with a stringency never before seen. With

opposition parties in complete disarray and greatly diminished competition from within the party, which had been the largest threat to any wanting to remain in office, Prime Minister Abe's leadership seems rather secure. (Two-fifths of the seats in the lower house of parliament are filled by proportional representation, but this does not alter the analysis here.)

What the people want is leadership to fix Japan's deflationary economy and a social security system teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. Since 1991, with the bursting of the fantastic economic bubble that saw the value of Tokyo real estate surpassing that of the entire continental United States, the Japanese economy has been in the doldrums. Soon after becoming Prime Minister, Abe hand-picked the new governor of the central bank, Kuroda Haruhiko, who began to implement a radical monetary programme of quantitative easing to lift the economy out of the prolonged deflationary morass. This so-called Abenomics saw money flowing into the stock market bolstering remarkable gains: in a little over two years since Abe took office, the Nikkei stock index doubled to over 20,000 (July 2015), then declined to 16,000 level (August 2016). Here at last was significant movement in the long-stagnant economy. People would pin their hopes on the zeal of the stock market rubbing off on their wages and everyday economic life. They would lend support to Abe's premiership in marked contrast to the disdain they had shown towards the utterly ineffective six previous Prime Ministers, who all lasted no more than a year in office, including Abe himself in 2006 and 2007. Popular support for Abe in his second-round hinges on the success of Abenomics, and Abe's ambition to write a new constitution depends on his popularity holding, which has been declining steadily, from nearly 70% at the start to around 50% in March 2015. And the public's primary reason to support Abe is rather negative: they can't think of anybody else fit to be Prime Minister; Abe is thus Prime Minister by default. Also, after two-and-a-half years of Abenomics, only 10% feel that their economic situation has improved, and the central bank's goal of stimulating a 2% inflation rate has not been achieved despite the bank's infusion of hundreds of trillions of yen into the economy. Even so, 52% of the public continues to express hope in Abenomics (Nippon Hoso Kyokai, 2015a).

So Abe is poised to be a long-serving Prime Minister, giving him the chance to revise the constitution. Public support for constitutional revision, however, began to take a significant plunge with Abe's ascendance to power, even according to public opinion polls taken by the *Sankei* newspaper, an unabashed cheerleader of Abe's nationalism. When Abe came to

power, 61% were for constitutional revision, but that figure is now 41% with 48% against (May 2015) (*Sankei News*, 2014, 2015). With Abe's moves to revise the constitution, more people have come to oppose constitutional revision, reversing a trend in place since the late 1990s. Rising Japanese nationalism, then, is a top-down phenomenon emanating from the Abe government, about whose wisdom the people are increasingly sceptical.

POLITICS OF CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

When asked, people respond to opinion poll questions, but that does not tell us whether the people find the questions relevant or even whether they understand the questions. Instead of simply asking whether they are for or against constitutional revision, an April 2015 poll by public broadcaster NHK included “it is hard to say” and “I don't know” as possible answers. “It is hard to say” elicited the largest proportion of respondents at 43%, while those for revision were 28%, and against 25% (Nippon Hoso Kyokai, 2015b). The constitution is not high on the list of public concern, and politics is rarely debated on constitutional grounds. And a surprising proportion of the public admits to never having read the constitution. While there has been increasing talk about constitutional revision among the conservative political class, notably since the end of the Cold War, until Abe no Prime Minister tried to seriously push the issue. He passed a law on the national referendum during his first term in office. Constitutional revision requires a national referendum, as well as a two-thirds vote in both houses of parliament, but until then there was no legal provision on how to conduct a referendum. Abe already had two-thirds control in the lower house, then in the summer 2016 upper house election, he won two-thirds control in the upper house as well. In that election, Abe stressed that the issue at stake was Abenomics and not constitutional revision, papering over his earlier promise to make parliament and the people vote on the constitution following a victorious upper house election. Now, for the first time, the Liberal Democratic Party with its parliamentary partners holds two-thirds control in both houses of parliament, making constitutional revision a possibility. The people are thus being forced to think about the constitution in a serious way, but there is as yet no clear understanding of what Abe is up to among the general public. While Abe may wish to be able to put an entirely new constitution to a vote, the law requires a vote on each specific clause to be

revised. So, for now, Abe looks for a revision—any revision—that will likely pass: adding a constitutional clause on environmental protection is a consideration. Abe wants the experience of a constitutional revision to get people used to the idea so that he can begin to make the changes he really wants. The Liberal Democratic Party has proposed a new, more authoritarian constitution, which tones down individual liberties and stresses public duties, and even allows the Prime Minister to declare a state of emergency and suspend the constitution. Critics see this Liberal Democratic proposal as a reversion to the imperial constitution before 1945. Abe asserts that a constitution without revision in nearly seven decades is an anomaly and cites the many revisions other countries have made, arguing that the constitution must be kept up to date. It does not occur to him that the longevity of the post-war constitution may be a reflection of its wisdom and, therefore, its strength. It is not at all clear to the people what about the constitution is anachronistic and in need of change.

When Abe was given his second chance as Prime Minister, unsure of how much time he might have, he hurried to make his moves on the constitution. He first attempted to revise the constitutional clause on amending the constitution, hoping to reduce the two-thirds parliamentary vote requirement to one-half, which would mean that any government of the day could alter the constitution just as it could pass any other law by a simple majority. But this was too much even for his own party to support. He then proceeded to embark on a policy of *de facto* constitutional revision by calling it a reinterpretation. In July 2014, the Abe government issued a cabinet decision that would allow the Japan Self-Defence Forces to partake in “collective self-defence,” meaning, in essence, the military can partake in war alongside their American ally anywhere in the world. This would be consistent with the alliance obligations of Britain or Australia, though the Self-Defence Forces would concentrate on logistic support and not commit to front line fighting. Such a decision is unconstitutional, many legal experts argue, in view of the long held constitutional interpretation of Article 9 restricting the use of force narrowly to territorial defence, so the adoption of a collective self-defence policy first requires constitutional revision. Abe supporters respond that Japan already possesses war potential despite the constitutional ban, so the use of force abroad is within constitutional bounds and providing logistical support to allies does not mean going to war. At the source of this curious back and forth is Article 9 of the constitution that reads:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means to settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized. (Emperor, Prime Minister and His Cabinet, 1946: article 9)

Article 9 lies at the heart of Abe's desire for constitutional revision. Even before his government introduced the bills necessary to make collective self-defence possible, Abe promised in his speech to the American Congress in April 2015 to enhance Japan's legislative foundations by the coming summer that should "fortify the US-Japan alliance" and "provide a seamless response for all levels of crisis" (Abe, 2015). And he correctly noted, "This reform is the first of its kind and a sweeping one in our postwar history" (Ibid.). Might he have added that this sweeping reform hollows out Article 9 and brings an end to Japan's post-war Pacifism? His command of simple majorities in both houses of parliament allowed him to pass the collective self-defence bills into law, but that made a mockery of the constitution and Japan's democracy. Abe has made clear he has no respect for the pacifist constitution, even while 63% of the people are against revising Article 9, and a diminutive 29% are for revision (*Asahi Shimbun*, 2015). A constitutional referendum on revising Article 9 would not carry. The post-war consensus on Article 9 had been that, although Japan possesses the Self-Defence Forces, they are strictly for territorial defence and the use of force is allowed only when Japan is under attack. Such consensus had long been buttressed by the constitutional interpretation offered by the Legal Affairs Bureau³ in the office of the Prime Minister, which acts as the de facto constitutional court on highly political matters pertaining to Article 9. This is instead of the Supreme Court, which normally rules on constitutional cases. Until Abe, most Prime Ministers took heed of the rulings of the Legal Affairs Bureau. But Abe broke the regular manner of senior civil service appointments to the Bureau and made extraordinary moves to bring to the Bureau those who would jettison the post-war consensus and rule that the collective self-defence action of dispatching Japanese troops abroad to war zones does not violate Article 9. In such a brazen manner, Abe removed a huge legal hurdle. Then Abe conjured up Churchillian strength and wisdom: he wrote of his admiration of Winston Churchill as the most decisive

statesman, who stood up for what is right in the face of massive criticism and opposition, as when he advocated strengthening the British military to counter the rise of Nazi Germany even as Britain disastrously followed Prime Minister Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler. Events would prove Churchill's vision, Abe lauds, as if to say that he too will be proven right (Abe, 2007: pp. 40–41).

CHINA THREAT

Foreign policy pundits in Japan and the United States commonly argue that Japan's move towards collective self-defence and the enhancement of the US-Japan Defence Cooperation Guidelines in May 2015 serve to deter the geo-political ambitions of rising China. Since 2013, after Abe came to power the second time, the annually published Japan's Defence White Paper began harping on the Chinese military threat to Japan and the region, citing especially the almost daily Chinese manoeuvring near Japanese sea and air space around the Senkakus, uninhabited islets in the East China Sea. China claims that the islets, called Diaoyu in Chinese, are theirs, while Japan refuses to acknowledge that a territorial dispute exists. Abe, quick to highlight the need to bolster Japanese military preparedness, spoke at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2014, comparing Sino-Japanese relations to that of Britain and Germany just prior to the First World War, and warning how they went to war despite their strong economic relations. Abe has been appealing to the Japanese public of the need for a stronger military posture, and public attitude towards China has dramatically worsened. Still, there is no direct link between defending Japanese territory and the Japanese adoption of collective self-defence. One veteran senior official of the Defence Ministry, Yagisawa Kyoji, who also served in key national security posts under several Prime Ministers, admonishes that the defence of the Senkakus can be dealt with under existing laws. He warns that the collective self-defence, which Abe dubs "proactive pacifism," is a trap that diminishes Japan's national security (Yagisawa, 2014). If bolstering the defence of Japanese territory is a key issue for Abe, he has little American support. On the issue of the Senkakus, Washington states that the islets are under Japanese administration and are covered by the US-Japan security treaty, but the United States does not take sides on the issue of sovereignty. While Tokyo wanted a firm American commitment to defend the Senkakus, Washington agreed in Principles for Coordinated Actions that "Japan will maintain primary

responsibility for defending the citizens and territory of Japan...The United States will coordinate closely with Japan and provide appropriate support” (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015: p. 11). Just as Japanese opponents of collective self-defence worry about Japan being dragged into America’s far-flung wars, Washington is sceptical about being pulled into any Japanese confrontation with China.

In any case, analysing the China threat as the rationale for Abe’s collective self-defence policy misses the point, for he would have pursued such a policy regardless of the condition of relations with China. Abe inherited the dour relationship with China from the Democratic Party government of Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko, which nationalized the Senkakus by purchasing all the land from private owners. This infuriated Beijing, who saw the act as Japan’s betrayal of an agreement made during the process of normalizing relations during the 1970s: the two governments then agreed to shelve the sovereignty issue for a future and wiser generation to decide and meanwhile keep things as they are. China’s incursions into Japanese territorial water began immediately after the nationalization. Noda’s debacle was a godsend to Abe wanting to elevate the nation’s sensitivity about military security. Abe played the Chinese military threat card and made no effort to mend relations with China, thereby making any meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping prohibitive for two-and-a-half tense years. Their first substantial meeting lasting thirty minutes finally took place on the side-lines of the sixtieth anniversary of the Bandung Conference held in Jakarta in April 2015. The meeting came about because Japan met China’s demand that it admit that a territorial dispute exists. By this time, Abe had made full use of the Chinese military threat card and was ready to submit the collective self-defence bills to parliament. It should be noted that in 2006, during his first term as Prime Minister, Abe visited Beijing immediately after taking office to mend relations that had been severely strained for five years by his predecessor Koizumi Junichiro’s insistence on visiting Yasukuni Shrine, where Japan’s war dead including class-A war criminals from the Second World War are enshrined. Abe is not anti-China per se. An antagonistic China is useful to him to the extent that it propels his nationalism “to make Japan beautiful.” In describing the need for collective self-defence, Abe would repeatedly describe not the defence of Senkaku but the Self-Defence Forces clearing mines in the Strait of Hormuz, through which much of Japan’s oil flows. In this scenario, the United States is ostensibly at war with the mine-laying enemy, who Abe does not name, as if war is something that

occurs in a vacuum. There is no discussion of either the efficacy or wisdom of the American use of force around the world. Furthermore, few are persuaded that mines in the Strait of Hormuz possesses a “clear danger and fundamental threat to Japan’s existence, to the lives of the Japanese people, and to the people’s right to the pursuit of freedom and happiness,”⁴ which Abe says is the condition for Japan’s engagement in any collective self-defence activity. What Abe envisions extends far beyond the territorial dispute in the East China Sea. With the hollowing-out of Article 9 by the collective self-defence policy, Abe emphasizes “the global nature of the Japan-US Alliance” with “seamless, robust, flexible, and effective bilateral responses” (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015: p. 1). Yet he cannot point to any clear and present danger to Japanese security, or to what he calls existential threats to Japan, that is, to any compelling reason why the post-war constitutional consensus should be thrown out. Abe’s opponents accuse him of transforming Japan into a country that can again go to war. Fear of war had been a powerful national emotion that buttressed the post-war: “never again shall we be visited with the horrors of war through the action of government,” declares the constitutional preamble (Emperor, Prime Minister and His Cabinet, 1946, Preamble). So, Abe turns to the very author of the constitution, the American military, to break the constitution by meeting the increasing American demand to enhance the US-Japan alliance. It is inconceivable in Japan today to even begin a discussion of the Self-Defence Forces using force abroad on its own; it is only with the cover of the American alliance that the use of force abroad can be entertained, “to come to the aid of an ally under attack,” which is a key rationale for collective self-defence (Ibid.). Abe is not talking about the American homeland under attack but about American expeditionary forces around the world in combat, whose activities presumably are more often than not against international law. Still, Abe deftly plays the American alliance card “to slough off the postwar regime.”⁵ While the Japanese Foreign Ministry may support collective self-defence by its strategic calculation, Abe and nationalists of his ilk are driven by their contempt for what they view as post-war state masochism. There is a marriage of hawkish foreign policy and emotional nationalism:

Does Japan desire to continue to be a tier-one nation, or is she content to drift into tier-two status? . . . Japan’s Self-Defense Forces are poised to play a larger role in enhancing Japanese security and enhancing security and reputation if anachronistic constraints can be eased. . . . For Japan to remain

standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States, she will need to move forward with us . . . Prohibition of collective self-defense is an impediment to the alliance. (Armitage and Nye, 2012)

Such was the gist of the August 2012 report on the US-Japan alliance by Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye for the Center for Strategic & International Studies. The series of Armitage-Nye reports over the years have been instrumental in moulding the alliance. Then in February 2013, Abe spoke at the Center in Washington; “Japan is not, and never will be, a two-tier country . . . I am back, and so shall Japan be” (Abe, 2013a).

NATIONALIST IMPULSE

Abe Shinzo was born in 1954. He became the first post-war born Prime Minister in 2006. Yet his ideas are strikingly pre-war. He makes admiring reference to his grandfather, Kishi Nobusuke, who was a cabinet member of the Tojo government at the time of Pearl Harbor, was arrested by the Allied Powers as a class-A war criminal but never tried, and served as Prime Minister between 1957 and 1960. By the post-war order of things, Kishi was a throwback to the pre-war era. Prime Minister Kishi successfully renegotiated the security treaty with the United States in 1960, but his effort was met by the Ampo riots, the liberal and left opposition of students and labour to the security treaty revision. The rioters accused Kishi of bringing Japan back down the road to war. The scale of opposition was strong enough to force Prime Minister Kishi into resignation, but only after he steered the passage of the new security treaty in parliament. Kishi made the United States accept three major changes to the 1952 security treaty: (1) The American military stationed in Japan would no longer be able to intervene in domestic affairs to put down large scale riots and disturbances; (2) While the original treaty had no time limit, (allowing the United States to maintain its military presence for as long as it desired), the revision stated that after ten years, either party may give notice to the other of its intention to terminate the treaty; (3) The revision committed the United States to act to defend Japan in case of an armed act, whereas the earlier treaty vaguely states that the presence of the American military should deter any armed attack against Japan. In revising the treaty, Kishi was working towards constitutional revision and rearmament, which irked the pacifist liberal and left opposition. Kishi saw the American military presence in Japan, practically anywhere it wished, as the continuation of

the American military occupation that formally ended in 1952. So, for Japan to regain true independence and sovereignty, he understood that Japan needed to remove the constitutional obstacle to rearmament and achieve military strength sufficient to begin to reduce the American military presence on Japanese soil. The rationale for the original security treaty, a price for the end of the American military occupation, read:

Japan will not have the effective means to exercise the inherent right of self-defense because it has been disarmed . . . Japan desires that the United States of America should maintain armed forces of its own in and about Japan so as to deter armed attack on Japan. (Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan, 1951: Introduction)

Reflecting on what his grandfather had done to revise the one-sided security treaty, Abe praises the effort to make Japan's relations with the United States more mutual, which was the best anyone could have done at the time. It is the duty of our generation, Abe continues, to begin to make the US-Japan security treaty "truly mutual" but, under the present constitutional interpretation, the Self-Defence Forces "cannot shed blood" in the defence of the United States under attack, and that is not a "perfectly equal partnership" (Abe and Okazaki, 2004).⁶ So, fifty-five years later, Abe is carrying the torch of his grandfather. It would probably not do to remind Abe how vastly different the security environment today is from 1960, or how much relations between Japan and the United States have changed, or how greatly the status of Japan in the world has been elevated from that of a war-torn country, or how vacuous is the notion of a perfectly equal partnership with the United States—what about the American idea of its power does Abe not understand? Abe is motivated by a dubious understanding of sovereignty and national independence from a bygone era to hollow out Article 9 and send Japanese troops abroad to fight and die alongside American GIs in foreign wars. Even grandfather Kishi was not thinking about rearming to send troops on foreign expeditions, to repeat the history of Japanese military aggression.

Abe's strong yet curious obsession with national independence, which hardly resonates among the public, who consider Japan to be independent, shows in his description of the Liberal Democratic Party's founding. In 1955, barely three years after the end of the American military occupation, the two main conservative parties of the time, the Liberals and Democrats, joined forces. The new party's platform included constitutional revision,

damning the American-authored constitution to be an affront to the Japanese state and patriotism. The party saw the constitution, especially Article 9, as an aspersion on Japanese sovereignty, as punishment by the American victor, a ploy to keep Japan down. The party was founded so that Japan can regain true independence through constitutional revision, Abe emphasizes. But, of course, the Liberal Democratic Party went on to hold government power almost continuously, winning elections and ruling according to the very constitutional arrangement it damns. Abe laments, in a typically conservative yearning for an imagined tradition, that Japan's inability to regain true independence has created a society driven by the profit motive in which higher values such as the family and love of country are greatly diminished (Abe, 2007: pp. 28–29).⁷ So Abe stands to relight the torch of the founding reason of his Liberal Democratic Party. But he neglects to mention what the party in 1955 said is the goal of constitutional revision: to rearm and “prepare for the withdrawal of the foreign occupation force” (Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, 1955). Naturally, true independence then meant the elimination of American military bases in Japan. And what the Abe government is now doing diametrically opposes the party's founding spirit, most noticeably, constructing a new air station for the US Marines in the island prefecture of Okinawa, whose governor and all its members of parliament and the majority of its people stand vehemently in opposition. Okinawa is mushrooming into a major political problem as Abe moves to strengthen the American military presence in Japan. Clearly, what Abe thinks is true independence is not what his grandfather or his grandfather's party had in mind. Abe's sense of history, from whence his justification for constitutional revision comes, is partial at best and twisted. Moreover, after the 1960 Ampo crisis and Kishi's resignation, it was the Liberal Democratic Party that became the guardian of the post-war constitutional peace. Feeling assured of the efficacy of the American commitment to defend Japan, the party focused politics not on national security but on economic development, with the Party willing to live with the American bases, political discussion ceased to be centred around issues of independence. The party's embrace of constitutional pacifism was made solid over the years by party heavyweights like Gotoda Masaharu and Nonaka Hiromu, who had experienced the Second World War and were deeply committed to the idea that never again would the Japanese experience the horror and the insanity of war. But the party Abe inherited was free of the generation that experienced war; they had either retired or were dead, and with them a certain wisdom dissipated.

And Abe is an anachronism. While Americans might have no qualms about writing constitutions for other countries, it would be unthinkable for them to live with a constitution written by a foreign occupier, and Abe thinks likewise. But why, after seven decades of living with the American-authored constitution, and when the country as a whole has long ceased to care about the constitution's foreign authorship, does he remain fixated on constitutional revision? It is as if Abe imagines himself to be the country's leader immediately after the Second World War and hopes to wish away the long post-war. He believes that Japan should have written a new constitution as soon as it was free to do so when American military rule came to an end, when Japan once again belonged to the Japanese. As if to stress the point and validate his moves towards constitutional revision, on 28 April 2013, four months into his second premiership, Abe organized a ceremony in a Tokyo hall commemorating the nation's recovery of sovereignty. On that date in 1952, the American military occupation ended; it is Japan's Independence Day. But since 1952 there have been no further commemorations; few remember the significance of the date, and most are unaware, even, that Japan has an independence day to celebrate. He spoke at the ceremony of "our responsibility to build a proud country" (Abe, 2013b). But the symbolism he sought to evoke fell flat, even with his nationalist supporters, and he did not celebrate 28 April again.

NATIONALIST LAMENT

There is limited utility in analysing Abe's intellectual coherence, of course, for he is not an intellectual but a politician on a mission. Still, we can get a sense of how he understands Japan's contemporary history and how that understanding propels him into action. His move to revise the constitution may appeal to nationalists generally. But to "true nationalists"—if there is such a thing—the thought of revising the American-authored constitution so that the Japanese military could play assistant in America's wars should be offensive. They see the folly in Abe's claim that Japan should have the choice of whether or not to participate in collective self-defence: how can Japan under American military protection say no to any American call to war once the constitutional restriction is lifted? Such nationalists would want American military bases out of Japan, thus true independence; and an independent Japan could negotiate with the United States a new alliance relationship, a more mutual one. They would argue

for a greatly enhanced Japanese military posture to fill the vacuum left by the departure of the American military, which possibly would include the acquisition of nuclear weapons, since the withdrawal of American military bases from Japan could alter the American willingness to continue to extend its nuclear umbrella over Japan. America's extended nuclear deterrence policy is at the core of the Japanese post-war consensus. Ishihara Shintaro, the former governor of Tokyo, thinks along these lines, just as grandfather Kishi did. For now, such nationalists are on the fringe, the extreme right, but it is important to note that Abe-type nationalism was until recently considered extreme and on the fringe; the move to revise the constitution and adopt a collective self-defence policy is a fundamental turn, despite Japan's "drift to the right" since the end of the Cold War. If Japanese soldiers were to kill and die in the next "mindless Iraq War," then the Ishiharas would likely trump the Abes. Once the Japanese under Abe discard Article 9, there would be little chance of Japan going back to the post-war consensus of Article 9, mainly because Washington would no longer acquiesce to it. The post-war consensus rests on America's respect for the constitution of a sovereign state.

Debating collective self-defence in parliament, Abe was asked whether he thinks Japan's Second World War was a mistaken war of aggression. He eludes the question. And the Opposition retort was "How can a man incapable of judging good from evil be entrusted to send soldiers to war" (Abe and Koike, 2015).⁸ When Japanese soldiers fall in battle for the first time since 1945, their spirits were enshrined at Yasukuni. At the shrine are the spirits of modern Japan's war dead. It was erected to honour the spirits of those who fell fighting for the victorious imperial force in the Boshin War, the civil war that brought about the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the birth of Japan's modernity. Henceforth, administered by the imperial military, Yasukuni was where the spirits of those who fell for the Meiji state returned. Almost every ten years, the Meiji state went to war, and the shrine became a central piece of Japanese nationalism. The shrine was more than a place of bereavement. It was a symbol of the call of the state for soldiers to be ever prepared to make the patriotic sacrifice. In this sense, it was the Japanese equivalent of the tomb of the unknown soldier found elsewhere around the world. But with Japan's first and total defeat in the Second World War, Yasukuni lost meaning, for in the post-war of constitutional pacifism, there would be no more wars. Now, as Abe seeks to transform Japan into a state that can once again go to war, Yasukuni is poised for a revival.

CODA

Abe's Japan is set on a path of authoritarian nationalism. The Liberal Democratic Party's draft constitution envisages elevating the emperor to "the head of state" from the current "symbol of the unity of the people," reverting towards the priest-king identity in the world destroyed in 1945. The draft introduces a new clause that obligates the people to respect the national flag and anthem. It also obligates the people to respect the family, while dropping the term "individual" found in the present constitution and replacing it with "person," thus privileging the family over the individual, again, in a way reminiscent of the pre-1945 world: Japanese conservatives have always equated individualism with selfishness and have tended to blame disparate social ills on constitutionally guaranteed individual liberties. So, by the Liberal Democratic draft, the many individual rights and liberties accorded by the American-authored constitution would be circumscribed by the primacy of public interest—the people would be free as long as they do not threaten public order, but who gets to define threat? Abe has already amended the basic law on education, another key product of the democratic reform imposed upon the Japanese by the American army of occupation, and introduced the importance of instilling in the young respect for nativist tradition, pride in national history and patriotism through moral education. Teaching history becomes a patriotic exercise, which is not so very different from the authoritarian nationalist tendencies of China and South Korea today.

Abe's Japan is set on regaining full independence and sovereignty, to "take the country back," according to another of Abe's political slogans. A fully independent and sovereign state possesses a military as an instrument of foreign policy, or so conservative nationalists have always believed. They are fixated on the definition of the state of a bygone era, of the Meiji state (1868–1945) during which national security was of paramount concern. But in the twenty-first century, the utility, efficacy and fungibility of military power have been greatly altered, even for the United States, as American national security leaders fruitlessly continue to ask themselves: if America is the greatest military power on earth, then why can't we lead? But Abe has already passed the collective security act, which the vast majority of Japanese constitutional scholars deem to be unconstitutional. He has also lifted the ban on the export of weapons, increased defence expenditures, created an American-style national security council and passed a state secrecy law—all towards bolstering the national security apparatus. Japan faces two national security threats: the dispute with China over uninhabited islets in the East

China Sea that Japan administers and North Korean nuclear weapons and missiles. But common sense tells us that the islets dispute should be settled by diplomacy and thinking in terms of a military solution is folly. As for North Korea, only an American success in convincing North Korea of its lack of belligerent intent in relation to toppling the North Korean regime would begin a process of normalizing North Korean relations with South Korea, the United States and Japan. Again, diplomacy is more important than military power. The Japanese move to reassert the military as an instrument of foreign policy is anachronistic and likely to contribute to an arms race in Asia. More importantly, it brings to an end the cheerful ideal of a great power thriving as a pacifist state. What then is the wisdom of the authoritarian and conservative nationalist urge to “take the country back” by destroying Japan’s post-1945 constitutional pacifism?

And why has Abe been able to make his moves, to fundamentally alter Japanese national identity, in the face of a generally pacifist populace? The answer is simply that the majority of the people neither understand nor care what their leaders are up to. It is difficult to understand what it would mean for the country to be at war after the long peace. It is also difficult to fathom the consequences of the ruling political class wanting to limit individual rights and liberties. Such things are beyond the pale of popular imagination and are therefore unimaginable.

The American-authored constitution is pacifist and a pristine liberal document. After seven decades of living under the constitutional arrangement, Japan is not a liberal society, because it insists on being an isolated, homogeneous and status-oriented society. Liberalism as an ideology and practice is not merely irrelevant to such a society as contemporary Japan; rather, it is a threat to the integrity and stability of the nation, something of which Japan’s authoritarian, conservative nationalists are well aware

NOTES

1. Departure from post-war regime (「戦後レジームからの脱却」).
2. The exceptions were Nakasone Yasuhiro (1982–1987) and Koizumi Junichiro (2001–2006).
3. See: Legal Affairs Bureau in the Office of the Prime Minister (内閣法制局).
4. An often repeated slogan of Abe’s.
5. Another often repeated slogan of Abe’s.
6. See Abe and Okazaki, 2004.
7. Prime Minister’s address at the recovery of sovereignty commemoration.

8. Debate in parliament between Prime Minister Abe and Koike Akira, Secretary-General of the Japan Communist Party, May 20, 2015.

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History, Politics, and Identity in Japan

Koichi Nakano

The politics of national identity and historical memory continues to play a key role in shaping the international relations of Northeast Asia today. This chapter seeks to shed light on the vexing regional situation by offering an account of the issues from a Japanese perspective.

In order to do so, I shall first provide an analysis of what is often termed the “Yasukuni view of history” (*Yasukuni shikan*). I will then give an overview of the post-war contestation over historical narratives, with particular reference to the textbook issue. It is important to note that, between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s, with the rise of a certain liberal/neoliberal, internationalist orientation that became dominant in the newly politically assertive and economically affluent Japan, serious political efforts to reach settlements (if not solutions) over the “history” issues with China and South Korea were made by the country’s ruling elites. This was, however, followed by a revisionist backlash since the late 1990s, which challenged and undid the fragile compromise with Japan’s neighbours. This was precipitated by the social disruptions caused by a globalizing economy, a new nationalism in Japan, and perceptions of Japanese relative decline in Northeast Asia. Finally, this chapter closes by

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placing the impact of the resurgence of the Yasukuni view of history in the contemporary regional context.

YASUKUNI VIEW OF HISTORY AND VICTIM MENTALITY

The Yasukuni Shrine was established during the Meiji Restoration in the late nineteenth century in order to commemorate and honour those who died fighting for the new Imperial Japan. Let us first examine excerpts from a Yasukuni pamphlet written for small children that offers its own version of the history of the shrine¹:

Q: Who built the Yasukuni Shrine and when?

A: The Yasukuni Shrine is a shrine with a long tradition and was built over 120 years ago in 1869. Throughout the time of national seclusion before the Meiji period, Japan did not have relations with other countries of the world. But the people of foreign countries gradually took a critical attitude toward Japan and pressured Japan to open itself to the outside world . . .

At this point was born the idea of everyone in Japan becoming of one heart and mind under the emperor in order to restore the beautiful traditions of Japan, create a splendid modern nation, and become good friends with all the people of the world.

Then in the midst of trying to achieve this great rebirth, the Boshin War—an unfortunate, internal dispute—occurred, and many people came forth to offer their lives for the country. In order to transmit to future ages the story of the People who died in the Meiji Restoration, which aimed at creating a new age, the Emperor Meiji built this shrine . . .

Q: What does “Yasukuni” mean?

A: The Honorable Shrine Name “Yasukuni Shrine” was bestowed on the shrine by Emperor Meiji. The “Yasukuni” in the name means “Let’s make our country a place of tranquillity and gentle peace, and always peaceful country” that reflects the great and noble feelings of the Emperor Meiji. All the gods who are worshipped at the Yasukuni Shrine gave their noble lives in order to protect Japan while praying for eternal peace, like the Emperor Meiji, from the depths of their heart.

Q: What gods are worshipped at Yasukuni Shrine?

A: I explained a bit about the Boshin War earlier . . .

After that there were also numerous battles within the country . . . until the new Japan was firmly established. All those who died for their country in those battles are also worshipped here. Everyone’s ancestors helped carry out the important mission of creating a marvellous Japan with the emperor at its center.

However, to protect the independence of Japan and the peace of Asia surrounding Japan, there were also—though it is a very sad thing—several wars with foreign countries. In the Meiji period there were the Sino-Japanese War and the Russian-Japanese War; in the Taisho period, the First World War; and in the Showa period, the Manchurian Incident, the China Incident, and then the Greater East Asia War (the Second World War)...

War is a truly sorrowful thing. But it was necessary to fight to firmly protect the independence of Japan and to exist as a peaceful nation prospering together with the surrounding countries of Asia. All those who offered up their noble lives in such disturbances and wars are worshipped at Yasukuni Shrine as gods.

Q: Could you please teach us some more about the gods?

A: Do you know how many gods there are at Yasukuni Shrine? The answer is over 2,467,000!² Also worshipped here are the many soldiers who died in the battle during the wars of the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa periods...

There are also those here who took the responsibility for the war upon themselves and ended their own lives when the Greater East Asia War ended. There are also 1,068 who had their lives cruelly taken after the war when they were falsely and one-sidedly branded as “war criminals” by the kangaroo court of the Allies who had fought Japan. At Yasukuni Shrine we call these the “Showa Martyrs” [including General Tojo Hideki], and they are worshipped as gods.

Yasukuni Shrine is the shrine where all Japanese go to worship. So now you know what gods are worshipped at Yasukuni Shrine. The gods of Yasukuni Shrine gave their noble lives on the battle field with the hope that Japan might continue forever in peace and independence and that the marvellous history and traditions of Japan bequeathed by our ancestors might continue on and on forever. That Japan is peaceful and prosperous is thanks to all of those have become gods at Yasukuni Shrine...

What is evident from the Yasukuni pamphlet is that the shrine since its founding defined all the wars that Imperial Japan fought, including, of course, the so-called “Greater East Asia War” (the Asia-Pacific theatre of the Second World War), as wars of self-defence, waged for the purpose of preserving national peace and independence. According to the pamphlet, not a single war was entered into for the purposes of colonial expansion or aggression. This perspective is fundamental to, and inseparable from, the very *raison d’être* of the shrine, and as such constitutes what is referred to as the Yasukuni view of history.

At the root of the Yasukuni view of history is a peculiar, though powerful, sense of victimhood that was born in Japan as it embarked on its path of modernization. I am referring here to a historical paradigm, perhaps not so uncommon in non-Western, late-developing countries, that the nation “suffered” modernization—that it did not choose to modernize but was instead passively forced to for the sake of national survival when Western imperial powers came threateningly banging at the gates (Nakano, 2006: p. 400).

Needless to say, there is something deeply spurious about the notion that Japan, a rather “successful” modernizer and imperial power in its own right, experienced modernity in a passive mode as its victim. Nevertheless, the unwelcome visit of Commodore Perry’s black ships to Uraga port demanding trade at all costs served both as a formative experience and a powerful symbol of the national peace that was broken by the outside world. According to this paradigm, Japan was a peaceful country in harmony with nature since time eternal, but in modern times, the Western imperial powers started to pose a serious menace, and in consequence, Japan had to modernize, westernize, and build up its military, and join the race of imperialist expansion—all for the sake of national sovereignty, self-defence and independence.

The State was at the heart of the modernization process of Japan and it played a key role in “moulding” national identity (Garon, 1998). The “Imperial Rescript on Education” of 1890 that the pupils of the Japanese Empire were required to memorize at schools famously preached: “should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth.” Alongside schools, the military played a similarly crucial role of inculcating a sense of the nation, and the “Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors” of 1882 ordered: “Remember that, as the protection of the state and the maintenance of its power depend upon the strength of its arms, the growth or decline of this strength must affect the nation’s destiny for good or for evil; therefore neither be led astray by current opinions nor meddle in politics, but with single heart fulfil your essential duty of loyalty, and bear in mind that duty is weightier than a mountain, while death is lighter than a feather. Never by failing in moral principle fall into disgrace and bring dishonour upon your name.”

This “reluctant modernization/imperialism” paradigm forms the basis of the Yasukuni view of history, and it enables the Japanese state to absolve itself from responsibility for wrongdoing by pointing to those wrongs

committed by the West. This bias makes it extraordinarily difficult for Japan to come to terms with its past role as an aggressor because of a deep-seated sense of victimhood—that it engaged in war and colonialism reluctantly and unwillingly and only for the sake of national self-defence.

The common justification proffered by rightist Japanese political leaders is, “Why accuse only Japan, when other countries behaved in much the same way?” This reasoning enables leaders to evade war responsibility generally and more specific responsibility for such wartime crimes and atrocities as the Nanjing Massacre and sex slave system (“comfort women”). This abdication of responsibility fuels a victim mentality and any international condemnation of Japan’s negationist attitude further reinforces the sense of victimhood.

In fact, the Yasukuni view of history need not be presented in an aggressively revisionist manner. For instance, when Prime Minister Abe Shinzo delivered his keynote address to sell his initiative to lift the constitutional ban on Japan exercising its right of collective self-defence under the banner of “proactive contribution to peace” at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2014, he naively (if incredibly) claimed that “Japan has for multiple generations walked a single path, loving freedom and human rights, valuing law and order, abhorring war, and earnestly and determinedly pursuing peace, never wavering in the least”³ as if militarist Japan and its wars of aggression in the Asia-Pacific region simply did not happen.

A much softer, and therefore more common expression of this victim mentality than the Yasukuni view of history is the narrative of the Asia-Pacific War as an enormous tragedy in which “everyone suffered”—rather like a natural disaster. In fact, it may even be argued to be at the heart of post-war Japanese pacifism on the left of the political spectrum. Indeed, many ordinary Japanese had reasons to remember and narrate the war as an experience of great sacrifice as the civilians suffered air raids, and even the two nuclear bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Seaton, 2007: pp. 27–28; Shibata, 2015). It is well known that the inscription on the Cenotaph for the A-bomb victims in Hiroshima says, “Let all the souls here rest in peace; for we shall not repeat the evil,” though in the original Japanese there is no subject in the latter half of this prayer, so who committed what evil is left unclear from the inscription itself. The official explanation provided by the city of Hiroshima today notes that “The inscription on the front panel offers a prayer for the peaceful repose of the victims and a pledge on behalf of *all humanity* never to repeat the evil of war.”⁴ It is as

if, through Hiroshima, the Japanese are able to represent all humanity as the victims of the evil of war in general.

The soldiers of the Imperial military who returned from the frontline also most frequently adopted this narrative of collective suffering by the evil of war. After all, the most common cause of death for the Japanese soldiers—some 60% according to one estimate—was “starvation” and “starvation-related illness” (Fujiwara, 2001). Not surprisingly, the surviving soldiers were far more likely to speak of their experience of hunger and suffering than of the war crimes and atrocities they committed once they returned home. Thus, without becoming aggressively revisionist, many Japanese nevertheless evaded the vexing issue of war responsibility in the post-war period by finding a more comfortable refuge in a version of pacifism that oddly takes agency out of the war experience and turns everyone, including the Japanese themselves, into equal victims.

CONTESTED MEMORY AND THE EVENTUAL RISE OF INTERNATIONALISM

Democratization of education began with the Occupation, and in 1947 the Basic Law on Education was enacted. This represented the basic educational principles that matched the new Constitution of Japan. The monopoly control over the textbooks, which used to be compiled directly by the state, was liberated and replaced by a new screening system of independently compiled textbooks. Until the mid-1950s, the history textbooks provided clear accounts of Japan’s war of aggression, including such atrocities as the Nanjing Massacre. The conservatives were, however, quick to re-establish a highly regimented style of education in classrooms, and started an orchestrated campaign against “biased” textbooks, and by the late 1950s reference to Japan’s wartime aggressions was eliminated. Improvements were made at long last in the mid-1970s, after Professor Ienaga Saburo, a historian, fought and won lengthy and arduous court cases that put a brake on the abuse of the screening system (Tawara, 2013: p. 39).

Angered by the re-inserted descriptions of wartime atrocities in the history textbooks, the Liberal Democratic Party conservatives started the “second wave” of attacks against “biased” textbooks in the late 1970s. As the screening system was once again placed under huge political pressure, the issue acquired an international dimension in 1982 as China and South

Korea lodged protest against the political efforts to distort history education in Japan (Tawara, 2013: p. 40).

This diplomatic problem led to the adoption of the Miyazawa Statement on History Textbooks on 26 August 1982 (Miyazawa, 1982):

1. The Japanese Government and the Japanese people are deeply aware of the fact that acts by our country in the past caused tremendous suffering and damage to the peoples of Asian countries, including the Republic of Korea (ROK) and China, and have followed the path of a pacifist state with remorse and determination that such acts must never be repeated. Japan has recognized, in the Japan-ROK Joint Communique of 1965, that the “past relations are regrettable, and Japan feels deep remorse,” and in the Japan-China Joint Communique, that Japan is “keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war and deeply reproaches itself.” These statements confirm Japan’s remorse and determination which I stated above and this recognition has not changed at all to this day.
2. This spirit in the Japan-ROK Joint Communique and the Japan-China Joint Communique naturally should also be respected in Japan’s school education and textbook authorization. Recently, however, the Republic of Korea, China, and others have been criticizing some descriptions in Japanese textbooks. From the perspective of building friendship and goodwill with neighboring countries, Japan will pay due attention to these criticisms and make corrections at the Government’s responsibility.
3. To this end, in relation to future authorization of textbooks, the Government will revise the Guideline for Textbook Authorization after discussions in the Textbook Authorization and Research Council and give due consideration to the effect mentioned above . . .

The Miyazawa Statement in turn led to the adoption of the so-called “neighbouring countries clause” in the textbook screening standards of the Ministry of Education that says, “Necessary considerations should be made in dealing with modern and contemporary historical phenomena between Japan and neighboring Asian countries from the point of view of international understanding and international cooperation.”

Thus, at long last, the Nanjing Massacre was referred to in all textbooks for junior high schools in 1984, in all high school textbooks in 1985, and for six-graders’ textbooks in primary schools in 1992 (Tawara, 2013: p. 41).

These developments, however, also triggered a series of revisionist reactions from nationalist politicians. In 1986, the newly appointed Minister of Education, Fujio Masayuki, incurred strong criticisms for such comments as: “The annexation of the Korean peninsula was done on the basis of consensus, and Japan is not solely responsible for it. Korea is too.” As Fujio refused to step down when asked by Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, he was dismissed by the Prime Minister. In 1988, the then-Director-General of National Land Agency (state minister), Okuno Seisuke was forced to resign as he denied that Japan had aggressive intentions during the Second World War. In 1994, a former Chief of Staff of the Ground Self-Defence Force turned politician, Nagano Shigeto, was forced to resign after only eleven days in office for stating in a newspaper interview that he believed the Nanjing Massacre to be a complete fabrication. In the same year, state minister Sakurai Shin, Director-General of the Environment Agency, resigned after claiming in a press conference that “Japan did not fight with an intent to conduct a war of aggression. We shouldn’t think that Japan alone was wrong. Most Asian countries were able to become independent from the European colonial rule thanks to Japan.” And, in 1995, state minister Eto Takami, Director-General of the Management and Coordination Agency, was forced to resign after making the following off-the-record comment: “Murayama’s statement that the Annexation of Korea was forced by Japan is false. During the colonial rule, Japan did some bad things, but it also did good things.”

The above cases were not isolated: I have cited only those that led to ministerial resignations, but there were additional comments made that did not result in political leaders losing their posts. One may point out that the revisionist comments were particularly numerous and frequent in the mid-1990s, exactly when the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War pushed the issue of war commemoration and war responsibility to the forefront, and in the period after 1991, when Japan was trying to respond to the outbreak of the sex slaves (“comfort women”) controversy.

The crimes of the “comfort women” system and their perpetrators received only very limited attention in the Tokyo war crimes tribunal and in various Class B and Class C war crimes trials (Yoshimi, 1995: pp. 160–192). Nor was the issue addressed in the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951 or indeed in the Japan-Korea Basic Treaty in 1965. Awareness of women’s rights and of wartime sexual violence was still lacking internationally; moreover, the military dictatorship in South

Korea did not provide an environment in which the victims could reasonably be expected to step forward and speak up.⁵ It was only after South Korea embarked on the process of democratization in the late 1980s that the wall of silence was finally breached. When a Japanese socialist parliamentarian raised questions over “comfort women” for the first time in the Diet in 1990, the government denied any involvement of the state and the military, and placed the responsibility solely on private operators. In the following year, the first victim appeared in Korea denouncing the system and holding the Japanese state responsible for the crimes committed. The Japanese government began its investigation as many more victims stepped forward (Wam, 2013: pp. 44–57).

This led to the Kono Statement of 1993 that acknowledged state involvement as well as the coercion that underpinned the system, and offered apologies to the victims. I cite here some of the key paragraphs (Kono, 1993):

As a result of the study which indicates that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women. Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere.

As to the origin of those comfort women who were transferred to the war areas, excluding those from Japan, those from the Korean Peninsula accounted for a large part. The Korean Peninsula was under Japanese rule in those days, and their recruitment, transfer, control, etc., were conducted generally against their will, through coaxing, coercion, etc.

Undeniably, this was an act, with the involvement of the military authorities of the day, that severely injured the honor and dignity of many women. The Government of Japan would like to take this opportunity once again to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those, irrespective of place of origin, who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

In 1995, the Japanese government went on to set up the National Fund for Peace in Asia for Women (known as the Asian Women's Fund) to conduct an atonement project for the individual victims in South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, the Netherlands and Indonesia. In many ways, the Fund was a rather imperfect response to the grievances of the victims because the Japanese state took the position that its legal responsibilities had already been settled in the various inter-state treaties, and it was merely out of a sense of moral responsibility that the Fund (not the state directly) was to offer "atonement money" that consisted of civil society donations (though state funds were also paid into the Fund). As a result, the Korean government, although initially supportive of the Fund's initiative, turned hostile, as did Taiwan, and the project ended with only very limited success. Nevertheless, the Kono Statement and the Asian Women's Fund did represent efforts on the part of the government to grope for a settlement of the issue by acknowledging its involvement.⁶

With these political efforts as a backdrop, the 1994 and 1995 (onward) editions of all high school Japanese history textbooks and from the 1997 editions onward all junior high school history textbooks started to include reference to "comfort women." This was a very significant development (Wam, 2013: pp. 64–65).

As I argued earlier, it is possible to point to the dominance of a certain liberal/neoliberal, internationalist orientation in the decade between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s (Nakano, 2015). One may indeed argue that the revisionist comments made by politicians which I noted above reflect how out of step and uncomfortable the reactionary nationalists were made to feel at a time when Japan's dominant political trend was to squarely deal with the historical facts and seek reconciliation with China and South Korea. It bears emphasizing that in most cases these revisionist ministers were forced to resign as their comments were widely repudiated not just by China and South Korea but also by the Japanese media, civil society organizations and opposition parties.

As the bubble economy (1986–1991) inflated Japan's economic might and boosted its self-confidence, the country's ruling elites were keen to lift the post-war ban on playing an active security role overseas. It was in this context that even such nationalists as Nakasone accepted that securing the understanding, if not active support, of Japan's neighbours and former victims, most notably China and South Korea, was a precondition to the realization of their new political ambitions on the world scene. It is almost hard to believe from today's perspective, but following 4 June 1989, while

Japan joined the United States and Europe in imposing economic sanctions against China, it was also the first to lift them, as it was eager to reintegrate China into the world economy.

On 10 August 1993, Hosokawa Morihiro, the first non-Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) prime minister in thirty-eight years, became the first prime minister to clearly acknowledge and express remorse that Japan fought a “war of aggression” (*shinryaku senso*) in the Second World War. Then on 15 August 1995, at the fiftieth anniversary of war defeat for Japan, the Socialist prime minister Murayama Tomiichi’s cabinet issued the Murayama Statement that included the key paragraph “During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history” (Murayama, 1995).

At the time, it looked as if the persistent hold of the Yasukuni view of history, and indeed of the victimhood paradigm of modern Japan, was finally being broken. Japanese national identity showed signs of developing into one as a proactive agent of internationalization, while also assuming more fully its past responsibility as an aggressor in the region.

It should be noted that there were important limitations to this internationalist orientation. For one, the “history” issue was dealt with more out of “consideration” for the national sentiments of the neighbouring countries than a burning desire to find out and accept inconvenient historical truths. For another, the internationalist initiatives regarding the wartime past went hand in hand with—and, to a degree, served as a cover for—an assertion of national identity and authority in today’s international politics.

REVISIONIST BACKLASH IN STAGNANT JAPAN

Such internationalist initiatives, however, were quickly replaced by the onset of a revisionist backlash as the newly introduced single-member district electoral system accelerated the demise of the political left

(Nakano, 2015). The electoral outcomes shifted the political balance considerably to the right and the right wing of the LDP was energized. It is ironic but true that the liberal/neoliberal turn of domestic politics—namely the introduction of the single-member electoral system and the resulting pressure for a confrontational, bipolar party system—contributed to the rightward shift of the LDP as well as of the political spectrum as a whole. By the late 1990s, a change of tide away from a liberal, internationalist orientation to a revisionist, nationalist orientation was obvious in the LDP.

Such a change was also a reflection of the rapid generational turnover that proceeded in the 1990s. Fifty years into the post-war period, the old generation, with direct experience of wartime, was being replaced by a new cohort of politicians who were born after the Second World War. As they built their political careers in the post-Cold War era and while the neoliberal norm was quickly gaining ascendancy, their worldview as well as understanding of history was bound to be different from that of the earlier generation. Abe, born in the post-war period and elected to the Diet for the first time in 1993, was a standard-bearer of this new breed of dynastic politicians, who challenged the post-war conventions and taboos, and questioned existing settlements and accommodation as betrayals of traditional Japanese values and uniqueness—above all, the historical “truth” that Japan never erred.

Feeling besieged, and with a deep sense of national crisis (and indeed with a renewed sense of victimhood) the revisionists regrouped themselves, and—where they had once lost ground through a sequence of individual revisionist comments and the inevitable ministerial resignations that followed—they now began organizing concerted campaigns that brought together politicians, intellectuals, media and grassroots activists to prepare the counterattack, to “take Japan back.”

In January 1997, a group of intellectuals and media personalities, including Fujioka Nobukatsu (Professor of Education at the University of Tokyo) and Kobayashi Yoshinori (popular cartoonist), formally launched the Association for the Compilation of a New History Textbook (*tsukurukai*) with the goal of producing and disseminating a new history textbook that is not, in their view, contaminated by the “masochistic” view of history. They were particularly angry at the inclusion of a reference to “comfort women” in the existing textbooks. From the very inception of the revisionist movement, Fuji-Sankei media group

and Bungei Shunju publishing company among others provided its media platform (Tawara, 1997).

In February, Abe took part in the establishment of the Young Parliamentarians' Group that Consider Japan's Future and History Education together with the late Nakagawa Shoichi that brought together the new generation of revisionist right wingers. The shared concern that united these politicians was contained in the question they posed: "Are our children going to study with textbooks that are not based on facts and are anti-Japanese? Is Japan of the future going to be OK when these children come of age?" (*Nihon no Zento to Rekishi Kyoiku wo Kangaeru Wakate Giin no Kai*, 1997: p. 3). The group initially functioned as the parliamentary lobby group for the passage of the *tsukurukai* textbook through the screening system—a goal that was met in 2001.⁷

The historical revisionist agenda was, of course, part of a wider revisionist agenda that also included the revision of the constitution. In 1997, extreme right-wing intellectuals and media celebrities joined forces with the religious right, which included the Shintoist lobby but also some of the new religions, to form the Japan Conference (*Nippon Kaigi*). Its parliamentary arm, more than anything else, grew in influence to represent the shift of power within the LDP away from the factions to revisionist ideological groups.

The revisionist backlash formed an integral part of the New Right ideology, together with neoliberalism, which came to be the new orthodoxy of conservative rule in Japan during the post-bubble economy "lost decade." As public deficits continued to grow, and the bad loan crisis dampened prospects for a sustained economic recovery, neoliberal reforms were introduced with increasingly far-reaching social consequences. Neoliberalism (economic liberalism), however, was no longer accompanied by political liberalism; it was, instead, complemented by revisionism. When social services were being curtailed and protections reduced, revisionist nationalism provided a fiscally cheaper alternative to serious efforts to maintaining welfare as a means of hiding the gap between the rich and the poor and ensuring a minimum level of equity, while still promoting national cohesion.

As Abe and his cohort were rapidly promoted during the Koizumi government (2001–2006), the revisionist history group dropped "Young" from its name, and continued to pursue its revisionist agenda with a growing focus on eliminating reference to "comfort women" from the textbooks. During the Koizumi era, a growing "politicization" of

foreign and security policy-making also took place. The bureaucratic machinery for a stronger prime ministerial intervention in foreign and security policy was set up by the Hashimoto reforms, but Koizumi effectuated the changes when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs went through an extraordinarily turbulent phase following the breakout of its slush funds scandal in 2001 and the destabilizing tenure of Tanaka Makiko as foreign minister. Overall, there was a trend towards greater concentration of power in the Prime Minister's office and away from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (particularly the country and region experts, including, notably, the so-called China school), as well as a growing politicization of top diplomats, now eager to serve the ideological convictions of their political masters to climb up the career ladder.

In spite of the fact that Koizumi had no track record of a strong interest in the Yasukuni issue, he made an unexpected campaign promise that he would visit the shrine on 15 August if elected. This was an attempt to get the votes of the members of the War-Bereaved Families Association. Indeed, Koizumi deepened his commitment to visiting Yasukuni when Chinese leaders opposed them. He also seems to have realized more fully the political gains he could score domestically by effectively playing up the nationalist card. He disingenuously claimed that the Yasukuni visits were a matter of his "heart" (thus presumably deeply personal), and also insisted that as the premier of Japan he was not going to allow Chinese leaders to tell him where he could or could not go in his own country.

The right-wing nationalists, who were suspicious of Koizumi's neo-liberal structural reforms,⁸ which they considered to be an unpatriotic selling of the family silver to American corporate interests, nevertheless supported him for his "patriotic" stance against the Chinese bullies. George W. Bush's administration, which coincided with Koizumi's premiership, tolerated and even welcomed what they regarded as expressions of "healthy nationalism," in the hope that they would allow Japan to share more of the military burden of the Iraq War and the "War on Terror." Enjoying a close personal bond with Bush, Koizumi asserted that as long as US-Japan relations were in good standing, nothing else mattered.

And although the leaders of Japanese big business were forced to acquiesce to what they largely regarded as Koizumi's eccentric stubbornness, they remained determined to ensure that his successor would not repeat the same mistake and further place Japanese companies at a

disadvantage in the Chinese market. This is why when Abe took over he chose to act pragmatically and proceeded to mend ties with China as a matter of priority.⁹

Abe nevertheless proceeded with the wider revisionist agenda in his first government, and succeeded in revising the Basic Law on Education to insert the “love of country” as a goal of education, upgraded the Defence Agency to a full-fledged ministry and passed the enabling law for an eventual referendum to amend the constitution. On the “comfort women” issue, Abe had to maintain the Kono Statement as the official government position, but in March 2007 he made a point of emphasizing that no written document directly showing that coercion by the military or the state police was used in the recruitment of the “comfort women.” The question referred to *kyosei renko* (kidnap-like coercive rounding up of women) in Japanese. In reality, many official documents have been discovered since that proved that there were cases in which state coercion was used in the recruitment of sex slaves,¹⁰ but in any case, the intention of Abe and his entourage was clearly to do what they could to undermine the legitimacy and credibility of the Kono Statement.

In the meantime, the relentless efforts of Abe and his fellow historical revisionists bore fruit, as by 2006 reference to “comfort women” in the main text of all of the junior high school textbooks was eliminated (and by 2012 the words “comfort women” disappeared completely from all junior high school textbooks). In fact, when one considers the fact that the second to last sentence of the Kono Statement notes that “We shall face squarely the historical facts as described above instead of evading them, and take them to heart as lessons of history. We hereby reiterate our firm determination never to repeat the same mistake by forever engraving such issues in our memories through the study and teaching of history,” it is clear that Abe is only very superficially upholding it.

The same strategy—superficially upholding the Kono Statement in order to minimize international (most of all, US) criticisms, while seeking to undermine it and the “comfort women” issue itself by narrowing the focus of the dispute to whether the kidnap-like rounding up of young women by the Japanese state was the main method of recruitment in the Korean peninsula—has been adopted by Abe since he returned to power in December 2012. He appointed a committee of experts to investigate the process through which research was conducted to formulate the statement, while at the same time ruling out the possibility of revising it. Indeed, when this committee reported back in June 2014, the conclusion

was that no evidence was found to invalidate the Kono Statement and, therefore, it remained the official position. The report, however, revealed that there were close consultations between the governments of Japan and South Korea over specific word choices in the statement. Since it was clear that Abe was hinting that the statement was a product of diplomatic negotiations and compromise (rather than purely academic historical investigations), the Korean government protested vocally against what it saw as an effort to subvert the statement.

In August 2014, when the liberal-leaning *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper belatedly issued corrections and apologies for “comfort women”-related articles that it published on the basis of false testimonies (the so-called Yoshida testimonies that claimed that young women were rounded up coercively by the Japanese military on Jeju Island) (*Asahi Shimbun*, 2014), the conservative media led by *Yomiuri* and *Sankei* newspapers, together with a range of sensationalist weekly and monthly magazines, and with the not-so-covert encouragement of the Abe government, launched a vicious anti-*Asahi* campaign that sought to create the impression that the comfort women issue was an *Asahi* fabrication. This was in spite of the fact that the Yoshida testimonies were considered dubious and unreliable even by *Asahi* itself in 1997, and indeed, neither the scholarly works by such engaged historians as Professors Yoshimi and Hayashi, nor the Kono Statement in 1993 adopted the Yoshida testimonies as evidence in the first place.

In a parliamentary exchange in October 2014, Abe denied that he intended revising the existing textbooks in light of the *Asahi* retractions of its previous “comfort women” based on the Yoshida testimonies.¹¹ He nevertheless underlined that future screening of the textbooks would be conducted along the new standards adopted by his government earlier in the year—which decreed that if the government held an official view on a certain issue in modern history, then the textbooks would be required to state it.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The revisionist backlash led by Abe and his close associates since the late 1990s continues to be one of the major causes of tension between Japan and its most important neighbours, China and South Korea. In recent months, some renewed efforts have been made to restore a semblance of normalcy in Sino-Japanese relations with the resumption of brief, awkward

bilateral summit meetings. The Chinese government, however, remains deeply suspicious of Abe's revisionism, and its leaders, not surprisingly, tend to associate it with his ongoing efforts at Japan's "security normalization." Abe is further adding fuel to the fire by his insistence on issuing an "Abe Statement" to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, which he hopes to make a "future-oriented" document that omits the "heartfelt apology" that was part of the Murayama Statement.

The current status of ROK-Japan relations is in many ways even worse than those with China. There was a prolonged period, for example, when there was not a single bilateral summit meeting between Abe and Park Geun-hye since the two leaders assumed office up until December 2015. This is not to say that the responsibility for heightened tensions in East Asia lies solely with Japan, but there is no denying that the legacy of Japanese revisionism greatly adds to the poisoned regional atmosphere—so much so that the US attitude regarding Japanese historical revisionism had to go through considerable change from the Bush-Koizumi era.

Abe's surprise visit to Yasukuni in December 2013 revealed the lack of trust and agreement between political leaders, in spite of clear and repeated communications from the Obama administration that Abe should not visit the shrine. In a rare moment of public admonition of its key ally, the US embassy in Japan issued a press release that stated that while Japan is a valued ally and friend, it "is disappointed that Japan's leadership has taken an action that will exacerbate tensions with Japan's neighbors" (US Department of State, 2013).

The US attitude towards the "comfort women" issue has similarly become firm and clear-cut in opposing the revision of the Kono Statement in the strongest possible terms. On the occasion of his visit to Seoul in April 2014 right after he met with Abe, Obama reiterated that "any of us who look back on the history of what happened to the comfort women here in South Korea, for example, have to recognize that this was a terrible, egregious violation of human rights. Those women were violated in ways that, even in the midst of war, were shocking. And they deserve to be heard; they deserve to be respected; and there should be an accurate and clear account of what happened" (Obama and Park, 2014).

These tendencies are by no means limited to the executive branch of the US government. In fact, lobbying activities by the Korean (and indeed Asian) American community has had greater success in Congress as was powerfully shown by the passage of House Resolution 121 asserting that

“the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces’ coercion of young women into sexual slavery” in July 2007 (Honda, 2007).

Similarly, the US Congressional Research Service, which already noted in its first report since Abe made his comeback that his strong nationalism should be “closely monitored by Japan’s neighbors as well as the United States” (Chanlett-Avery et al., 2013), has elevated its language in its latest report issued in September 2014: “Abe’s approach to issues like the so-called ‘comfort women’ sex slaves from the World War II era, history textbooks, visits to the Yasukuni Shrine that honors Japan’s war dead, and statements on a territorial dispute with South Korea are all ongoing points of tension in the region. To many U.S. observers, Abe brings both positive and negative qualities to the alliance, at once bolstering it but also renewing historical animosities that could disturb the regional security environment” (Chanlett-Avery et al., 2014).

In response to this pressure from the United States, the Japanese Government sought to address and finally resolve the “comfort women” issue. In January 2016, it offered direct reparations to the surviving “comfort women” in return for the Korean Government agreeing to shelve the issue permanently and for the removal of the Comfort Women Statue which stands in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul. This agreement has stalled as the surviving Comfort Women were not consulted and did not agree to the major terms of the agreement. They would rather have a personal apology from the Japanese Prime Minister than reparations. This means that the “comfort women” issue continues to impede easy relationships between Seoul and Tokyo.

As is symbolized by Abe’s campaign slogan “Taking Japan Back,” the old-fashioned victimhood paradigm is now fully reinstated as a dominant perspective in foreign and security policy-making, while making use of proactive internationalist rhetoric largely as a cover for the premier’s jarring ideological beliefs. In view of a serious lack of checks, the ghost of historical revisionism is likely to continue to haunt East Asia and jeopardize a cool-headed approach to diplomacy and security that is rooted in realism.

This is all deeply ironic. The relative economic decline, combined with growing inequality triggered a crisis in the legitimacy of the state in Japan (as in so many other countries), particularly since the late 1990s. In order

to overcome this, conservative ruling elites, led notably by Koizumi and Abe, accelerated the pace of US-led security “normalization” and “structural reform” of the economy, and it was, in a sense, to make up for the further loss in state authority that revisionist nationalism was reinstated. Indeed, US policy-makers, who once welcomed what they regarded as a “healthy” nationalism that assisted “reformist” Japanese prime ministers to transform the country’s security as well as economic policies, are now increasingly wary of the “genie” that is out of the bottle.

NOTES

1. The original pamphlet, widely distributed at Yasukuni, is entitled *Yasukuni Daihyakka: Watashitachi no Yasukuni Jinja* (Yasukuni Shrine, 1992). All translation quoted here is provided in Gardner 1999, except that I corrected his obvious mistranslation of *Daitoa Senso* as “Great Pacific War” to “Greater East Asia War.” What is in parenthesis [] is the translator’s.
2. It bears noting that well over 85% of the gods enshrined in Yasukuni are from the “Greater East Asia War.”
3. “Peace and Prosperity in Asia, forevermore: Japan for the rule of law, Asia for the rule of law, and the rule of law for all of us” (Abe, 2014).
4. Italics are added. The explanation is also provided on the homepage of the City of Hiroshima (The City of Hiroshima, 2001).
5. It bears reminding ourselves that the first leaders of the post-independence South Korean military drew heavily from the officers trained by the Japanese (or Manchurian) imperial military during the colonial era. This, of course, includes President Park Geun-hye’s father, former President Park Chung-hee.
6. See: The Asian Women’s Fund’s own comprehensive website for details: <http://www.awf.or.jp> (The Asian Women’s Fund, 2007).
7. The revisionist textbooks, however, continued to struggle through the screening process and faced even greater challenges in increasing its adoption rate at schools since. By 2007, the *tsukurukai* itself split because of internal disagreements, and today the more “successful” revisionist textbooks are published by Ikuhosha, a Fuji-Sankei subsidiary. Its overall adoption rates are still around 4% nationally, but they found success in prefectures and municipalities with revisionist governor and mayors, for instance, Tokyo metropolitan schools, Saitama prefectural schools, and Yokohama city schools.
8. Most notably, his pet project to privatize the postal services, including the postal savings, which happens to be the world’s largest bank, divided the Japan Conference members at its heart.

9. As is well known, Abe later expressed strong regrets that he did not visit the shrine during his first premiership, but that was after he resigned.
10. See: Fight for Justice (2013) at: http://fightforjustice.info/?page_id=2789&lang=en.
11. In reality a rather bizarre idea, given that Asahi's adoption of Yoshida testimonies in its past articles had no impact on history textbooks in the first place, and also that references to comfort women were already eliminated from junior history textbooks in any case.

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Trust and Trust-Building in Northeast Asia: The Need for Empathy for Japan-ROK- China Security Cooperation – A Japanese Security Perspective

Yamaguchi Noboru and Sano Shutaro

In recent years, Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK) and China have come to play increasingly important roles in maintaining peace and stability in Northeast Asia as well as in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. Issues such as North Korea's nuclear and missile development have forced the three countries to work more closely together than before.

There have been ups and downs, however, in the levels of relationship among the three countries. On the one hand, ROK-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relationships have strengthened economically and culturally over the years. Bilateral trade has been maintained at a high level. Exchanges of cultural goods such as music, manga (Japanese cartoons) and television programmes have expanded. The numbers of tourists and exchange students to Japan have generally increased. But on the other hand, there have

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been continuous disputes over territorial issues (such as the Senkaku/Diaoyu and Takeshima/Dokodo Islands) as well as historic issues (such as comfort women, the Nanjing Massacre, visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and confrontations over the content of textbooks), which have affected the levels of cultural exchange as well as security cooperation among Japan, South Korea and China.¹

These challenges stem largely from insufficient trust-building and deep-rooted divisions among the three countries. From a security perspective, the issues are deeply rooted in the difference in each country's threat perceptions, resulting in the way each country pursues its defence and security policies. The issues are also related, in part, to identity and recognition challenges. As noted in other chapters of this volume, Japan, South Korea and China have different identities, formed in part through the wariness and painful sensitivity which marks their perceptions of each other.

This chapter explores the critical issues surrounding Japan-ROK-China cooperation from Japan's security perspective. First, it will focus on Japan's basic position in building trust in Northeast Asia. Second, it will clarify the growing opportunities and challenges for the bilateral and trilateral cooperation. Third, it will explore the impact of identity and recognition challenges on security-related issues. And finally, it will provide short- and long-term recommendations in building trust across boundaries of harm and difference among the three countries. In the process, empathy is key (Welch, 2014).² Empathy is a notion that stresses the importance of seeing the world from the perspectives of others. Empathy is an intermediate stage between confidence (initial stage) and trust (final stage) that enhances cooperation between relevant actors. It is expected to fill the gap between confidence and trust, thereby forming a stronger foundation in building perpetual trust among the actors.

JAPAN'S PURSUIT OF TRUST-BUILDING IN NORTHEAST ASIA

Since the end of World War II, Japan has maintained its security and contributed to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region by enhancing its alliance with the United States and by deepening cooperative relationships with other countries. Furthermore, Japan has pledged to contribute even more proactively to securing peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and in the international community. This is the fundamental principle of Japan's national security, which was clarified in its first-ever

National Security Strategy (NSS) issued in December 2013. The year 2013 was an epoch-making moment for Japan as the Government of Japan (GOJ) made important initiatives in its security policies, including the adoption of the NSS and the National Defence Programme Guidelines (NDPG) as well as the establishment of the National Security Council. These policies were based on the belief that Japan needed to be a “proactive contributor to peace” with active involvement in the security realm both in the Asia-Pacific region and in the international milieu. Japan set forth six strategic approaches, including the need to strengthen diplomacy and security cooperation with Japan’s partners for peace and stability in the international community (Government of Japan, 2013).

With regard to South Korea, the GOJ clearly acknowledges that South Korea is a neighbouring country of utmost importance for the security of Japan. The GOJ understands that despite different stances over issues such as the Takeshima/Dokdo Islands and competing interpretations of history, close cooperation with South Korea is of “great significance for the peace and stability of the region, including in addressing North Korean nuclear and missile issues” (Government of Japan, 2013: p. 23). In March 2014, when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met his counterpart Park Geun-hye in the Netherlands, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga reinstated the importance of the bilateral relationship with South Korea, and emphasized that both Japan and South Korea valued freedom and democracy and were important neighbours, and that it was extremely important for both countries and for the security of East Asia as a whole to establish a future-oriented relationship (*South China Morning Post*, 2014).

As for China, Japan reasons that “stable relations between Japan and China are an essential factor for peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.” To this end, Japan has pledged that it “will strive to construct and enhance a Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests with China in all areas, including politics, economy, finance, security, culture and personal exchanges” (Government of Japan, 2013: p. 25). These views are in line with the statement by Prime Minister Abe during the 13th International Institute of Strategic Studies Asian Security Summit in Singapore where he emphasized that the new Japanese “are determined ultimately to take on the peace, order, and stability of this region as their own responsibility,” and that they “possess the drive to shoulder the responsibilities of peace and order in the Asia-Pacific region, working together with our regional partners with whom we

share the values of human rights and freedom” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2014).

Meanwhile, both Seoul and Beijing have expressed their intentions to expand their roles in the security realm. In August 2014, President Park Geun-hye vowed that South Korea will expand its contribution to peace and co-prosperity in the world (*Yonhap News Agency*, 2014). In a similar vein, President Xi Jinping stressed that China will work along with other parties to advocate a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security concept in Asia, establish a new regional security cooperation architecture, and jointly build a road for the security of Asia during the 4th Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in May 2014 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC, 2014). While Japan and South Korea do not share the same security framework with China, opportunities for cooperation have expanded as the three countries are now willing to play a more active role in maintaining the peace and stability of the region.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

For many decades, Japan has deepened its economic relations with both South Korea and China. Over the years, economic cooperation and competition have made the three countries increasingly integrated. Despite the various identity and recognition challenges that the three countries confront, there is a growing need for these countries to cooperate on issues beyond the economic realm including on security.

First, the three countries, together with the international community, can work together for common goals such as denuclearization and peace and security of the Korean Peninsula. North Korea’s nuclear and missile developments have been a critical issue for the region. Some have pointed out that North Korea is unlikely to use its nuclear weapons in any offensive military action (Roehrig, 2012: p. 94). In February 2009, Denis Blair, the US director of national intelligence, noted in congressional testimony that “Pyongyang probably views its nuclear weapons as being more for deterrence, international prestige, and coercive diplomacy than for war fighting and would consider using nuclear weapons only under certain narrow circumstances” (Blair, 2009: p. 24). The true intentions of North Korea’s leadership remain unclear, but many experts see that North Korea’s nuclear programmes will cause further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) as well as related nuclear devices and

technologies. If North Korea exports nuclear weapons and related technologies to non-nuclear parts of the world, it would devastate the international scheme for strengthening the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime. It is imperative, therefore, for the international community, including Japan, South Korea and China, at the minimum to manage and prevent North Korea's nuclear arsenals from being proliferated.

Second, the protection of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) in the Asia-Pacific region has become increasingly important for the Asia-Pacific countries, including Japan, South Korea and China. For the three countries, the protection of the SLOCs in the western Pacific, East and South China Seas, and the Indian Ocean has been of vital national security interest, as they import a large portion of their crude oil from the Middle East. According to one analysis, China now imports roughly half of its oil from the Persian Gulf, overtaking the United States in oil imports from that region (Plumer, 2014). Needless to say, no country, including China, is willing to rely solely on foreign assistance. A Chinese strategist admits;

No matter how much China desires a harmonious world and harmonious oceans, it cannot possibly rely on other countries' naval forces to guard the safety of its SLOCs. A big country that builds its prosperity on foreign trade cannot put the safety of its ocean fleet in the hands of other countries. Doing so would be the equivalent of placing its throat under another's dagger and marking its blood vessels in red ink (Hailin, 2009).

Despite some pessimism, countries can, for example, exchange information to secure the safety of the SLOCs. In this sense, a joint effort to strengthen their capabilities in these waters will be of great importance for the three countries.

Third, Japan, South Korea and China share a common interest in engaging in international cooperative activities, including United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKO). Japan's contribution to UN peacekeeping began in 1992, when it dispatched over 1,200 personnel to Cambodia. Despite its short history, Japan has, since then, sent its forces to Mozambique (1993–95), Rwanda (1994), Golan Heights (1996–2013), East Timor (2002–04, 2010–12), Afghanistan (2001), Nepal (2007–11), Sudan (2008–11), Haiti (2010–13) and South Sudan (2011–2017). The roles of Japan's peacekeeping forces have been limited by the constitution, but until now, local governments and populations have greatly appreciated the high level of performance and discipline

displayed by the Japan Self Defence Forces (SDF). Meanwhile, South Korea has also actively participated in UN peacekeeping, and in a wide variety of discussions on issues related to the Security Council and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. As of July 2015, a total of 638 troops have been deployed to seven missions, including the deployment of 317 troops to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and 293 troops to the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) (Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea, 2017). Likewise, China has also been actively engaged in international military cooperation since 2003. As of October 2015, China has participated in ten UN PKO missions deploying over 3,000 personnel (United Nations Peacekeeping, troop and police contributors archive, 2015b). During their PKO missions, South Korea and China have thus far made nine and fifteen supreme sacrifices during their PKO missions, respectively (United Nations Peacekeeping, Fatalities by Nationality and Mission, 2015a).

UN peacekeeping can be a field for further cooperation among the three countries as all three are willing to contribute actively to UN peacekeeping activities. Indeed, when a Japanese engineer battalion was dispatched to Cambodia in 1992, a Chinese engineer battalion was deployed next to the Japanese troops, and engaged in exactly the same mission, which led to de-facto Sino-Japanese military cooperation. Similarly, when China sent its specialized rescue units to the affected areas after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti in addition to the People's Liberation Army peacekeepers already deployed there, the Chinese rescuers engaged in the same mission in the same areas as other rescuers, including the Japanese units. The interactions between Japanese and Chinese contingents facilitated a cooperative ethos. Likewise, Japan and South Korea made substantial contributions on the ground after the Haitian earthquake and good working relationships were established. According to one Ground Self-Defence Force (GSDF) Central Readiness Force officer, the South Korean troops dug wells for the Japanese unit, which used the water for its bathing facilities. In turn, members of the South Korean contingent were invited to bathe in these facilities by the Japanese.³ In South Sudan, the Japanese troops also had a friendly relationship with the South Koreans despite a dispute over the ammunition transfer in December 2013.

Meanwhile, the new security legislation, which was enforced in March 2016, will enable the SDF to engage more with other foreign troops during missions, including peacekeeping activities. For example, the scope of the use of weapons will expand to include the protection of

UN officials and NGOs, the so-called *kaketsuke-keigo*, and the conditional use of weapons for the purpose of fulfilling UN PKO missions. Since the legislation will allow the SDF to engage more with other foreign troops during missions, including peacekeeping activities, room for cooperation with other troops, including ROK and China, is likely to expand.

GROWING CHALLENGES

Opportunities for cooperation have expanded for Japan, South Korea and China. However, the three countries face various security challenges that may hamper their efforts towards bilateral and trilateral security cooperation. The principal challenge concerns the differences in these countries' threat perceptions related to the problems associated with North Korea. The international community in general, with the exception of North Korea, agree on the need to eliminate the dangers associated with North Korea, and to achieve peace and stability on a nuclear-free peninsula. Japan, South Korea and China have differences, however, in their sensitivities over the dangers posed by North Korea in the short term. These have led to different policy priorities, which stem from their geopolitical positions, which in turn, are based on where the three countries are located and on their overall relations with North Korea.

For Japan, the most imminent danger posed by North Korea are its WMDs and its missiles. Japan's Defence White Paper *Defence of Japan 2014* dwells at length on North Korea's WMDs and missiles, emphasizing that these weapons constitute "a serious destabilizing factor to the security not only of Japan but of the entire region and the international community," and that "North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated."⁴ While the White Paper does touch upon the conventional military threats posed by North Korea to South Korea, the explanation is relatively brief. Furthermore, the White Paper expresses Japan's concern over North Korea's actions stating that the "development of WMDs and missiles by North Korea constitutes, coupled with provocative words and actions, including missile attacks against Japan, a serious and imminent threat to the security of Japan," and that "such development poses a serious challenge to the entire international community with regards to the non-proliferation of weapons, including WMDs." Japan's concern over North Korea's nuclear programme largely rests on Japanese bitter experience of being devastated by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Furthermore, Japan is concerned about North Korea's

Nodong and Musudan missiles as Japan is within the range of these weapons.

By contrast, the outbreak of another war on the peninsula or any event close by is of the most serious concern for South Korea. South Korea directly faces North Korea's conventional forces over the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), and Seoul is located close to the DMZ within range of North Korea's artillery. Furthermore, North Korea's armour echelon and special operations forces are positioned to inflict serious damage on the Seoul metropolitan area as occurred in the early 1950s. South Korea's *Defence White Paper 2012* emphasizes that 70% of North Korea's ground forces are positioned south of the Pyongyang-Wonsan line and ready for a surprise attack. Imminent threats to the capital are also clearly explained as "the 170 mm self-propelled artillery and 240 mm MRLs in forward positions are capable of surprise, concentrated fire on South Korea's Seoul metropolitan area." These weapons are believed to have a range of over 40 km and are thus able to reach South Korea's most highly populated area from their currently deployed positions just north of the DMZ. The White Paper further explains that North Korea's armour echelons and special operations forces, with the support of its naval and air forces, can penetrate the US-ROK defence line. In addition, the White Paper refers to North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes in a chapter entitled "Strategic Weapons." While the White Paper states that North Korea has gained "direct strike capabilities against South Korea, Japan, Guam, and other surrounding countries" with SCUD-B, SCUD-C, Nodong and Musudan missiles, it seems clear that the emphasis is placed more on North Korea's conventional and special operations forces rather than on North Korea's nuclear and missile development.

Meanwhile, China seems to be more concerned with the US overall engagement in the Asia-Pacific region than with the issues related to North Korea per se. Contrary to how China perceives the US involvement, US initiatives in Asia are not targeted primarily at China. At the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2012, then Secretary of Defence Panetta stated that the United States would "play a deeper and more enduring partnership role in advancing the security and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region" (Panetta, 2012). Panetta also rejected the view that the increased emphasis by the United States on the Asia-Pacific region would be some kind of challenge to China and maintained that "increased US involvement in this region will benefit China as it advances our shared security and prosperity for the future." These

statements have been reinforced by the scholar Ely Ratner who points out that the US initiatives are the “first or foundational steps in a decade-long project upon which substantially more economic, diplomatic, cultural, and military initiatives will be built” (Ratner, 2013: p. 25). In other words, the main focus of the United States is not necessarily to contain China.

However, China seems to perceive the US presence in the Asia-Pacific as an attempt by Washington to contain Beijing’s “peaceful rise.”⁵ China’s fear may have been a reaction to Hillary Clinton’s statement that a “strategic turn to the region fits logically into our overall global efforts to secure and sustain America’s global leadership” (Clinton, 2011: p. 58). Furthermore, China’s sense of insecurity seems to have intensified as the United States has continued to deepen its diplomatic, economic and military engagement in Asia. Such activities include strengthening US security ties with treaty allies including Japan, South Korea and the Philippines; deepening relations with emerging powers such as Indonesia and Vietnam; increasing US engagement in ASEAN-centred institutions; announcing US national interests in the South China Sea; supporting the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement; re-engaging Burma [Myanmar] and deploying the rotational presence of US Marines to Darwin, Australia (Ratner, 2013: p. 23). This perspective was evident from the 2013 PLA defence white paper, which states that “The US is adjusting its Asia-Pacific security strategy... and... has strengthened its Asia-Pacific military alliances, expanded its military presence in the region, and frequently makes the situation there tenser” (Information Office of the State Council, 2013). Furthermore, a PLA general was blunt at the 2013 Shangri-La Conference of Asia-Pacific when she challenged US Secretary of Defence Hagel’s explanation of the goals of the US rebalance by stating “China is not convinced... How can you assure China? How can you balance the two different objectives—to assure allies, and to build a positive relationship with China?” (Symonds, 2013). Meanwhile, with some 5,200 nuclear warheads, the operational capabilities of US forces in the Asia-Pacific magnified by the bilateral defence treaties and cooperative arrangements, creating what Qian Wenrong of the Xinhua News Agency’s Research Centre for International Issue Studies has called a “strategic ring of encirclement” (Nahan and Scobell, 2012). Furthermore, an editorial in the *People’s Daily Online* has described the US strategy in Asia as having “the obvious feature of confrontation” (Sheng, 2012). More recently, China has strongly complained to the ROK and the United States for

their decision to deploy the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defence (THAAD), formerly known as Theatre High-Altitude Area Defence, system on the Korean Peninsula.

In addition, China seems to view the collapse of the Kim regime or an upheaval within North Korea as a threat to China. Historically, ethnic Koreans have lived in areas close to the Chinese-North Korean border. As a result, any disorder on the peninsula caused by either an armed conflict or domestic uprising may have a serious effect on China as a large number of refugees may jeopardize the domestic order within the north-eastern part of China. In the light of these threat perceptions, China may want to avoid a situation that could result in a regime change in North Korea as well as an increase of influence of the US-ROK alliance on the peninsula, particularly in the area near the border between China and North Korea.

Meanwhile, the United States, being the closest ally of both Japan and South Korea, has regarded the issue of North Korea's nuclear and missile development as the most insistent danger for the country as well as for the Asia-Pacific region and the international community. US national security documents such as the Quadrennial Defence Review, the Nuclear Posture Review, the Ballistic Missile Defence Review and the National Security Strategy published by the Obama administration explain the danger posed by North Korea. According to these documents, North Korea is regarded as one of the world's two most problematic countries along with Iran in terms of its nuclear weapons and long-range missile programme. Nuclear proliferation, nuclear terrorism and missile development are perceived by the US government as a means to deny access to key US military areas, including Northeast Asia and the Middle East, and to directly threaten the US homeland.

Japan, South Korea, China and the United States have differences in their policy priorities based on differences in their threat perceptions of North Korea. South Korea and China, which each share a border with North Korea, give priority to maintaining stability on the peninsula in order to avoid the eruption of armed conflict and to prevent an outbreak of domestic chaos within North Korea. Japan, on the other hand, gives priority to international efforts to prevent North Korea's nuclear and missile development. Japan also focuses on its own efforts and those of the United States to protect the Japanese population from North Korea's ballistic missiles. This issue has become increasingly important since the Abe cabinet decided to exercise its right to collective self-defence in July 2014. In addition, the Japanese public is also concerned with the violation

of Japan's territorial waters by North Korea's military and paramilitary vessels such as the occasion in December 2001, which resulted in the sinking of a North Korean spy boat after a firefight with the Japanese Coast Guard. Furthermore, the Japanese public has special concerns over North Korea's criminal activities. Japan has suffered from a number of incidents carried out by North Korea's special operations forces, such as the abduction of Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s. It is estimated that nineteen Japanese nationals were abducted on thirteen occasions (International Crime Research Institute, 2007). Meanwhile, in May 2014, when North Korea agreed to reopen the investigation into the abduction of Japanese citizens, Japan decided to lift some of the sanctions it had imposed on North Korea. In Singapore, Defence Minister Onodera insisted that Japan would aim to resolve issues pertaining to abduction, nuclear weapons and missiles in a comprehensive manner. In other words, Japan has seemingly no intention of resolving the issue of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles without resolving the abduction issue. Meanwhile, Japan's strong determination to resolve the abduction issue has raised concerns within both the United States and South Korea that a closer relationship between Tokyo and Pyongyang will negatively affect the united stance among the three countries against North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.

The second challenge is China's assertive actions in the Asia-Pacific region in recent years. There are serious doubts among Japanese security experts about China's argument on the original "peaceful rise," or the amended "peaceful development." Both the South China Sea and the East China Sea have been hotspots between China and its neighbours over territorial claims. For Japan, territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, competing claims over exclusive economic zones in the East China Sea, and increased Chinese naval activism near the Ryukyu Islands have further heightened anxiety about Beijing's intentions. In other cases, there have been direct confrontations in the region. A provocative event occurred in March 2009 when the Chinese navy and civilian patrol vessels harassed an ocean surveillance vessel USNS *Impeccable* south of Hainan. Another serious crisis occurred in April 2012 when Chinese and Philippine vessels were involved in a standoff over Scarborough Shoal.

The third challenge is specific to Japan's diplomatic relations with South Korea and China. This issue has become a concern also for the United States as it has once been perceived that the Park Geun-hye administration moved closer to China diplomatically. In short, unless Japan, along with South

Korea and China, works out policies to reduce the once-extremely high tensions in the ROK-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relations, it seems impossible for Japan to cooperate with South Korea and China.

From a security perspective, differences in threat perceptions have contributed significantly to hampering, or at least delaying, the progress for bilateral and trilateral security cooperation among the three countries. However, as we will see below, identity and reputational challenges have also, in part, negatively affected the progress to promote such cooperation.

IMPACT OF IDENTITY AND REPUTATIONAL CHALLENGES

ROK-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relations have been tense due to various issues, including disputes over territorial and historical matters. These concerns are also related to identity and reputational challenges. The conflicting perceptions of history and different identities have, in part, affected bilateral and trilateral security cooperation among these countries.

ROK-Japanese relations have soured over the Takeshima/Dokdo Islands and the comfort women issues in particular. These disputes have flamed nationalistic sentiments in both countries and heightened antagonistic feelings against each other. Unfortunately, according to the 2014 poll, 70.9% of South Koreans said that they had an “unfavourable” or “relatively unfavourable” impression of the Japanese. This percentage is slightly lower than last year’s 76.6%, yet still overwhelmingly negative. On the other hand, 54.4% of Japanese said that they had a negative impression of the South Koreans, increasing from 37.3% of the previous year. As for the reasons behind the South Koreans’ negative impression of Japan, 76.8% and 71.6% of the respondents answered respectively, “inadequate repentance over the history of invasion,” and “continuing conflicts on the issue of Dokdo.” By comparison, 73.9% of the Japanese respondents were concerned about “criticism of Japan over historical issues” This was much higher than the 55.8% of the previous year. These figures suggest that identity and reputational issues are still deeply rooted among the public in both countries (Genron NPO and East Asia Institute (EAI), 2014).

Furthermore, these public views have affected the bilateral security cooperation between Japan and South Korea. On the issue of information sharing, for example, South Korean Defence Minister Kim Kwan-jin said in Singapore in May 2014 that while it was necessary to strengthen security ties with Japan, the South Korean government needed to take domestic public opinion into consideration, and was reluctant to

strengthen cooperation over information sharing with Japan. In 2012, the signing of the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was postponed due to strong opposition among the South Korean public.

Japan and China, on the other hand, have been in dispute since the GOJ decided to purchase the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in September 2012. According to a public survey in 2013, 92.8% of the Chinese and 90.1% of the Japanese said they have either an “unfavourable” or “relatively unfavourable” impression of the other side. These figures had increased from 64.5% and 84.3%, respectively from the previous year. This was the first time that the figures had exceeded 90% since the annual survey started in 2005. Among the Chinese respondents in 2013, 77.6% blamed Japan for causing the territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, followed by 63.8% for not fully apologizing for and reflecting on the history of aggression. Furthermore, 62.7% of the Chinese respondents, up from 43.1% in 2012, said that the Japanese prime minister should not visit the Yasukuni Shrine, either in an official or private capacity. On the other hand, 53.2% of the Japanese respondents answered that the conflict continues over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Genron NPO and China Daily, 2013).

According to the 2014 survey, the negative impressions of the other side have not improved. 93% of the Japanese respondents have an unfavourable impression of the Chinese population, and 86.8% of the Chinese respondents say that they still have a negative impression of the Japanese. The reasons behind their negative impressions remain unchanged. Although the percentages have declined slightly, the territorial issue (64.0%) and Japan’s lack of apology and remorse over its invasion of China (59.6%) still remain the top reasons among the Chinese respondents for their negative impression of the Japanese. On the other hand, the main reasons for the Japanese respondents’ negative impressions of Chinese, are: (1) the incompatibility of Chinese actions with international rules, 55.1%; (2) Chinese assertive actions, 52.8%; (3) criticism of Japan over historical disputes, 52.2% and (4) continuous confrontation over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, 50.4% (Genron NPO and China Daily, 2014). As long as this tension remains volatile and dangerous, Japan and China may have no room to work together in dealing with problems, including those related to North Korea.

These public polls in Japan and China coincided with the heightening of military tensions between the two countries. Repeated Chinese violations of Japanese airspace and territorial waters had already compelled the JSDF to shore up their military position near their southwestern offshore islands (Yoshihara, 2014: p. 41). Furthermore, in mid-January 2013, a Maritime Self Defence Force (MSDF) helicopter SH-60 had presumably been targeted by a Jiangkai I class frigate Wenhou and in late January, Japan's Destroyer JS Yudachi operating in the East China Sea was targeted by the fire control radar of PLAN's Jiangwei II class frigate Lianyungang.

Identity and reputational challenges have also affected Japan's engagement in international cooperative activities. The "proactive contribution to peace" has raised concerns within South Korea and China. According to the 2014 poll, 46.3% of South Koreans ranked Japan as the second largest threat, with only North Korea perceived as more threatening (Genron NPO and East Asia Institute (EAI), 2014). In December 2013, when Japanese troops handed over 10,000 rounds of 5.56 mm ammunition to the South Korean contingent free of charge as an emergency and humanitarian measure at the request of the South Korean troops, these rounds were returned to the Japanese for political reasons. Unfortunately, since the matter became public, the Japanese and South Korean armed forces have not been able to interact officially with one another. Meanwhile, a Chinese article maintained that the "advocate of the doctrine of 'proactive pacifism' is a historical revisionist who minimizes or ignores Japan's wartime atrocities" (*China Daily*, 2013).

It is unclear to what extent the various identity and recognition challenges have had an effect on the security policies and military activities of the three countries. Specifically, in regards to the Sino-Japanese relationship, no one can say for sure that these challenges alone have pushed China to take what is perceived to be more provocative action against Japan. It may be more accurate to say that security policies and military actions are based more on threat perceptions than on identity and recognition challenges. This is because security officials in general prepare for worst case scenarios and are reluctant to pursue long-term gains at the expense of losing short-term advantages. However, tensions in the Sino-Japanese security relationship have been at least partly affected by identity and recognition challenges which have had at least some negative effect on bilateral security cooperation. Likewise, the ROK-Japanese security relationship has also been affected, in part, by identity and recognition challenges.⁶ Both Japan and South Korea continue to focus on maintaining

their alliance relationships with the United States, and are not necessarily eager to establish a strong Japan-ROK bilateral security mechanism that will exclude the presence of the United States. Moreover, the ROK government and its people do not want any Japanese troops on the Korean peninsula even during contingencies. This rejection largely stems from history.

For the resumption of harmonious relationships among Japan, ROK and China, emphasis should be placed more on the notion of empathy as it will be discussed below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The fundamental security frameworks differ significantly between Japan, ROK and China. Unlike China, both Japan and South Korea rest their security foundations on alliances with the United States. This is unlikely to change in the near future as the two alliances have contributed greatly to the defence of Japan and South Korea and also of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. Furthermore, Japan has, together with other Asian countries including South Korea, made it clear that it opposes any attempt to change the status quo by force. It is premature or even inadequate, therefore, to try to establish a new security mechanism that will replace the present US security alliance network. What seems to be a realistic approach for the region would be to maintain the present US security alliance network while simultaneously strengthening the various multilateral and multi-layered collective security frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region.

Meanwhile, identity and reputational challenges, together with threat perceptions, have been the root cause of tensions among Japan, South Korea and China. These challenges have, in part, hampered bilateral and trilateral security cooperation among the three countries. Traditionally, Japan, South Korea and China share Confucian, Buddhist and other cultural history. But the existing identity and recognition issues are not likely to disappear in the near future as they are directly related to narratives of history which will always be remembered. However, Japan, South Korea and China can alleviate these challenges, and improve their relationships in areas including security by broadening the areas of common interests and concerns. The three countries can take full advantage of the expanding opportunities that lie ahead, and make an incremental improvement for bilateral and trilateral cooperation.

In the process, empathy is key. That is, Japan, South Korea and China need to see the past and present situations more from the others' perspectives. It may be desirable, although inappropriate for political reasons, for the three countries to agree with what each of the others maintain. But what will be important is for the trio to at least understand the situation in which the others are placed, so that they will neither take actions nor make statements that will jeopardize the sensitivities of the others. By doing so, Japan, South Korea and China will be able to minimize the substantial gap between what Welch calls confidence and trust, and to establish a firm foundation for building an eventual trust among the three countries.

Specifically, in the short run, each country can first of all alleviate the historical challenges to some extent by addressing the issues sensitively, and by taking prudent action. Recently, the GOJ has made efforts to clarify Japan's peaceful position in the face of severe criticism against Prime Minister Abe's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013, as well as his controversial proclamation of his intention to review the Murayama and Kono Statements. According to *Yomiuri Shimbun*, for example, Abe announced at a New Year's press conference in 2015 that the cabinet would continue to follow the "positions taken by past cabinets regarding historical perceptions, including the Murayama statement." Abe also revealed that the statement would incorporate three elements: "remorse over the war," "Japan's post-war path as a pacifist nation" and "future contributions to the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world." An aide close to Abe also said, "It is not necessary for [the prime minister] to go to lengths to try to have 'Abe colors' reflected in the statement" (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 2015). Furthermore, during his visit to Israel in late March 2015, Abe stressed his determination to engage actively in international cooperative security missions and stated that Japan would continue its efforts to realize a world without discrimination and war and a world that protects human rights, and that Japan would contribute more proactively to the peace and stability of the world. Abe's above determination was also stressed during his statement on the seventieth anniversary of the end of World War II (Cabinet Public Relations Office, 2015).

Meanwhile, South Korea and China have not expressed opposition to these statements by Abe. Hong Lei, a spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry said, "It is hoped that the Japanese could honor the statement and commitment it has made on historical issues and follow the path of peaceful development with concrete actions" (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 2015). In addition, the seventh Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Foreign

Ministers' Meeting was held in March 2015 for the first time in three years, and the three Ministers agreed to "continue their efforts to hold the Trilateral Summit at the earliest convenient time" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015a). These moves have served as a catalyst for Japan, South Korea and China to alleviate the identity and recognition challenges, and lead to the foundation of a more stable and friendly relationship among the trio. Indeed, the three countries held their first trilateral summit since 2012 in November 2015. The leaders issued a Joint Declaration for Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia, and expressed that "the common recognition that exchanges and cooperation among the peoples of the three countries lay an important foundation for increasing understanding among the three countries, and will expand and develop various people-to-people and cultural exchanges with the aim of strengthening understanding and trust" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015b).

Second, the three countries can establish a common identity as "international security contributors" and cooperate in areas such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations (HA/DR). As mentioned, all three—Japan, South Korea and China—are willing to take an active part in these activities, and are presently engaged in the same UN peacekeeping operations in places such as South Sudan. Each country, therefore, has many lessons to share with the other two countries. Japan, for example, is known for its high-performance levels in HA/DR, both domestically and internationally. In particular, Japan has been highly appreciated by the locals for performing from a local perspective (*genba mesen*), an approach which can be shared with South Korea and China. The exchange of liaison officers could also be beneficial. Japan's *Defence of Japan 2014* outlined cooperation between the SDF contingent and the Australian forces in South Sudan, highlighting how two Australian military personnel were dispatched to assist Japan's Coordination Teams: since August 2012, they have been engaged in the coordination activities of the South Sudan Mission duties. Likewise, if Japan, South Korea and China can each mutually dispatch military personnel to one another's headquarters as liaisons, it will increase transparency and promote mutual understanding, thereby strengthening the grounds for mutual confidence. In the case of South Korea and Japan, the South Korean contingent in South Sudan returned ammunition rounds to the Japanese units for political reasons. But the fact that these ammunition rounds were

initially accepted by the South Koreans illustrates that there is room for military cooperation on the ground between the Japanese and the South Korean forces. Similarly, cooperation in this area can enhance further understanding among the three countries, and may alleviate some of the existing identity and recognition challenges.

The bilateral relationships between Japan and South Korea and between Japan and China can also be improved in areas other than their international peace contributions. In regards to ROK-Japanese relations, both countries can, in the short term, be on equal ground by strengthening their security ties with the United States. From the United States' perspective, Japan has been "the indispensable linchpin of our forward military and diplomatic presence in Asia and the foundation of a stable strategic equilibrium in the region" (Green, 2011), "the cornerstone of peace and stability in the region" (Clinton, 2011: p. 58), and "a platform for US military readiness in Asia" (Chanlett-Avery, 2011: p. 1). Likewise, the US-ROK alliance serves as a "linchpin of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and to meet security challenges of the twenty-first century" (The White House, 2013).

For both Japan and South Korea, the US-Japan and the US-ROK alliances have played and will continue to play a vital role in maintaining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. Cooperation with China, therefore, does not necessarily mean that the two countries should seek a security mechanism that will replace the present US-centred alliances. What is important is that the Japanese and South Korean governments and their populations should better appreciate that the US-Japan and US-ROK alliances are inseparable and interdependent and that they both enhance security for Japan and South Korea as well as for the Asia-Pacific as a whole. In fact, the Korean Peninsula has historically protected the western flank of Japan⁷ and the US-Japan alliance has continued to be defended by the US-ROK alliance, which has dealt with contingencies on the Korean Peninsula that might easily have spilled over to Japan. The US-Japan alliance, on the other hand, has provided Washington and Seoul with security in their backyard and logistical support, as demonstrated in the 1950s. The US-ROK alliance is still heavily supported by the US forces stationed in Japan. There was a time in the mid-1990s when the two countries heavily promoted security cooperation due to the increasing necessity of dealing with the heightened tension over North Korea's nuclear programmes. This mechanism needs to be maintained.

By nurturing these two pairs of alliances, Japan and South Korea can establish a common identity as the two closest US allies in Asia. In recent years, Japan has actively contributed to strengthening the effectiveness of the US-Japan alliance by; (1) issuing the National Security Strategy for the first time ever in December 2013, as well as renewing the National Defence Programme Guidelines and the Mid-Term Defence Build-Up Programme, both of these emphasizing Japan's "proactive contribution to peace" and (2) recently reinterpreting the constitution to allow Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defence. South Korea has also maintained a strong relationship with the United States. In April 2015, US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter maintained the importance of enhancing the trilateral security cooperation among the three countries in an interview with the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. He said, "The United States appreciates the historical sensitivities in this [Japan-ROK] relationship, but we believe the potential gains of cooperation—the opportunities that exist for both our two long-time allies, and the entire region—outweigh yesterday's tensions and today's politics" (*Japan Times*, 2015). Unfortunately, however, according to the poll in 2014, 73.8% of the Japanese respondents said that the Japan-South Korea relations were extremely or relatively bad. This percentage was up from 55.1% in 2013. Meanwhile, 77.8% of South Koreans said that the bilateral relations were so, worsening from 67.4% the previous year (Genron NPO and East Asia Institute (EAI), 2014). This trend needs to be reversed.

Japan and South Korea, together with the United States, could also establish collective information sharing for dealing with North Korea's ballistic missiles. The problems relating to North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear programmes are a major threat to all three countries, although their threat perceptions differ, as mentioned above. According to the 2014 survey, 72.5% of the Japanese public and 83.4% of the South Korean people said that North Korea was the country which was the biggest threat to their security. The establishment of a regional missile defence system will improve the possibility of intercepting North Korea's missiles. Although the trilateral defence ministerial talks in Singapore in May 2014 failed to agree on specific measures concerning information sharing, the three countries have at least agreed to build a framework to deal with the issue.

Japan and South Korea could also strengthen their military relationship in areas other than information sharing. Although it would be very difficult and even inappropriate politically, for example, to dispatch Japanese

ground forces to the Korean Peninsula during an emergency, the threshold seems to be lower for Japan and South Korea to cooperate in such areas as maritime fuel replenishment, maritime and air transport, ammunition sharing and mine sweeping in addition to information sharing. These actions would be enhanced by the signing of the Acquisition and Cross Service Agreement (ACSA). In fact, the Japanese and the South Korean governments were almost able to conclude the ACSA and Defence Information Security Agreement in June 2012. Although this attempt failed and the signing was postponed because of domestic opposition in South Korea, the two governments resumed that track for closer cooperation between the two militaries. The two forces should also continue to strive for approval from their respective populations for enhancing such cooperation.

Meanwhile, it is crucially important for Japan, South Korea and the United States not to be perceived by Beijing as trying to contain China through their trilateral cooperation efforts. Undoubtedly, China's recent assertive actions have not contributed positively to the security and safety of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole, nor to the defence of Japan and South Korea. Opposing China, however, may only provoke additional hardliner response from the Chinese. Sourabh Gupta, a senior research associate at Samuels International Associates, referred to the future of US-India strategic ties, and stated that it is "too important to be constructed solely or even primarily through a China-management lens," and that cooperation in defence matters "should be constructed rather on more modest but firmer foundations that are geared to nudging the Indo-Pacific region's multilateral security relations towards a more consociational model of international relations where power is shared and balanced within" (Gupta, 2014). By the same token, Japan, South Korea and the United States will need to both hedge and engage China through the multilateral security framework so that China can become a responsible stakeholder that will not try to change the status quo of the region by force.

It would not be appropriate, though, for Japan to play an intermediary role between the United States and China, as Japan's security rests on its alliance with the United States. However, Japan could alleviate China's anxiety over its perception that Japan is attempting to contain China, by insisting that Japan is not pursuing strategic rivalry for "top dog" status in Northeast Asia. Because of this, a constructive management of Japan's military forces and the peaceful use of its military are essential.

Furthermore, Japan and South Korea may be able to play an important role in establishing the Code of Conduct (COC) between ASEAN and China. Regardless of the legitimacy of China's claim to the South China Sea, the countries with claims need to manage the issue to prevent it from escalating into a military confrontation. To this end, the formulation of a COC for the South and East China Seas will be essential. Unfortunately, no real further movement was made on COC during the ASEAN Regional Forum in Myanmar in August 2014. COC is a major focal point for most ASEAN members but is something China has been hesitant to progress in light of its claim to a vast majority of the South China Sea (Richards, 2014).

Japan and South Korea both need to take prudent actions in resolving their historical disputes. For Japan, this means the Japanese leadership refraining from making statements or taking provocative actions which aggravate its relationship with South Korea. In this regard, Japan needs to enhance its application of *honne* (inner feeling) and *tatemae* (outer appearance) regarding historical issues including that of the comfort women. Furthermore, Japan may need to emphasize the period after 1945 instead of the history before 1945. Ralph Cossa, president of the Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu, Hawai'i, has proposed in an interview that the importance of Japan's economic assistance to South Korea after 1945 needs greater recognition from the South Koreans. However, Japan needs to be very careful how it presents this because it may be perceived as another instance of Japanese high-handed behaviour, creating additional tension among the South Korean public. In this case, the United States may be in a better position to assume this task.

South Korea, on the other hand, needs to detach security-related issues from historical issues, especially over the matter of comfort women. In 2012, the signing of the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was postponed due to strong opposition among the South Korean public. It is important for both Japan and South Korea to acknowledge the significance of the GSOMIA, given the severity of the current regional security environment. In addition, South Korea needs to maintain the comfort women issue as a bilateral issue in order to make it easier to resolve with Japan. South Korea's efforts to place the comfort women dispute as an international problem, and forming a united front with China over historical matters as a whole, are only complicating the problem, affecting trilateral security cooperation among Japan, South Korea and China. The establishment of the comfort women foundation

between Japan and South Korea serves as a positive move, although a first step, for both countries in order to accomplish a “final and irreversible resolution” of the issue.

The Sino-Japanese relationship can also be improved. There are three short-term recommendations. First, Japan and China should try to remove obstacles that are hampering bilateral cooperation by at least freezing for the time being the current status quo, in order to ease the immediate tension over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. To this end, it was a good sign to see Japanese and Chinese senior legislators resume exchanges for the first time in three years in April 2015.

Second, while both countries freeze the status quo over the Islands issue, they need to establish confidence-building measures by creating a system that can deter any unexpected incidents involving vessels and aircraft from occurring between the two countries in the East China Sea. It is fundamentally important for both Japan and China to prevent the escalation of tension from a law enforcement level to a more hazardous military confrontation. Even though Sino-Japanese military tension may not deteriorate into an all-out war given the effects of the US extended deterrence, a mere skirmish between the two militaries in the East China Sea could result in the gravest consequences since it would mean that two of the world’s largest economies with huge political influence over international politics would be plunging into a zero-sum game. Therefore, it is urgent that Japan and China further accelerate cooperation on confidence-building measures to avoid serious incidents in the wider maritime and air spaces around the East China Sea. This has become increasingly important as China declared its Air Defence Identification Zone that overlaps that of Japan as well as South Korea, increasing the danger of interaction between the air components of the two countries. After securing measures to avoid a breakout of any violent incidents between the two countries, Japan and China would be able to work on long-term issues that have existed between the two countries.

Third, Japan also needs to cope better in resolving the historical issues with China. As was the case with South Korea, Prime Minister Abe’s visit to Yasukuni Shrine has not been beneficial for the establishment of a friendly Sino-Japanese relationship. Liu Xiaoming, China’s ambassador to the United Kingdom, strongly criticized this action and said, “If militarism is like the haunting Voldemort of Japan, the Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo is a kind of horcrux, representing the darkest parts of that nation’s soul” (Xiaoming, 2014). Similarly, *Global Times* stated, “We

need to make our demands simple and clear, that is, the Japanese prime minister cannot visit the war criminals in Yasukuni because it is equivalent to paying homage to criminals like Hitler and Goebbels” (Wee and Li, 2014). The Japanese leadership needs to refrain from taking what would be perceived as a provocative action against the Chinese.

In addition to these short-term goals, Japan, South Korea and China, together with the United States, may need to play leading roles in the long run to reconstruct an order in the Asia-Pacific region that can prevent all future wars. In this regard, the European experience is a good example. Discussions on European regional security architecture around the end of the Cold War serve as a useful precedent for Asia where there are various hotspots for possible conflicts. NATO and the former Warsaw Pact Organizations have explored ways to avoid the accidental breakout of military conflict. In addition, a number of international organizations such as the EU, the WEU and the OSCE, have pursued a common goal of integrating the European continent. Likewise, Asia also has multiple international systems such as APEC, ASEAN, ASEAN+3, ARF, the EAS, the Six Party Talks and the US-centred hub and spoke alliance network. Furthermore, the European experience illustrates that opportunities for cooperation increase through military cooperation in multinational peace operations such as the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. West-European countries such as Germany and France, which fought against each other for centuries, now cooperate in the UN PKOs and other forms of international military operations. In addition, European countries including former Warsaw Pact nations have joined cooperative networks such as Partnership for Peace. Although it is still premature to establish similar mechanisms in the Asian Pacific region, examples of these multinational setups will be useful for building trust among Asian countries including Japan, South Korea and China.

The aforementioned recommendations are likely to have a positive impact on Northeast Asian relationships, as these recommendations are expected to enhance cooperation through empathy and build a more harmonious relationships among Japan, South Korea and China. Empathy is no panacea, but will help to establish a stronger foundation in building eventual trust, which would enable the three countries to overcome the identity and recognition challenges which have haunted them for many years.

NOTES

1. It is important to note that the reasons behind the decreasing numbers of Chinese and South Korean tourists and exchange students to Japan are a combination of the territorial/history issues and the effect of the 3.11 incidents in 2011.
2. According to Welch, confidence is “a degree of subjective certainty that one is safe from imminent conflict resting on situational constraints (i.e. the incapacity of others to pose a proximate threat through surprise or otherwise).” Trust, on the other hand, is “a degree of subjective certainty that one can count on non-violent interaction and peaceful dispute resolution resting on dispositional considerations (another’s well-meaning character or a relationship based on respect and mutual concern for the others wellbeing).”
3. Interview with a CRF official on September 27 (Sano, 2014).
4. Japan’s 2014 Defence White Paper spends 11 pages on North Korea’s WMDs and missiles, and roughly two pages on North Korea’s conventional military threat.
5. According to Steinberg and O’Hanlon, the term “peaceful rise” was amended to “peaceful development” out of concern that even a “peaceful” rise might seem threatening to other countries in the region and beyond. See Steinberg and O’Hanlon (2014: p. 30).
6. Tensions in the ROK-Japanese and the Sino-Japanese relations have heightened during power transition periods in the three countries where any newly coming administration may have a smaller room for diplomatic manoeuvre. Political leaders at their early phase need to establish their bases for domestic support, and therefore cannot afford to be viewed as being too soft or too weak in foreign policy. The Abe administration won the upper house election with a fairly big margin in July 2013 and gained political assets to implement its political agenda including seeking better relations with South Korea and China. President Park Geun Hye has been in power for nearly two years and seems to have established her own style and steady course for policy implementation. President Xi Jinping has been extremely active in establishing better relations with other countries including the neighbours in Southeast China, and seems to be successful in gradually gaining stronger support within the Chinese Communist Party. It is highly desirable and probable that the three leaders with stronger domestic support take steps forward to improve the ROK-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relations that are essential for the peace and stability of Northeast Asia as well as the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.
7. For more than 115 years since the seventh century, Japanese strategic thinkers have been concerned about the western flank of Japan because most of the battles between Japan and China were fought either on or

through the Korean Peninsula. During the battle of Baekgan (or *Hakusukinoe* in Japanese) in 663, Japan experienced a total defeat in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula against the alliance of the Tang Dynasty of China and the Siila Kingdom of Korea. After the defeat, the Yamato Court of Japan feared an invasion from Tang or Siila and established the first-ever defence system in the western part of Japan such as frontier guards (*Sakimori* in Japanese), signal fire systems and permanent fortification. Additional battles were fought between Japan and the Yuan Dynasty in 1274 and 1281 off the coast of Kyushu, as well as a series of battles on the Korean peninsula from 1592 to 1598. After the Meiji Restoration in 1867, the western flank of Japan was secured at the expense of Korean sovereignty and national pride until 1945, and subsequently with the help of the US-ROK alliance.

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Japan's Article 9 in the East Asian Peace

Stein Tønnesson

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution renounces forever Japan's sovereign right to go to war and use force as a means of settling international disputes, and furthermore forbids Japan from maintaining land, sea and air forces, or other war potential. Historically, Article 9 was instrumental in allowing Japan, under the so-called Yoshida doctrine, to stay out of the wars in Korea and Vietnam, so it could concentrate on its economic reconstruction and growth. This benefitted the whole of East Asia—both Southeast and Northeast—in two main ways: It removed fears of a Japanese militarist revival, so other countries too could focus on their economic development instead of preparing for war. And it provided a model of peaceful development for others to emulate. By learning from Japan and obtaining Japanese aid and investments, one East Asian nation after the other shifted to peaceful economic development strategies, which required stability externally and internally. The East Asian Peace, which has characterized the region since the Sino-Vietnamese war in 1979, is the cumulative effect of these Japan-inspired national priority shifts. When Article 9 is now being revised or reinterpreted beyond recognition, its role in promoting regional peace may come to an end.

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THE EAST ASIAN PEACE

In 1946, the US journalist and author Harold Isaacs wrote a book called *No Peace for Asia!* While Europe could gain peace after the end of World War II, he said, Asians were condemned to continued warfare. He was right: in the years 1946–79, more than 80% of the people killed in war worldwide were killed in East Asia. Not in Japan though—but in China, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Myanmar. Wars raged in all those countries until new national leaders were able to switch their priorities away from nationalist or communist ideological aims or acute concerns for security, to the “economy first.” In the 1980s, after China had made its priority shift, East Asia’s share of global battle deaths dropped from 80% to 6.2%. Since 1990, when Vietnam had also switched to an “economy first” policy, and withdrawn its forces from Cambodia so a peace treaty could be signed for that country in 1991, East Asia’s share of global battle deaths has been a mere 1.7%. This should be seen in light of the fact that more than 30% of the world’s population live in East Asia. In the 1980s–90s, war “migrated” from East Asia to the Greater Middle East, South Asia, Africa and parts of Europe. East Asia became a zone of surprising peace. The East Asian Peace programme at Uppsala University has studied this regional transition from widespread warfare to relative peace as a phenomenon that might form a path to world peace. Japan’s Article 9 has a key role in that story (Heldmark and Wrangnert, 2016; Tønnesson, 2015b, 2017).

ARTICLE 9

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution says:

(1) Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. (2) To accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

The article is “pacifist” in content, and pacifists have been at the forefront of defending it. It could not, however, have survived in Japanese politics without support from the left wing of Japanese politics as well as powerful

pragmatic conservatives. And until now, it has always been helped by the constitutional provision that amendments require a decision by a two-thirds majority in both houses of the Japanese parliament, followed by a referendum.

The argument to be explored in this paper is that Article 9 was instrumental in allowing Japan, under the Yoshida doctrine, to stay out of the wars in Korea, Vietnam and other wars in which the United States was involved, so Japan could concentrate on its economic reconstruction, and become a model for the rest of the region. The doctrine consisted of three main elements: economic primacy, accommodation of the United States, slow and unthreatening rearmament only for self-defence.¹ The Yoshida doctrine did not just help Japan's own resurgence as a sovereign and prosperous nation but benefitted the rest of the region as well, since it reduced fears of a Japanese militarist revival and provided a model for peaceful economic development. By learning from Japan and obtaining Japanese aid and investments, one nation after another (South Korea, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, now perhaps Myanmar) has shifted to a "peaceful development" strategy with an overall priority for economic growth through integration in the global market (Midford 2002). This has required policies aimed at external stability (through accommodation, moderation, institutional cooperation and non-intervention principles) and internal stability (through either repression or legitimate governance). Several governments set at least temporary limits on their military spending, and they all gave priority to keeping good relations with the United States. This was not out of love for America, but rather because they did not want to become the target of hostile actions from the world's greatest power, and wished to access its markets, aid and technology. Some East Asian countries, like Japan and South Korea, also wanted military protection. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the extent to which Japan's ongoing attempt to change or reinterpret Article 9, and to exert Japan's right to take part in "collective defence," may undermine the East Asian Peace.

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution has helped Japan stay out of war for almost seventy years. This period stands in stark contrast to the previous seventy years, when Japan under the slogan "Rich Nation Strong Army" fought wars against China 1894–95, the Boxer uprising in Beijing 1900, Russia 1904–05, Germany (in Tianjin) 1916, China (in Manchuria and Shanghai) 1931–32, in Shanghai again 1934, China 1937–45, the Soviet Union and Mongolia 1939, French Indochina 1940, 1941 and

again in March 1945, the United States, the Netherlands and the British Commonwealth and their Allies during 1941–45 and the Soviet Union again in August 1945. One war followed another, and once the United States had been drawn in through the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan's fate was sealed.

Through its peace-based and export-led growth policies under the so-called San Francisco system of 1951–52, Japan did not just obtain peace for itself but set the whole East Asian region on the road to peace and growth. By signing the San Francisco peace treaty in September 1951, Japan regained its status as a sovereign nation, but in return had to sign a security treaty with the United States and allow US military bases on its territory. Okinawa, moreover, remained under US administration until 1972. The good thing about the San Francisco system is that it laid the foundation for peace and trade among the non-communist nations in East Asia. What was bad was that it did not include the communist states, and also left a number of border disputes unresolved (Hara, 2015). Since 1952, Japan has consistently aligned its foreign policies with Washington. In return it has reaped enormous benefits from not having to waste resources on a strong military of its own, and has been able to base its security on the US alliance, and a US nuclear umbrella—“extended nuclear deterrence” as strategic experts call it. Japan was thus for a long time given room to concentrate on its economic rise, and even benefit economically from wars elsewhere in the region.

Article 9 has been a constant source of controversy in Japan since it was adopted by the Diet in 1946 (Samuels, 2007). Prominent conservative politicians such as prime ministers Kishi Nobusuke (1957–60), Nakasone Yasuhiro (1982–87), Koizumi Jun'ichirō (2001–06) and Abe Shinzō (2006–08 and 2012–), have seen it as a straitjacket, preventing Japan from being a “normal nation,” and signifying that no Japanese can be proud of their national heritage but instead must submit to American domination and apologize over and over again to their neighbours for incidents in the past. Yet Article 9 has stood the test of time until now. It has not yet been formally revised, only reinterpreted. Article 9 has been defended by a coalition of convinced pacifists, left-wing socialists and conservative pragmatists. The support for and use of Article 9 by the latter, with the aim to ensure Japan's re-entry into the world community as a sovereign nation concentrating fully on its economic development, has been crucial for upholding the Constitution. The man who embodied this policy was Yoshida Shigeru, prime minister for most of the period 1946–53.

In 1946, Article 9 was included in Japan's "Peace Constitution" on the initiative of the US occupation authorities. This was certainly not because their chief, General Douglas MacArthur, was inspired by pacifist ideas. What was on his mind was to placate the US wartime allies China and Australia so they would not interfere with his occupation policies or allow the Soviet Union to do so. MacArthur had decided to let the Showa emperor remain on his throne, in spite of his responsibility for Japan's war-time decisions, and needed to sweeten that pill with an anti-militarist article (Dower, 1999, pp. 82–83, 347, 394–404, 561–562; Masatomo, 2015). The Constitution was adopted before the Cold War had begun in earnest, and many war-weary Japanese seemed to like it. They were quick to make a virtue of it and even started teaching their school children that Japan had become a "peace nation." As the Cold War took hold, however, and well before the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, the United States expressed regrets about strict interpretations of Article 9, and began asking the Japanese government to rearm. During the Korean War, the United States wanted Japan to take part, but the Anglophile aristocrat Yoshida did not want to sacrifice Japanese blood in a war under US command. Neither did he want to make an unwelcome return to Japan's former colony Korea, and antagonize both the Chinese and Koreans. And he did not want any resurgence of militarism inside Japan itself (Dower, 1979; Yoshida, 1961, Hara 2015).

Yet Yoshida was not a convinced pacifist. He was just pragmatic. In the past he had supported, even called for, the use of force against opponents of Japanese interests in China, but he had always warned against confronting the United Kingdom and the United States as the world's leading economic and military powers. In the 1930s he struggled as a diplomat to prevent the developments that separated Japan from the Western powers, leading to Pearl Harbor and ultimately Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Emperor's decision to surrender. He blamed Japan's fateful mistakes on its militarism. Military officers must not be allowed to interfere in politics, he concluded. Yoshida had always been keen to promote Japan's economic interests, notably in China. When he became prime minister in 1946, his one overriding priority was Japan's economic reconstruction. He embraced Article 9 and saw how it could help his economy-focused policy. Instead of entering the war in Korea, Japan made money on it and initiated Japan's economic miracle.

THE YOSHIDA DOCTRINE

In his memoirs, Yoshida explained the disastrous influence of “military cliques” in Japanese politics in the 1930s with budgetary cuts undertaken by the civilian government as a result of the world economic crisis of 1929–30. The cuts caused alarm in the ranks of the military forces. For a government that needs to reduce military costs it is essential to keep the officer corps under control. One of Yoshida’s reasons for resisting requests for rapid Japanese rearmament in the 1950s was his fear of creating conditions where military intervention in politics might again be possible. He did not only concern himself with the officer corps but about the common soldiers as well. He was afraid of providing guns to soldiers recruited among the lower classes, who might on occasion turn their weapons against the government under inspiration from communist or socialist leaders (Dower, 1979: p. 462). This provided him with a deeply conservative argument for embracing Article 9.

Until 1950, Yoshida was the most prominent exponent in Japanese politics of a strict interpretation of Article 9: Japanese rearmament in any form was prohibited. When defending the Peace Constitution in 1946, he declared: “Now that we have been beaten, and we haven’t got a single soldier left on our hands, it is a fine opportunity of renouncing war for all time.” And on 26 June that year, he told the House of Representatives that not just the right of belligerence but also of self-defence was renounced. Yet he soon came under pressure from the Cold War mentality to reverse or at least soften his position. In January 1950, after the communist victory in the Chinese civil war and following a call for Japanese rearmament in General Douglas MacArthur’s New Year address, Yoshida stated that the Constitution did not “of course” preclude self-defence. The recreation of Japanese armed forces began in July 1950, just a few weeks after the outbreak of the Korean War. In February 1951, Yoshida stated publicly that Japan had “a right and obligation to defend its own security.” Yet he resisted US pressure to rearm more quickly. Yoshida set Japan on a path of slow remilitarization, first under the name “Police Reserve,” then “Safety Force,” and then “Self-Defence Force.” In order not to violate Article 9, the force was said to not constitute “war potential,” defined as ability to attack and occupy other countries.

As mentioned, an amendment of the Japanese constitution requires a two-thirds majority in both houses of the Diet, as well as a simple majority of the votes cast in a subsequent national referendum. Abe Shinzō’s victory

in the 2016 elections for the first time created a two-thirds majority in both houses that might vote in favour of change. Yet the majority includes, *i. a.*, the Komeito party, who is proud of Article 9 and strongly promotes Japan's role as a "peace nation." Komeito, and also others counted in the two-thirds majority, may not agree on changing Article 9 or on how it should be changed.

Abe Shinzō's cabinet (2012–) with the support (under pressure) of the Cabinet Legislative Bureau, which is responsible for making sure Cabinet decisions and legislation are constitutional, has issued a cabinet decision reinterpreting the constitution. On the basis of this reinterpretation, the Diet later passed new "security legislation," providing the framework for potentially using force overseas. This altered the interpretation of Article 9 that was made at the time when the Yoshida government created the Japanese Self-Defence Forces. At that time Japan forbid itself from using its sovereign right to collective self-defence. In our context, the main thing to notice about Yoshida is not that he bowed to pressure from the United States and the national security lobby to rearm, but rather that he resisted the pressure for rapid rearmament, revision of Article 9, and participation in the Korean War. This was controversial. Many conservatives, some of whom had been purged temporarily from Japanese politics because of their wartime activities, adopted the US view that Japan needed to rebuild its armed forces in order to resist the communist threat. There can be no doubt that Yoshida personally limited the speed and scope of Japan's rearmament. In 1952, when the United States asked for an increase in troop strength from 75,000 to 180,000, Yoshida increased it to 110,000, and to 150,000 in 1954—after the Korean War had ended in an armistice. Although his successors were more favourably inclined towards rearmament, they also allowed only a modest increase so the troop strength reached 220,000 in 1958. Here again Yoshida left a personal imprint on history. The modest scale of rearmament was based on his pragmatic reasoning. He did not see any direct military threat to the Japanese home islands, and did not want to damage the national economy by spending too much on a non-productive sector. Yoshida also saw a need to avoid stirring up anti-Japanese sentiments in other Asian countries. And he did not think he needed any strong self-defence forces. If the new military were allowed to grow beyond a certain level, Japan might find it difficult to resist pressures to dispatch troops to America's wars. His general distrust of military officers, stemming from the 1931–45 experience, also played a role. Until 1952, Prime Minister Yoshida served as his own

foreign minister so he could make sure that Japan's foreign policy would help instead of undermine his domestic agenda.

Based on these various motives, Yoshida successfully resisted the rearmament pressures. In 1951 he went so far as to secretly dispatch messengers to some of his socialist adversaries, encouraging them to organize anti-rearmament demonstrations while US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles visited Tokyo (Dower, 1979: p. xxi). Yoshida continued to resist "war-loving America." Only towards the end of his life, perhaps under the impression of the Chinese Cultural Revolution and a time when he no longer held political power, did he reverse his position. He now claimed that his past policy had been based on political expediency and that he had never envisioned eternal disarmament. Once Japan was restored to great-power status, he said, to not have a national army would be a "deformity" (Dower, 1979: pp. 379, 570 (note 64)). So, if this was what Yoshida had been thinking all the time, his minimal rearmament policy was a temporary expedient. Yet, as such, it played a highly significant role in the gradual pacification of East Asia.

JAPAN AS MODEL

The main argument in this chapter is not about the role of Article 9 in Japanese politics or national identity, but about its regional impact. It reduced the widespread fears of a resurgent Japanese militarism and provided a basis for Japan's later elaborate attempts to reassure its neighbours (Midford, 2000). Other Asian countries did not have to worry about an independent Japanese threat. To the extent that there was a threat, it was not primarily Japanese but American. The only military forces in Japan with an offensive capacity were American. They were stationed in Okinawa and other bases. From the perspective of China, North Korea, the Soviet Union, Sukarno's Indonesia or North Vietnam, Japan constituted an extended US threat. Any country that was able to establish stable, secure relations with the United States would also have stable, secure relations with Japan. This stabilized the international relations of the countries included in the San Francisco system (in Asia they were Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos and South Vietnam), and paved the way for stabilizing the whole of East Asia as soon as China and the United States had found each other in their common fear of the Soviet Union in 1971–72, and normalized their political relations in 1979. Japan established diplomatic relations with

China in 1972, seven years before the United States. When Deng Xiaoping took over as China's leader in 1978, one of the first countries he visited was Japan. It seems unlikely that Japan's economic miracle in those years could have been embraced and emulated by the other regional countries were it not for Article 9.

The Yoshida doctrine was so successful that other Asian countries began to emulate it. Japan became an explicit or implicit model for most of the East Asian countries. One after the other, they opted out of war and set limits to their military budgets in order to give top priority to economic growth within a market-based international system: South Korea 1961, Singapore and Indonesia 1965, Taiwan 1972, China 1978, Malaysia 1984, Vietnam 1986–89, Cambodia after 1991 and now perhaps Myanmar.² Some are still not quite ready to undertake this kind of national purpose transition: the main latecomers are North Korea, Thailand and the Philippines. Thailand and the Philippines have seen substantial economic development, and they trade intensely with both Japan and China. They have benefitted greatly from integration in the global market, but their governments have not had the capacity to apply a consistent policy of prioritizing national economic development. The fate of North Korea, and its role in contemporary East Asian politics, serves as a reminder of what East Asia might have looked like if the constant fear of war had still been at the forefront of national priorities in other regional countries as well.

The biggest emulator of Japan was China. When Deng Xiaoping went to Japan in December 1978, his explicit aim was to learn from the Japanese government and its companies, and attract Japanese investments and technology transfer (Vogel, 2011: pp. 86, 300). Thus began China's astounding economic rise. This could not have happened without the Japanese model, Japanese technology provided through development aid and investments, and access for both Japan and China to the US and European markets.

A FRAGILE PEACE

Unfortunately, the East Asian Peace remains insecure, and not only because of North Korea. The peace does not rely on strong regional institutions or shared democratic values as it has—at least until recently—in Europe. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its various consultative frameworks (ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN+3 and East Asian Summit)

are no substitutes for closer institutional cooperation, and East Asia's peaceful economic integration has not been matched by institutional security guarantees. Instead the alliance pattern from the first half of the Cold War 1950–69, with Russia and China standing together against Western domination, has been reproduced. The San Francisco system, which never included China and Russia, has not been superseded by a more comprehensive regional system of collective security.

Since the national political systems in East Asia are so diverse, the regional peace cannot rely on shared political values. Some, like Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Indonesia, are liberal democracies. Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore have semi-democratic political systems, dominated by one party. And some, like North Korea and Brunei, are outright dictatorships. China, Vietnam and Laos are capitalist Communist Party states. Thailand's civilian governments have never controlled the country's armed forces, and neither Thailand nor the Philippines has been able to build capacity as developmental states. Thailand has the world record in frequency of military coups; since May 2014 it is again under military rule. Struggles over democratization characterize Myanmar as well as Hong Kong. Myanmar may be in a situation quite similar to that of Thailand in its periods of civilian governance, with two states in one: a civilian state with Aung San Suu Kyi as its main face, and a "deep state" led by commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing, with a mission to ensure national unity. There is a strong affinity between Myanmar and Japan, who helped establish the Burmese army under the command of Aung San Suu Kyi's father, General Aung San during World War II. For several decades now, Japan has contributed generously to developing Myanmar's basic infrastructure, but there is at the same time a disturbing rivalry for influence in Myanmar between Japan, China and India.

THE DIVISIVE ROLE OF HISTORY

The biggest threat to the East Asian Peace comes from crises or tension in Sino-Japanese and Sino-US relations. The strange fact is that in the last two decades, the Chinese and Japanese political cultures have returned to the memory of their murderous past and reignited historical grievances. It is as if no reconciliation had occurred. Japan's main conservative leaders reinterpret not just Article 9 but also the history of Japanese militarism. They want new generations to be proud of their history and stop making endless apologies for the misdeeds of the past. On its side, the Communist

Party of China has abandoned communism in favour of a classic, assertive nationalism, the same ideology that used to be held by Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang Party. Its emphasis is China's long struggle to resurrect its glorious past after the humiliations it suffered from the European powers and Japan. Today the Kuomintang Party is in disarray after the victory of the Democratic Progress Party candidate Tsai Ing-wen in Taiwan's 2016 presidential elections. But the Chinese Communist Party now carries on the Kuomintang's ideological legacy (Tønnesson, 2016).

The underlying premise for Xi Jinping's "China Dream" is that the nation was humiliated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by Europe and Japan (Zheng, 2012). Now China is about to become strong enough to make up for its past humiliation by entering the world stage as a respected power in a "New Type of Great Power Relations," where there is room for Russia and the United States, maybe even Europe if it could act more in unison, but not Japan. China has drastically modernized its armed forces. Deng Xiaoping's downsizing of the People's Liberation Army in the mid-1980s was followed by an upgrade under his successor Jiang Zemin (1992–2002) and a tremendous boost under Hu Jintao (2002–12) and then Xi Jinping (although the 2017 budget, largely due to financial constraints, saw less growth in military expenditure). And China has engaged itself in assertive demonstrations of its maritime claims. This has instilled fear among China's maritime neighbours, notably the Philippines, Vietnam—and Japan, where it has paved the way for the current attempt to revise Article 9. Perhaps the main challenge to the argument I make in this chapter, or at least to my claim that there can still be a "developmental peace," is the Chinese rearmament effort since the 1990s, which has provided a main reason for Japan to reconsider its role as a "peace nation." In the 1980s, when Deng Xiaoping reduced China's military expenditures and aligned his foreign policy with the United States and Japan (against the Soviet Union), China fully followed the Japanese model. Its later emphasis on military rearmament and modernization has removed it somewhat from the model and contributed to undermining the East Asian Peace by instilling fear among others. Yet China has resolved most of its boundary disputes on land, and—like Japan—has not engaged in any armed conflict abroad since the end of the Cold War. The fact that East Asia's two main economic and military powers have avoided the use of force abroad provides a key to understanding how the East Asian Peace could survive for so long. Hence, a likely prerequisite for it to last even further is that Japan and China continue to uphold their defensive military doctrines, and refrain from emulating United States or Russian foreign policy behaviour.

REINTERPRETATION BEYOND RECOGNITION

Article 9 has been reinterpreted more than once. In its long process of “remilitarization,” Japan has built a modern and highly capable Self-Defence Force, although this was always difficult to reconcile with the wording of the Constitution: “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained” (Hughes, 2009). Yet this one limit long remained: the Self-Defence Force could be used only in defending the homeland. Japan could not take part in US wars in other parts of East Asia and the world. The US-Japan security treaty of 1960 obliged the United States to defend Japan in the event that it came under attack, but the reverse was not the case. Japan was not obliged by the security treaty to take part in defending US security in Korea, Vietnam or in the Gulf. In fact, it was prohibited by its constitution from doing so.

One of Yoshida’s pragmatic followers, Sato Eisaku, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974, notably because he had announced three non-nuclear principles in 1967: Japan would not manufacture, possess or permit the entry of nuclear weapons into its territory. With some hesitation, Japan also signed the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).³ Since then, Japan has acquired the technologies needed to rapidly build nuclear weapons in case its government should see it as necessary, while subjecting itself to strict monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the NPT. Japan has also played a constructive role in diplomatic efforts to prevent proliferation and obtain nuclear arms reductions.

At the time that Sato received the Nobel Peace Prize, Article 9 had been protecting Japan against demands to follow the Australian and South Korean examples and send troops to Vietnam. Japan was for the second time able to make money on a major US war. Sato stuck to Article 9 and stated in 1970, at a time when the United States had begun to look for ways to extricate itself from Vietnam, that the Constitution of 1946 made the dispatch of Japanese troops abroad impossible. Article 9 is deeply embedded in the process that led to the East Asian Peace, but its key pacifying role has never been fully recognized or appreciated in Japan itself. The political left supported it from 1950 onward, but the left wing of Japanese politics hardly exists any longer. The Buddhist Komeito party and the Soka Gakkai religious organization used to be staunch supporters of Article 9, but since Komeito entered into a coalition government with the Liberal

Democratic Party (LDP), it has to some extent compromised its pacifist principles, yet has also constrained the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)'s constitutional revisionism. An attempt to generate Sino-Japanese political cooperation and understanding, and alleviate the region's reliance on US security guarantees and military bases failed miserably under the governments of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) 2009–12. China failed to seize this chance and heated up the Senkaku dispute in the East China Sea just as Japan had the most China-friendly government conceivable. The DPJ lost public support. The conservative nationalist Abe Shinzō could form his second government in 2012 and pursue his aim of revising Article 9 and prepare Japan for taking part in “collective self-defence” together with its US ally or with other nations who have a significant relationship with Japan. Without yet having changed the wording of the Constitution, Abe has obtained a cabinet decision and subsequent legislation by the Diet, which do away with the main remaining aspect of Article 9, namely the constitutional prohibition against exercising the sovereign right to take part in collective self-defence. Until 2014, Japan only allowed itself to defend its homeland or “near area.” Although there are still some restrictions included also in the latest legislation, such as a requirement that Japan's *survival* must be at risk and that Japan cannot *initiate* combat against another country, its government now has the right to take part in collective self-defence anywhere in the world, if it perceives a threat to its survival. Abe Shinzō is about to achieve what his grandfather Kishi Nobusuke, Yoshida's nemesis in Japanese conservative politics, failed to achieve in the 1950s.

When Abe's government first made its decision in July 2014 to exercise Japan's right to collective self-defence, it argued:

No country can secure its own peace only by itself, and the international community also expects Japan to play a more proactive role for peace and stability in the world... In particular, it is essential to avoid armed conflicts before they materialize and prevent threats from reaching Japan by further elevating the effectiveness of the Japan-United States security arrangements and enhancing the deterrence of the Japan-United States Alliance for the security of Japan and peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. (Cabinet Decision on Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan's Survival and Protect its People, 2014)

The emphasis in that quote is on Japan's contribution to the deterrence capacity of the US-Japan alliance, not on reassuring others of Japan's peaceful intentions. Although Japan does not have the same obligation to defend the United States as the United States has to defend Japan, the two alliance partners are now more and more talked about as equals.

In 2014, Kazuhiro Togo, director of the Institute for World Affairs at Kyoto Sangyo University, and grandson of Japan's wartime Minister of Greater Asia, explained that:

the “excessive pacifism” that Article 9 commanded has long become a pain in the minds and hearts of some politicians and government officials, including myself. The idealism of Article 9 could not change the reality of international politics: power-balancing is the key to sustainable peace. Japan's failure to help ensure a balance of power made Japan an ego-centric country that cared only for its own peace. The toll of this “one-country irresponsible pacifism” was sharply felt in the first Persian Gulf War in 1990–91, but the explosion of the Senkaku issue in 2012 and increasingly erratic North Korean behavior under Kim Jong Un made such irresponsible pacifism an unsustainable policy (Togo 2014).

The reasoning of Abe and Togo contradicts the main argument in this paper that Article 9 has not just contributed to giving Japan peace with itself and its past but has also contributed to pacifying the region. Too much attention, in my view, is given by researchers and analysts to Japanese politicians' quest for a “normal” identity (*futsu no kuni* 普通の国) and also to its peace identity (*heiwa shugi* 平和主義). What matters most is not identity but peace as reality: Article 9 has hugely contributed to East Asia's pacification by reducing the sense of insecurity among Japan's neighbours, and creating a model of national peaceful development. The protection of Article 9 is not a self-interested Japanese enterprise, but a regional and global interest.

At first sight, Togo's argument that if the United States is obliged to help Japan, then Japan should also be ready to help others, seems reasonable. It builds on a nice principle of equality. Yet the argument is deeply problematic. Since the United States is the world's dominant military power, and sees itself as responsible for upholding the world order through the use of force whenever needed, with or without basis in decisions by the UN Security Council, Japan's new willingness to take part in collective self-defence could well signify—

at least in US eyes—that Japan can be called upon to help the US police the world, just as some NATO countries do. The Pentagon may expect Japan to take part in US interventions abroad just as it does with Great Britain. Future Japanese leaders may end up with a legacy similar to that of Tony Blair. One sometimes sees the argument that as a “normal nation,” Japan can have its own foreign policy and thus lower the risk of entanglement in US wars. This is an unlikely argument. The recent changes in Japan’s security outlook have led to a stronger integration of the US and Japanese military command systems, not to a loosening of ties. While this may somewhat further reduce the already negligible risk that the United States might abandon Japan in a crisis, the risk of Japanese entanglement in US wars has increased. In a crisis, it may not matter much if the Japanese public opinion is opposed to the deployment of Japanese forces abroad if the United States demands this from its ally, well knowing that it no longer suffers from (or rather benefits from) any constitutional inhibition.

The ongoing changes in Japanese security policy most certainly worry Beijing. China undergoes a similar change in the direction of exercising its right to actively defend its interests and principles in its region as well as globally. China does not have any peace constitution, but it has cherished its “Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence” from 1954 and has later adopted a doctrine of “peaceful development” and made pledges to never seek hegemony. As mentioned, China has not engaged in combat abroad since the end of the Cold War, and has upheld defensive military doctrines. More recently, the Chinese government has not just watched how the United States and Russia use force to promote their interests. Beijing has also realized the extent to which its own interests abroad have expanded through trade and investments. There are also those within the People’s Liberation Army who see a need for acquiring combat experience if China wishes to cope swiftly with future challenges. Albeit with some hesitation, both Japan and China are thus moving away from their defensive postures, stimulated by each other’s example as well as by a mutual threat perception. They could end up on a collision course. To prevent this dangerous scenario, a cautious US president would see a need to be vigilant in checking or guiding Japan’s foreign and security policies, as well as those of Taiwan.

The increasing integration of the US and Japanese security policies was confirmed and boosted by new guidelines agreed upon in 2015 for Japan-

US defence cooperation. They gave ground for the following comment by a former commander-in-chief of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Forces:

It is crystal clear that, in theory, any military should be able to operate in any area on this planet in order to protect its own country or national interests. Of course, in the actual execution of operations, an objective area such as “the region surrounding Japan” will be set for practical purposes. However, when taking into account the global nature of Japan’s national interests and the operational characteristics of our alliance partner’s forces, the attempt by the Government of Japan to remove the geographical limitations should be viewed positively. This will provide the Government of Japan with more flexibility to make vital security decisions.

Flexibility, however, is not a good thing if it allows you to make decisions you would rather not make. By freeing itself of its constitutional constraints and gaining a greater role within an integrated allied command system, Japan makes itself more dependent on an ally who is all too likely to continue to call the shots.

CONCLUSION

At the moment of writing, it seems unlikely that Prime Minister Abe will be able to achieve his aim to obtain a formal revision of Article 9 before the next general elections. Although the governing coalition is supported by more than two thirds of the members of both houses, there is too much disagreement within the ruling coalition to allow a quick decision. At any rate, the security laws adopted by the Japanese parliament have emptied Article 9 of most of its content. Its positive role in furthering peace in East Asia may thus be at its end. Now that Japan is ready to exercise its right to collective self-defence, its government may feel compelled to take part in US military operations wherever and whenever the Pentagon might push for a contribution. So far, public opinion seems to have prevented this from happening but then the US Obama administration has also not seen it as essential to get Japan to take part in naval operations in the South China Sea or send troops to fight against the Islamic State. More urgent requests are bound to come.

This has created a situation where Japan can no longer reassure others or inspire itself as a “peace nation.” Russia, China and North

Korea will see Japan's military forces as a threat to themselves and take this into account both emotionally and rationally when deciding their foreign policies. Then the only two big pacifying factors in East Asia will be economic inter-dependence and the deterrent capacity of the US-Japan alliance (Tønnesson, 2015a). Japan's increasing integration with the US system of command makes it unlikely that it can undertake military operations that have not been fully endorsed or requested by its ally. The risk of war in East Asia will hence be limited as long as the United States maintains friendly relations with China, and avoids escalation of crises in Korea, the Taiwan Strait and the East and South China Seas. The more independent-minded the Japanese Self-Defence Forces become, and the more influence they wield in developing Japan's security policy, the more closely the United States must check Japan's crisis behaviour so it does not draw the United States into a conflict. This is a dilemma for conservative Japanese nationalists. To the extent that they are successful in removing the remaining constitutional constraints on their armed forces, they must be prepared to accept interference by the United States in Japanese policy making.

Beijing knows, of course, and will continue to know, that Tokyo depends on the United States in a time of crisis, and may, therefore, play tough in relation to Japan whenever it feels certain that the United States does not want a confrontation. Yet Beijing will also be aware that if a crisis escalates into an armed confrontation, then it will have to face the full combined force of Japan and the United States. The overwhelming force of the alliance is unlikely to prevent assertive Chinese behaviour at the initial stage of a crisis but is more likely to deter China from actually using force if a crisis becomes acute. While this may preserve the East Asian Peace and prevent the outbreak of any full-scale war, the regional peace will depend on fear and crisis management, not on reassurance or cooperation. And Japan's special role in reducing other countries' fear and inspiring them to worry less for their security and more for their economic development, may be over.

Johan Galtung has made an important distinction between "peace with peaceful means," such as diplomacy, consultation, co-operation, confidence building, conflict management and resolution and "peace with unpeaceful means," such as deterrence, power balancing, alliances and show of force (Galtung, 1996). Article 9 has been a peaceful constituent in the East Asian Peace. Its unpeaceful constituents are now being accentuated.

Yet we should remember—and perhaps celebrate—the historical role of Article 9 and Yoshida Shigeru’s achievements. He was not just an instrument of contemporary circumstances, although he would never have come to power in Japan if the United States had not needed a leader who remained close to the Emperor without carrying any responsibility for Japan’s war-time activities. Yoshida seized his chance to form Japan’s future and made choices of historical significance for his region.

As mentioned in the beginning, the Yoshida doctrine consisted of three main elements: economic primacy, accommodation of the United States, slow and unthreatening rearmament only for self-defence. This combination, and the balance Yoshida struck between the three elements, set Japan on its course to peaceful rise, allowing it to use its resources mainly for civilian purposes, preventing the men with guns from unduly influencing politics and staying completely out of armed conflict at a time when the countries in its neighbourhood were consumed by war. Although the Yoshida doctrine may now have lost its significance, it deserves to be remembered. East Asia would not have been where it is today without it.

NOTES

1. Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru never issued any formal doctrine. The concept “Yoshida line” was introduced in 1964 by the political scientist Kōsaka Masataka, and would later be referred to as the “Yoshida doctrine.” I would like to thank Paul Midford for this information, as well as for his many helpful comments on a draft version of this chapter. I am of course alone responsible for any remaining errors or misunderstandings.
2. For theories of “national purpose transition” and “learning,” see Legro, 2000, pp. 419–432 and Legro 2008. For a systematic application of Legro’s theory to the case of Vietnam, see Elliott, 2012.
3. It was discovered later that in 1964, after China had exploded its first nuclear device, Sato had hinted to the United States that Japan might need to have its own nuclear weapons too. He also ordered an internal study to be made. Fitzpatrick, 2016, pp. 67–73.

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Apology and Forgiveness in East Asia

Ria Shibata

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will analyse the obstacles to reconciliation and what makes Japan's apologies unacceptable to its victims in East Asia. Why do China and South Korea continue to express their discontent that Japan's expression of remorse is not "genuine and sincere"? Based on the theoretical framework of basic human needs and identity, the chapter sheds light on the possible psychological drivers that motivate the Japanese revisionists to nullify the government's official apologies, making it impossible for the victim nations to readily forgive.

Despite years of developing multiple layers of exchanges and efforts to restore positive relationships, issues involving war history still continue to stand as an onerous barrier that plague the process of reconciliation between Japan, China and South Korea. Nearly seven decades have passed since the end of the Second World War, and the "history issue" still haunts and protracts the conflict in East Asia. Japan continues to be accused of failing to apologize and express remorse for its past injustices. Various scholars argue, however, that it is not accurate to simply conclude that

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Japan has failed to “address its past” (Seaton, 2007: p. 65). Yamazaki, who has conducted an extensive rhetorical study of Japan’s past war apologies, also contends that it is a “common simplistic view that Japan has never apologized” (Yamazaki, 2006: p. x). Dujarric further argues that in view of the number of official apologies issued by Japanese leaders in the past, “this is far more apologizing and contrition than the world average” (Dujarric, 2013). Why then has Japan gained so little recognition for its efforts for reconciliation?

Although the post-war political environment was not conducive to processes facilitating reconciliation in East Asia, the emergence of global human rights norms in the last three decades has revived active discussions about war guilt, justice, memory and apology. The 1990s saw increased calls for unresolved compensation and justice for human rights violations of the Second World War. Barkan (2001) described this trend as “a sudden rush of restitution cases all over the world” (p. 46). This international political climate placed considerable pressure on Japan to respond to the demands of the former victims for reparations and proper apology. The 1990s saw a series of official apologies issued by the Prime Ministers of Japan. However, despite the many apologetic statements offered, critics in China and South Korea still repeat their demands that Japan “has not apologized.” What are the factors underlying the victim nations’ rejection of the perpetrator’s expressions of remorse? What are the impediments to their willingness to forgive and reconcile? Apology is an issue that needs to be addressed as it has long been a major linchpin in Japan’s deteriorating relations with its neighbouring countries in East Asia. This chapter provides an important context and historical background in understanding one of the essential puzzles of this thesis, why the majority of the Japanese feel they have done enough while the victim nations continue to denounce Japan for its lack of remorse.

APOLOGY AND HUMAN NEEDS

Many prolonged conflicts have their roots in traumatic memories of past violence. To manage and prevent such conflicts governments are increasingly offering apologies to aggrieved citizen groups and states to acknowledge their historical injustices. Scholars argue that collective responses to historical injustices are critical to the healing of damaged relationships (Lazare, 2004; Tavuchis, 1991; Minow, 2002). Recently, there has been growing scholarship devoted to understanding of how public apologies may contribute to forgiveness and reconciliation, but there is still a dearth of research on when and why

government apologies for historical injustices might or might not be effective (Blatz et al., 2009: p. 221). Nonetheless, apology is a key component in reconciliation (Kelman, 2008). Barkan (2000) and other scholars (Brooks, 1999; Minow, 2002; Nadler and Shnabel, 2008) assert that in the process towards reconciliation, the primary purpose of apology is in the healing of the victims' sense of trauma, grievance and validation of identity. Without amends and reparations, the wounds from a historical injustice will continue to fester, causing resentment to deepen and conflict to exacerbate.

Nadler and Shnabel's (2008) needs-based model for reconciliation posits that while victims suffer a threat to their self-esteem and identity as powerful social actors, perpetrators suffer a threat to their identity as moral actors. In order to cope with this threat, victims need to restore their feelings of self-worth and control. One way to restore their esteem and power is by having the perpetrator issue an apology with full acknowledgement of their responsibility for the injustice they have caused. This acknowledgement and responsibility-taking create a kind of "debt" that only the victim can cancel, and thus returns control to the hands of the victim, who may then determine whether or not the perpetrator will be forgiven and reaccepted into the moral community (Minow, 1998).

The ongoing conflicts between Japan and its East Asian neighbours have their roots in unresolved historical injustices. From this perspective, it is not the kind of dispute that can be resolved with traditional methods of negotiation or diplomatic agreements alone. This chapter argues that the disputes in East Asia are identity-driven conflicts. The kind of action that contributes to reconciliation, therefore, is that which addresses the deep emotional and psychological needs of both the victims and the perpetrators. In this chapter, I will examine the Japanese government's official attempts to redress the past injustices which fail to satisfy the fundamental needs for recognition and restoration of self-esteem amongst the victimized nations. It will demonstrate how conflicts are likely to protract when the feeling of humiliation and pain makes needs satisfaction challenging for both the perpetrator and the victim (Burton, 1987; Kelman, 1995; Nadler and Shnabel, 2008; Azar, 1990).

WHAT MAKES AN APOLOGY EFFECTIVE?

Lazare (2004) contends that there are certain psychological needs that successful apologies can satisfy. He proposes that for an apology to help heal a damaged relationship, one of the important psychological needs

that must be met is the “restoration of dignity and self-respect.” Many historical injustices are humiliating. They rob the victims’ self-respect and dignity, and reduce them to inferior positions where they feel powerless. Hence, a successful apology must somehow restore these vital aspects of the victims’ self-esteem in order for them to heal (Lazare, 2004: p.45). Furthermore, Blatz and colleagues have conducted a systematic analysis of what improves or undermines the effectiveness of intergroup apologies for reconciliation. These researchers have discovered that the following key elements are necessary to increase the perceived sincerity and potential effectiveness of an apology: 1) the perpetrator’s acceptance of responsibility; 2) acknowledgement of harm and/or victim’s suffering; 3) expression of sorrow and remorse; 4) admission of injustice or wrongdoing; 5) forbearance, or promises to behave better and never repeat the mistake again; and 6) offers of reparations/to repair the damages (Blatz et al., 2009: p. 221). Studies showed that these elements were found to enhance sincerity and effectively promote forgiveness.

SINCERITY

If apologies are to be accepted as a symbolic redress of transgression, then they are only effective as long as they appear to be sincere. In an interpersonal context, sincerity can be defined as congruency between inward thoughts and outward expression. For some apologies to be effective, victims need to see the wrongdoer suffer and that suffering becomes evident when they express their remorse, guilt, shame and humiliation for what they have done (Lazare, 2004: p. 61). Although sincerity is difficult to measure with public apologies, it can be evaluated based on how thorough the acknowledgments of the offence are whether there is “consistency and consensus as visible in public record” (Yamazaki, 2006: p. 21). As Yamazaki aptly notes, “actions speak louder than words”; government representatives need to avoid actions or statements that seem to contradict the nation’s apologetic stance (Yamazaki, 2006: p. 21). Sincere apologies can underscore the transition from an unjust past to a peaceful future, whereas insincere apologies may serve to reinforce the original injustice (Iyer and Blatz, 2012). As such, a great deal of effort is often placed into communicating sincerity in an apology.

REPRESENTATION

Norma Field stresses that for a national apology to be of value, the issue of representation becomes a key component (Field, 1997: p. 7). Tavuchis (1991) also agrees that for a collective apology to be considered satisfactory, it must be offered with the backing and authority of the collectivity so that the apology is official and binding and must be made publicly and on the record (p. 48). For example, many who argue that Japan has “never apologized” are attached to the fact that there has not been any parliamentary resolution issued (e.g. the case of “comfort women”). To the extent that is possible, apologies should be formally endorsed by government representatives.

SPECIFICITY AND CLEAR ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE OFFENCE

For an apology to be effective, it needs to clearly acknowledge the offence. It is important to specify the wrongdoing, especially if the apology is to be seen as genuine. An inability to clearly identify who was responsible for the grievance, and to whom the apology is owed and to recognize the impact of the offence on the victim(s) leads to failed apologies (Lazare, 2004: p. 75). Clarifying the details of the offence demonstrates that the party is fully aware of the seriousness of the moral offences that they have violated. Apologizing for specific offences is an important element that makes a national apology credible. Instead of apologizing in abstract terms with passivity and ambiguity about the agency, Tavuchis (1991) claims that the most important function of collective apologies is to provide an official record that outlines the specificity of the nature of the wrongdoing and who was responsible.

The apologies are considered deeply significant since they provide recognition of the victims’ own memory and suffering, and an admission of guilt by the perpetrator, all of which helps the healing process. Apologies have been often found to be more significant than material compensation in the beginning of reconciliation processes.

JAPAN’S OFFICIAL STANCE

The Japanese government has been criticized frequently in the international community for its wartime conduct. Accusations of Japan’s wrongdoing occur at two levels: first, specific atrocities like the “Rape of

Nanjing,” inhumane treatment of prisoners of war, the forced sexual services of “comfort women” for Japanese soldiers, medical experimentation in Manchuria and on a more general level, Japanese aggression, annexation and colonial rule in Asia (Yamazaki, 2006: p. 24).

In response to these accusations, the Japanese government has explained its official position regarding war history and reparations in the following document issued by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in July 2005:

During a certain period of the past, Japan followed a *mistaken national policy and caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those Asian nations, through its colonial rule and aggression*. Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility. With feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan, underpinned by its solid democracy, has resolutely and consistently strived for peace by adhering to a strictly defensive security policy, preventing the escalation of international conflict, and dedicating itself to international peace and stability by mobilizing all its resources . . . After the end of World War II, Japan renounced all rights, titles and claims to Korea, Taiwan, the Kurile islands, a portion of Sakhalin, and other territories, and accepted the judgments of the International Military Tribunal of the Far East (Tokyo Trial), in which 25 Japanese leaders had been convicted of war crimes. Many other Japanese were convicted in other war crimes courts. *Japan has dealt with the issues of reparations, property and claims, in accordance with the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the bilateral peace treaties, agreements and instruments. Japan paid reparations to Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, while others waived them*. After the normalization of its relations with the Republic of Korea, China and other countries, *Japan extended a substantial amount of economic cooperation. With the parties to these documents, the issues of reparations, property and claims, including the claims by individuals, have been settled legally*. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005, cited in Seaton, 2007: p. 66)

Many critics and activists stress that in order for reconciliation to take place in East Asia, Japan needs to issue a clear apology and pay reparations to its former victims. However, Japan’s official position is that the country has already accepted war responsibility, has issued clear apologies, and has fulfilled all its legal obligations to pay reparations and compensation. From an interests-based realpolitik perspective, Japan feels it has fully addressed the past.

LEGAL REPARATIONS AND BILATERAL TREATIES

From the 1950s to the 1970s, Japan signed peace treaties and offered compensation to almost all of the countries that it had occupied. These agreements sometimes took the form of technological or economic assistance, but it was understood that they were meant to serve as wartime compensation. Most of these treaties contained clauses saying that the compensation issue had been finally resolved by those treaties, and this understanding constitutes the core of the Japanese official position. Seaton has offered explanations as to why the demands for compensation stipulated in San Francisco Peace Treaty have been so “lenient” on Japan. The Versailles Treaty of 1919 demonstrated how excessively punitive post-war treaties can lay the grounds for future conflict. In Japan’s case, preventing a resurgence of militarism or a backlash against the harshness of the post-war treaties were key aims (Seaton, 2007).

Japan and South Korea signed a treaty in 1965 normalizing diplomatic relations. At that time, they also signed a separate agreement for Japan to provide financial aid to Seoul, in return for South Korea relinquishing its right to claim wartime compensation.

Likewise, the Chinese government relinquished the right of pursuing claims for wartime compensation after gaining the possession of Japanese assets in China at the end of the war. In 1972, the Japan-China Joint statement waived reparations. The Joint Communiqué of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People’s Republic of China (excerpted) states:

The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself . . .

(5) The Government of the People’s Republic of China declares that in the interest of friendship between the Chinese and the Japanese peoples, it renounces its demand for war reparation from Japan. (Tanaka and Chou, 1972)

So, why are Japan’s efforts to apologize and restore relationships with its former victims failing to bear fruit? Barkan claims that restitution is a process where “victims and perpetrators (come) face to face to barter the suffering and responsibility for the past and create a future, which both sides can subscribe to . . .” (Barkan, 2001: p. S-49). It can encompass

compensation to victims, an admission of guilt, recognition of suffering and responsibility for the past. An important element he emphasizes is the “willingness of governments to admit to unjust and discriminatory past policies and to negotiate terms for restitution or reparation with their victims based more on moral considerations than on power politics” (Barkan, 2000: p. 317). According to the earlier theories on effective collective apology (Tavuchis, 1991: p. 101), the apology has to be: 1) official, in the sense that the prime minister of Japan acts as the representative of the collectivity and 2) on record and therefore binding. An apology needs to be accompanied by an assurance that there will no repetition of the acts to reassure that the perpetrator is genuinely sorry. Barkan states that an apology needs to validate and show respect for the victims’ memory and identity, the very recognition of past injustices constitutes the core restitution. It is recognition that transforms the trauma of victimization into a process of mourning, which allows for the rebuilding of relationships (Barkan, 2000: p. 323) With these criteria in mind, let us look at some representative cases of official apologies that Japan successfully issued in the past to understand why they were accepted as genuine and sincere by its former victims.

SINCERE APOLOGIES BY JAPANESE LEADERS

In August 1993, Hosokawa Morihiro became the prime minister of a coalition government consisting of eight minority parties including the Socialist Party. For the first time since 1955, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had lost its majority in the Diet and was out of power. During his brief nine-month term in office, Hosokawa made more than four official apologies for Japan’s “aggressive acts” and “colonial rule,” causing “intolerable pain and suffering” to the people of Asia and around the world. Hosokawa’s statements were hailed as having shifted the apology discourse of the Japanese government. The new administration of Hosokawa marked a significant break with the past. In the international arena, the end of the Cold War cast a new light on Japan’s position in the international community. “Comfort women” lawsuits and the surrounding publicity continued to plague the Japanese government. Despite apologies by Prime Minister Miyazawa in January 1992 and investigations conducted by the Japanese government in 1992 and 1993, the comfort women issue continued to gain momentum. During the 1990s, there was a shift towards greater contrition in the official narrative.

The Hosokawa administration shift in war apology discourse was exemplified in a press conference statement of 10 August after his inauguration as the prime minister: “My understanding is that it was a war of aggression and it was wrong” (*Asahi Shimbun*, 1993). This was the first time a Japanese Prime Minister had acknowledged that the war was wrong and a mistake. Hosokawa’s statements made front-page headlines and the statement was welcomed enthusiastically by China and South Korea.

On 23 August 1993, in his speech at the 127th Diet Session, Hosokawa made another apology in his first policy speech to the Japanese Diet:

Going back just four turns of the twelve-year cycle, it was with the end of the war in August 1945 that we realized the great mistake we had made and vowed to start a new, resolutely determined never to repeat the wrongs of the past.

I would like to take this opportunity to express a new our profound remorse (*hansei*) and apologies (*owabi*) for the fact that Japanese actions, including acts of aggression and colonial rule, caused unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people and to state that we will demonstrate our new determination by contributing more than ever before to world peace. (Hosokawa’s policy speech to the 127th session of the National Diet, 23 August 1993)

The final example of Hosokawa’s apologetic statement was made during his trip to South Korea to meet with the new President Kim Young Sam on 7 November 1993.

Because of our country’s past colonial rule, residents of the Korean peninsula experienced various forms of unbearable pain and grief, including such things as not being allowed to use their own language in school, being forced to change their names to Japanese style names, and the requisitioning of military comfort women. As the perpetrator of these actions, from the heart we want to express our deep remorse. (*fukaku hansei*) and apologize (*chinsba*) (*Asahi Shimbun*, 8 November 1993)

In this statement, what makes Hosokawa’s apology to Korea strong was his explicit reference to the details of Japanese occupation in Korea. President Kim responded to Hosokawa’s apology positively, especially in relation to the issue of comfort women:

I want to commend PM Hosokawa's understanding of history. Previous administrations have requested compensation for the former military comfort women. We have decided that, although looking to the past and keeping alive the lessons of history is important, it is more important to build a relationship [for the future]. As for the comfort women issue, although previous administrators have pursued compensation, [we find it] unnecessary. (*Asahi Shimbun*, 8 November 1993, cited in Yamazaki, 2006)

Hosokawa's apologies in 1993–1994 were considered the “zenith of Japanese apologies, judging by their reception in neighboring countries, and his apologies seemed to be taking Japan on a bold new course” (Seaton 2007, p. 87). Prime Minister Hosokawa's apology statements were positively accepted by Korean leaders. The Korean Foreign Minister even said, “The summit was 110 out of 100. The issue of past history is closed” (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 10 November 1993, cited in Yamazaki, 2006).

Japanese public opinion concerning Hosokawa's usage of the term “aggression” and “colonial rule” was positive. A public opinion poll of 3,000 respondents conducted by the *Asahi Shimbun* on 13 November 1993 revealed that 76% approved Hosokawa's Diet speech, while only 18% opposed it. National apologies for the country's past wrongdoing must gain acceptance from the domestic audience. For the government to maintain its political legitimacy, apologies must be justified to the audience in such a way that they still protect positive national pride and identity. “Learning from the past” through self-reflection and changing the tainted old identity to one which enables actors to take the moral high ground is one way of apologizing without damaging the nation's reputation. Hosokawa differentiated himself from the old LDP political establishment and was able to apologize with a renewed determination without making the nation lose face. Moreover, Hosokawa never compromised or nullified his apologies with other actions, which is why they were treated as sincere.

MURAYAMA'S APOLOGIES

Towards the fiftieth anniversary of the war, there were initiatives made to settle the past by producing a definitive resolution in the Diet, which would include an apology to Asian victims of the war, and an assurance that Japan would not follow the same path again (Rose 2005). Plans for the adoption of the resolution for the renunciation of the war was

advanced by a project team of the government under Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi of the Socialist Democratic Party. The internal politics of the coalition government (SDP, LDP and Sakigake) in addition to opposition from LDP hard-liners led the final draft to become a disappointingly watered down version. Despite the promise that the LDP would support the Socialist call for an apology, the Diet resolution was passed in June in a greatly altered version from the original draft amid much public criticism of the Japanese government. The final draft failed to include the words “apology” or “renunciation of the war” as was originally intended. Prime Minister Murayama tried to salvage the situation by issuing a personal statement. On 15 August 1995, Murayama called a press conference at his private home where he read a statement in which he apologized for Japan’s wartime conduct:

During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse (*tsunsetsu na hansei*) and state my heartfelt apology (*kokoro kara no owabi*). (Murayama, 15 August 1995, cited from Yamazaki, 2006)

Murayama redeemed the situation with his “heartfelt apology” by mentioning the “colonial rule and aggression” and having caused “tremendous damage and suffering.” The phrase “irrefutable facts of history” was interpreted as a rejection of the revisionist historical views of the conservatives and nationalists. In terms of response, the Chinese government adopted Murayama’s statement as a benchmark against which to evaluate subsequent official statements and apologies for the war (Rose, 2005: p. 103). His personal integrity and his long-time association with leftist politics gave his statement credibility and the sincerity and emotional content of his speech was persuasive in indicating true repentance (Yamazaki, 2006: p. 109).

Reactions to Murayama’s statement were generally positive. The statement was not representative of the Japanese government as a whole, but Murayama nonetheless obtained a cabinet decision (*kakugi kettei*). This move reflected his wish that his statement would be interpreted both at

home and abroad as the general will of the Japanese cabinet, which then would politically bind future cabinets (Mukae, 1996: p. 1029). Subsequent Japanese prime ministers did use Murayama's statement as a model for their own apologies. Prime Ministers Hashimoto and Koizumi modelled their apologies in accordance with Murayama's speech and the Japanese Foreign Ministry repeatedly affirmed this speech as the official government statement on apology.

China and South Korea accepted it in a reserved manner as they felt that Murayama's speech was a personal gesture rather than an official position. Added to this, in the afternoon on the same day of the press conference, more than half of Murayama's LDP cabinet visited the Yasukuni Shrine, showing how little support he had from his own cabinet despite the prior cabinet approval.

WHY APOLOGIES HAVE FAILED

The main problem surrounding the apparent failure of the Japanese to come to terms with the past is (from the Chinese and Korean points of view) the refusal of successive Japanese governments to offer genuine, sincere apologies to the Chinese people, backed up by consistent actions and behaviour that support the apologies.

Although the Japanese government, politicians and the public may feel that apologies have already been offered on a number of occasions, this view is at odds with the Chinese and Koreans who contend that Japan still has not apologized for its past. Repeated requests from leaders of Korea and China are evidence of the failure of Japanese apologies.

Based on the criteria explained earlier, Japanese apologies have expressed remorse and regret for the harm done. Another important aspect of regret concerns the expression of emotion in apologies. The success of Murayama's speech owes much to his "heartfelt" apology. In terms of representation, as the elected head of state, the prime minister appropriately represented the Japanese people as the legitimate person to apologize. However, those who argue that Japan "has never apologized" focus on the lack of a parliamentary resolution of apology. The failure to pass a Diet apology resolution in 1995, along with the wrangling over words to use, undermined the impact of the past official apologies made. For example, the issue of representation was the main reason why the former "comfort women" were dissatisfied with the Japanese act of apology and atonement.

COMFORT WOMEN APOLOGIES

During the 1990s, Japan came under international pressure to make amends for its historical crimes during the Second World War. International pressures together with domestic criticisms forced Japan to revisit its responsibility for wartime acts and the core of the dispute was over Japanese treatment of the “comfort women.” The practice of sexual slavery was brought into international prominence in 1990. The Japanese government, the two Koreas, China, the UN, and several nongovernmental, and women’s organizations became embroiled in the question of how to respond to injustices inflicted upon these women fifty years ago.

It was not until 1991 that a public testimony by a former comfort woman Kim Haksoon was given in Korea. The Japanese government initially denied direct involvement in the recruitment of comfort women. The Japanese government gave a statement in 1990 rejecting any official connection to the management of the brothels. Instead, the government attributed the coordination to private contractors.

However, after historian Yoshiaki Yoshimi discovered government records in the Japanese Defence Agency library in 1992 providing a direct role in managing the brothels. The lawsuits promoted the appointment of a Japanese committee to study the comfort women issue. This led to several official expressions of remorse, including that of Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama who acknowledged Japan’s “mistaken national policy” and offered his “feelings of deep remorse” and “heartfelt apology.”

In 1993, then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono made a statement regarding “the involvement of the military authorities” in the “comfort women” issue and added that “Japan would like to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those . . . who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable . . . wounds.” Several Japanese prime ministers wrote to surviving sex slaves noting that “with an involvement of the Japanese military, it was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women . . . our country, painfully aware of its moral responsibilities, with feelings of apology and remorse, should face up squarely to its past.” Although these statements mark a turning point in the official position of the Japanese government, the former comfort women rejected them as merely individual responses that did not represent the people of Japan, as long as the Diet refused to issue an apology. Added to this, there is considerable ambiguity and passivity in these statements.

While accepting some involvement to the military-servicing brothels, the government evaded legal responsibility towards the comfort women. The government's first denial, then continuing to downplay the state's position in institutionalizing sexual slavery during the war, is the reason why the government's statement failed to satisfy the emotional needs of the former comfort women. The victims argue that official acknowledgment and apologies are both necessary. When the Japanese government apologized to the comfort women in August 1993, it was welcomed by the victims' groups only until it became evident that compensation would be "unofficial" via the Asian Women's Fund set up in July 1995. The victims wanted monetary reparation to be directly from the government as a symbolic gesture of taking responsibility for the harms caused (Chang, 2009).

Although Murayama released statements that expressed remorse and apologies towards former comfort women and their suffering, his message was taken as an individual's message, and not representing the reluctant government. "For such a significant issue, individuals cannot speak convincingly on behalf of a heel-dragging government" (Chang, 2009). Hence, the Japanese Diet has largely been considered not to have extended formal acknowledgment, apologies or acceptance of responsibility.

Even this acknowledgment was recently challenged by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's remarks in 2007 that there was "no evidence to prove that there was coercion as initially suggested." This brought a hailstorm of denunciations from international organizations and nations.

PRIME MINISTERS' VISITS TO THE YASUKUNI SHRINE AND THE TOKYO TRIBUNAL

Gestures and remarks made by Japan's nationalist leaders have nullified the official apologies and help to explain why Japan is widely perceived as having inadequately addressed the past. Despite the number of apologies made, Prime Ministers Koizumi and Abe's Yasukuni Shrine visits have provoked the greatest public anger in East Asia. Such contradictory messages and actions cast doubt on the sincerity of any apology, and therefore nullify its effect.

For China, Korea and South Korea the most problematic issue that destroys the authenticity of the past apologies is that of Japanese prime

ministers' controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. The Yasukuni Shrine is where the souls of over 2.5 million war dead are enshrined. The shrine originated from the wishes of the new Meiji leaders to perform rituals for those who had died in wars for the nation.

Japanese Prime Ministers and cabinet ministers have made regular visits to the Yasukuni Shrine from 1951 onward. The problem first emerged in the 1980s when Yasuhiro Nakasone paid a visit in his official capacity on 15 August 1985. But it was not until Koizumi became prime minister that the issue developed into a diplomatic problem once again. The heart of the problem is the fact that those honoured and worshipped there include fourteen convicted Class-A war criminals, such as Prime Minister Tojo Hideki.

When there is a threat to the perpetrator group's moral identity, memory would be used to valourize the group and restore its collective esteem (Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Nadler and Shnabel, 2008). In the process of valourizing Japan, one critical memory that Abe and the nationalists needed to reshape was the history of humiliation following the judgements rendered by the Tokyo Tribunal. Recently, in the written message that was sent to an annual memorial ceremony honouring Class-A and other war criminals in August 2014, Abe asserted that those executed by the Allied Powers are "the foundation of the nation" and should be hailed for having "staked their souls to become the foundation of their nation so that Japan could achieve the peace and prosperity of today" (*AJW*, 2014). In his message sent to the ceremony in 2013, Abe further expressed his determination stating, "I want to establish the existence of a new Japan that would not be an embarrassment to the spirit of the war dead" (*Ibid.*). As the inscription on the statue honouring the 1,180 war criminals at the Yasukuni Shrine also stresses, to Abe and his supporters, the International Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Tribunal) was "a harsh and retaliatory trial never before seen in the world" (*Ibid.*), one which needs to be denounced for the sake of posterity.

Abe and the conservatives have repeatedly voiced their frustrations that the Japanese people have been forced to live far too long under the shadow of their defeat, and it is time they restore a national identity with dignity and pride. From this perspective, it is therefore imperative that they negate the verdict of the Tokyo Tribunal, which placed the Class-A war criminals on charges of "crimes against peace" and "crimes against humanity" otherwise they live with the stain of being "descendants

inheriting the DNA of people who have committed heinous crimes” (Abe and Hyakuta, 2013: p. 154).

To the revisionists, the Class-A war criminals were victims who were unjustly punished under victor’s justice. At a recent ceremony held in honour of the Class-A war criminals, Abe raised the stature of these wartime leaders as martyrs: “I would like to sincerely express my feelings of remembrance to the spirit of the Showa Era (1926–1989) martyrs who staked their souls to become the foundation of their nation so that Japan could achieve the peace and prosperity of today” (*AJW*, 2014). Abe’s essential argument is that “the military tribunal was a scheme designed by the victor to impose its political judgment upon the vanquished and as such, it had no moral authority” (Abe, 2006: pp. 69–70). This blatant glorification of the Class-A war criminals in his messages demonstrate Abe’s resolve not only to exonerate his own grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi,¹ who was imprisoned as a Class-A war criminal (later released) but to reject the tribunal’s verdict that the past war was an act of aggression.

By paying obeisance and patronizing the Yasukuni Shrine, Abe and past prime ministers of Japan are viewed by China and South Korea as endorsing the shrine’s public position that nullifies Japan’s past apologies, claiming that the Tokyo Tribunal should be rejected and “the recent great war was not a war of aggression, but a war of self-defense, in which the very survival of Japan was at stake and which aimed, moreover, at liberating Asia from European and American colonial oppression” (Takahashi, 2005: p. 115). As social identity theory suggests, in the face of shameful events in history, groups are driven to remember the past in ways that eliminate humiliating events altogether from their historical narratives (Bar-Tal et al., 2009) Abe and the nationalists’ efforts to honour the wartime leaders and whitewash the past can be interpreted as their way of defending the nation’s damaged moral status and replacing it with a glorious trope of which its citizens can be proud. And for China and South Korea, this act only appears as further evidence of Japan’s lack of remorse over its wartime conduct.

APOLOGIES NULLIFIED

The table below highlights why political leaders in China and Korea feel agitated by the verbal apologies which are then subverted by the Japanese leaders’ nationalist actions. China is very insistent that “actions speak louder than words,” especially on delicate questions as acknowledgement and responsibility for wartime atrocities.

<i>Prime Minister</i>	<i>Content of Apology</i>	<i>Negation of Apology</i>
Tanaka Kakuei	25 September 1972: as part of the restoration of Sino-Japanese relations, expresses remorse for the “trouble” (meiwaku) Japan caused. The comments cause some anger because the word “meiwaku” does not express sufficient remorse.	Visited Yasukuni Shrine 5 times.
Kiichi Miyazawa	26 August 1982: Miyazawa statement on history textbooks Note: Miyazawa statement led to the adoption of “neighbouring countries clause” in the textbook screening standards of the Ministry of Education.	
Nakasone Yasuhiro	22 August 1984: in Korea, expresses “deep remorse” (fukai hansei) for the trouble and “terrible damage” (sangai) in the past.	Makes “official” worship to Yasukuni Shrine on 15 August 1985 and marks the internationalization of the Yasukuni issue. July 1986: Education Minister Fujio Masayuki states, “The erroneous view that only Japan committed aggression must be corrected . . . the verdict that Tojo was a Class-A war criminal was wrong” (Fujio was later dismissed by Prime Minister Nakasone).
Takeshita Noboru	6 March 1989: in the Diet, states that the “militaristic aggression” (gunjishugi ni yoru shinryaku) of our country cannot be denied. 30 March 1989: expresses deep remorse and “feelings of regret” for colonial rule to North Korea, the first such statement to the North.	
Kaifu Toshiki	3 May 1991: At the ASEAN summit, Kaifu expresses deep remorse for the “unbearable suffering and sadness” (taenikui kurushimi to kanashimi) caused by “our nation’s acts.”	

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<i>Prime Minister</i>	<i>Content of Apology</i>	<i>Negation of Apology</i>
Miyazawa Kiichi	17 January 1992: apologizes for the “comfort women” on his trip to Korea.	Made 1 secret visit to Yasukuni in 1992.
Hosokawa Morihiro	10 August 1993: makes a statement it was “an aggressive war and a mistake” (shinryaku senso). 15 August 1993: Hosokawa becomes the first prime minister to offer condolences to Asians on 15 August. 6 November 1993: In Korea, Hosokawa lists specific Korean grievances such as the “comfort women” and comments that “as the aggressor” (kagaisha to shite) he expresses remorse and a “deep apology” (fukai chinsha). 20 March 1994: In China, expresses remorse and an “apology.”	
Kono Yohei	1993 Kono Statement: Yohei Kono, the then-Chief Cabinet Secretary made a statement regarding “the involvement of the military authorities” in the “comfort women” issue and added that “Japan would like to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those . . . who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable . . . wounds.”	
Murayama Tomiichi	15 August 1995: the Murayama statement(danwa) tried to salvage the widely criticized Japanese Diet statement (9 June). Murayama’s “personal heartfelt apology” became the standard for later apologies by Japanese prime ministers.	May 1994: Justice Minister, Nagano Shigeto repeatedly objected to the term of Nanjing “Massacre,” calling the incident a fabrication. He did not deny that there was killing, rape and pillaging but he argued that the term “massacre” was too strong. He also claimed that “the war should not be

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<i>Prime Minister</i>	<i>Content of Apology</i>	<i>Negation of Apology</i>
Hashimoto Ryutaro	<p>26 January 1996: in the Diet, Hashimoto states it was aggression and restates the content of Murayama communiqué.</p> <p>23 June 1996: Hashimoto apologizes (owabi) to the “comfort women.”</p> <p>15 August 1996: Hashimoto expresses remorse to the Asians, but he also praises the soldiers who fought for “the security of the nation” and sacrificed their precious lives (totoi gisei).</p> <p>12 January 1997: In China, Hashimoto repeats the Murayama communiqué.</p>	<p>called an aggression since Japan’s intent was to liberate colonies and establish a co-prosperity sphere.” Nagano was forced to resign and apologize.</p> <p>12 August 1994: Sakurai Shin, Director General of the Environment Agency stated that Japan did not fight with the intention of waging an aggressive war, and thanks to Japan Asia could “throw off the shackles of colonial rule” (Sakurai resigned two days later).</p> <p>8 November 1995, Director General of the Management and Coordination Agency, Eto Takami, rejected Murayama’s apology statement and said that he believed “Japan also did good things during its colonial rule.” Eto was forced to resign. This led Murayama to issue a written apology to South Korea.</p> <p>Hashimoto’s words were taken with skepticism because of his position as the former head of the War Bereaved Association (izokukai), his private visits to Yasukuni Shrine, and his earlier comment that he had “lingering doubts about whether it could be called a war of aggression” (when he was Minister of Trade and Industry).</p>

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<i>Prime Minister</i>	<i>Content of Apology</i>	<i>Negation of Apology</i>
Obuchi Keizo	15 August 1998: Obuchi repeats Hashimoto and Murayama position. 8 October 1998: Obuchi expresses remorse (hansei) to President Kim Dae-jung as part of the Japan-Republic of Korea Joint Declaration. 25 November 1998: President Jiang Zemin visits Japan. Obuchi issues a verbal apology but there is wrangling over a written joint declaration that only mentions remorse.	
Koizumi Junichiro	8 October 2001: Koizumi expresses remorse and apology in China and visits the Marco Polo Bridge and the Anti-Japanese War Museum. 15 October 2001: Koizumi expresses remorse and apology (owabi) for Japan's colonial domination. 17 September 2002: Koizumi acknowledges "Japan caused tremendous damage and suffering to those in Asia, and expresses 'on behalf of people of Japan . . . feelings of profound remorse and heartfelt apology.'"	Makes 5 visits to Yasukuni Shrine: 13 August 2001, 21 April 2002, 14 January 2003, 1 January 2004, 17 October 2005.
Shinzo Abe	October 2006: Abe expresses an apology for the damage caused by its colonial rule of aggression.	Abe's apology was followed on the same day by a group of 80 LDP lawmakers' visit to Yasukuni Shrine. 1 March 2007: Abe stated that "there was no evidence that the Japanese government had kept sex slaves, even though the Japanese government had already admitted the use of brothels in 1993. The fact is, there is no evidence to prove there was coercion."

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<i>Prime Minister</i>	<i>Content of Apology</i>	<i>Negation of Apology</i>
<p>14 August 2015, Abe issued his statement on the 70th anniversary of the Second World War in which he expressed “deepest remorse” and “sincere condolences” to wartime victims both home and abroad.</p>	<p>Abe claimed that the Class-A war criminals “are not war criminals under the laws of Japan.” Abe expresses doubt on Murayama apology saying, “The Abe Cabinet is not necessarily keeping to it.” “There is no definitive answer either in academia or in the international community on what constitutes aggression. Things that happened between countries appear different depending on which side you’re looking from.” December 2013, Abe makes a surprise visit to Yasukuni Shrine Abe at the same time stressed that Japan has “repeatedly expressed the feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology for its actions during the war” and that future generations should not be obliged to apologize for Japan’s wartime actions seventy years ago. Abe sent a monetary offering to Yasukuni Shrine the following day on August 15 on the 70th anniversary of the end of the First World War. 15 August 2015: Three cabinet ministers—Haruko Arimura, state minister for women’s empowerment, Sakae Takaichi, minister for internal affairs and communications, and Eriko Yamatani, minister in charge for the abduction issue—paid their visits to Yasukuni Shrine. 66 Diet members also jointly visited the shrine that day.</p>	

ABE'S STATEMENT MARKING THE SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's 14 August statement marking the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War was issued at a sensitive time when mounting tensions in Japan's diplomatic relations with its neighbouring countries in Northeast Asia needed some easing. As China and Korea closely watched the outcome of the war anniversary statement, South Korean President Park Geun-hye expressed her hopes that Prime Minister Abe's statement would uphold the views held by past cabinets on wartime history "to show the Japanese government's mature attitude in trying to make a fresh start in relationships with neighbouring countries, including us" (*Reuters*, 2015). Abe's statement was drafted as he juggled conflicting priorities and amidst pressure to appease both his conservative supporters and the approval of the pacifist-leaning coalition partner, Komeito. The resulting anniversary statement drew mixed responses from both camps. One focal issue was whether Abe's seventieth anniversary statement would continue the legacy of the landmark fiftieth war anniversary statement made by then-Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in 1995 in which he expressed "feelings of deep remorse" and a "heartfelt apology" for Japan's "colonial rule and aggression." Ten years later, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi repeated the same expressions in his own statement. Abe referred to the statements of his predecessors stating that "Such positions articulated by the previous cabinets will remain unshakable into the future." This could be taken as a compromise for Abe and his conservative cohorts who have repeatedly questioned the rulings of the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal that singled out Japan to be guilty of aggressive war.

Chinese and South Korean leaders were far from satisfied with Abe's war anniversary statement. According to *Asahi Shimbun*, China's first vice foreign minister Zhang Yesui summoned the Japanese Ambassador to convey Beijing's stance on the issue. "Japan must clearly explain the nature of its war of aggression, as well as its responsibility for the war, while also making a sincere apology to the peoples of nations that suffered from the war. It should not try to gloss over this important and fundamental issue" (*AJW*, 2015b). Chinese, Korean media and left-leaning groups in Japan also criticized it as a step back from the Murayama Statement for not including a more explicit acknowledgement of Japan's actions. Although Abe's statement repeated several of Murayama's key phrases, it was

criticized for its ambiguity in failing to clarify the scope of Japan's responsibilities during the war. For example, Abe used the word "aggression" without clarifying whose aggression he was referring to: "Incident, aggression, war – we shall never again resort to any form of the threat of use of force as a means of settling international disputes. We shall abandon colonial rule forever and respect the right of self-determination of all people throughout the world" (Abe, 2015).

South Korean leaders were dissatisfied with the indirect use of terms, particularly "aggression." Another issue that was raised by Korean officials was the indirect reference made to "comfort women" as "women behind the battlefields whose honor and dignity were severely injured." He failed to acknowledge that Japanese military authorities coerced tens of thousands of Asian women to work as sex slaves, a claim he has consistently denied.

Although Abe did include such key words as "aggression," "colonial domination," "deep remorse" and "apology," Murayama dismissed his successor's anniversary statement for not having upheld the spirit of his 1995 statement. At a news conference following Abe's delivery of the statement, Murayama made critical remarks regarding the ambiguity and indirect language. He said Abe's address did not make clear for which actions Japan was apologizing (*AJW*, 2015a).

Another area of focus was whether the Prime Minister would express "apology" for Japan's actions seventy years ago. Abe in fact expressed "feelings of profound grief" and "eternal, sincere condolences" to the victims of war at home and abroad in his statement. However, these words of remorse were questioned by Japan's neighbours when he stressed that "Japan has repeatedly expressed the feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology for its actions during the war" (Abe, 2015). He further added that "We must not let our children, grandchildren, and even further generations to come, who have nothing to do with the war, be predestined to apologize. Even so, we Japanese, across generations, must squarely face history. We have a responsibility to inherit the past, in all humbleness, and pass it on to the future." To suggest that Japan has done enough apologizing reflects not only the conservatives' position: according to the recent Pew survey, more than 50% of the Japanese public feel that they have apologized enough.

Critical Chinese and Korean media questioned the sincerity of Abe's apology pointing out to his attempt to use "rhetorical twists" to appease both the conservative camp and critics in China and South Korea. Xinhua

news agency described Abe's war anniversary statement as "rife with rhetorical twists" and "carefully calibrated context into which he has embedded those too-fundamental-to-avoid terms, the apology was a diluted one at best, thus marking only a crippled start to build trust among its neighbors" (*Xinhua.net*, 14 August 2015). As mentioned in the earlier section, specificity of the wrongdoing is a critical element that makes a national apology genuine (Tavuchis 1991). Abe's statement failed to satisfy the victimized nations with his ambiguous rhetoric that avoided specifying the nature of the wrongdoing and who was responsible for it.

CONCLUSION

Unresolved trauma, historical memory and identity anxieties generate deep contextual elements that become impediments to reconciliation and protract the conflict. How both the transgressor and transgressed deal with their past history of violent trauma is a critical component to reconciliation in East Asia. Japan's so-called "historical amnesia"—represented by its denial of the Nanjing Massacre, avoidance of responsibility for the comfort women, and the controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine—has generated resentment from the victimized nations. Collective apology for historical injustices is an integral component in reconciliation. As victims suffer a threat to their identity as powerful actors, the perpetrators suffer a threat to their identity as moral actors (Nadler and Shnabel, 2008). Social identity theory posits that individuals attain a sense of self-esteem and self-worth from the social group that they belong to and are, therefore, driven to maintain a positive collective identity. The possibility that one's group has perpetrated an unjust act can pose a threat to the in-group's moral identity (Branscombe et al., 1999). Victims' accusations and demands for apology, therefore, threaten the perpetrator's identity as a moral actor. The Japanese conservative elites' have defused the threat to its positive national identity by denying the painful consequences of their actions and their responsibility for having caused them.

This chapter examined some of the factors underlying the victim nations' rejection of the perpetrator's apologies; why both China and South Korea are dissatisfied that Japan's expression of remorse is not "genuine and sincere." Sincerity of an official apology requires the appearance of consistency and consensus in government statements, actions and institutions. Many scholars highlight the insincerity of a number of Japanese apologies being subverted by a steady stream of

cabinet officials visiting the Yasukuni Shrine after requesting forgiveness. This insincerity is further exacerbated by conservative politicians seeking to revise history by denying or minimizing Japanese wartime atrocities. Revisionist history especially in the area of textbooks is another indication of insincerity on the part of the government (see Nakano's chapter).

As for public opinion, recent polls reveal that the majority of the Japanese feel that Japan has apologized enough. Incessant demand for apology by China and South Korea is making the public feel some degree of apology fatigue. Japanese leaders have issued official apologies or expressed remorse at least fifty times since the war. There is a feeling that Japanese apologies are "never enough" and that China and South Korea will never be satisfied no matter what Japan offers. Given the current tense relationships between China, Korea and Japan, it is imperative that ripe conditions are established for the giving and receiving of apologies considered acceptable to China and Korea. These conditions have been mapped out in this chapter and include apology coupled with sincerity, actions consistent with rhetoric and official representation and, if possible, written declarations that express remorse and sorrow for past injustices.

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