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Session III: Asia's China Strategy II: Towards a Regional Order:

Asia's China Strategy: Japan Reacts to China's Rise

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Introduction

The spectacular and successful Olympic Games in Beijing has brought the rise of China into sharper focus than ever. Described in hyperbolic terms by the Western media as 'China's coming out party', the events seemed to amply demonstrate the People's Republic of China's (PRC) newly-found wealth, confidence and global influence. Beijing may indeed have substantial reason to feel confident about its newly found power. China had suffered a psychological blow in the wake of the 'China Threat' discourse in the late 1990s, when it discovered (much to its shock) that the PRC's rise was not welcomed.¹ While the Chinese responded angrily to the 'China Threat' theses, claiming that it was a Western and Japanese-led conspiracy intended to contain China, they quickly understood the message from the international community, and particularly the West: China had to be seen as a 'status quo power' in order to be accepted and occupy its 'rightful place' alongside the other great powers in the international community.²

Since then, China has sought to reassure its neighbours that it does not wish to upset the status quo of the region by following a policy of '(1) participation in regional organizations; (2) establishment of strategic partnerships and deepening of bilateral relations; (3) expansion of regional economic ties; and (4) reduction of distrust and anxiety in the security sphere.'³ Evidence of this new strategy is visible in many areas of China's behaviour in Asia. Beijing has, for instance, signed the Declaration on Conduct in the South China Sea, which commits signatories to eschewing the use of military force in the resolution of the on-going territorial dispute there.⁴ Beijing has also become an enthusiastic participant in a plethora of regional multilateral organisations, which is a significant change from its previous tendency to favour bilateral relations where it could use its power advantage to draw out diplomatic concessions from weaker states. In addition, the PRC has sought to allay regional fears of its military power by entering a series of confidence-building measures, ranging from bilateral security dialogues to improving the transparency of its military spending.⁵ China's policy of assurance seems to be working well. Its membership of international organisations is unprecedented, and it is fast proving itself to be a key player in many of these forums. The PRC played a key role

¹ See Yong Deng, 'Reputation and the Security Dilemma: China Reacts to the China Threat Theory' in Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert Ross (eds), *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

² See Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Is China a Status Quo Power?', *International Security* (vol. 27, no. 4, Spring 2003, pp. 5-56) for a detailed discussion on 'status quo' and 'revisionist' powers.

³ David Shambaugh, 'China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order', *International Security* (vol. 82, no. 6, 2004/5, pp. 64-99), p. 72

⁴ The full text of the agreement can be found at <<http://www.aseansec.org/13163.htm>>. In 2003 China also signed the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, which commits itself (among others) to non-interference, renunciation of the threat or use of force, and economic cooperation between the signatories. See <<http://www.aseansec.org/1217.htm>>. The full text of the Instrument of the Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, see <<http://www.aseansec.org/15271.htm>>.

⁵ Shambaugh, 'China Engages Asia', pp. 85-89

in facilitating the Six Party talks aimed at preventing the nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, and has received much praise for its efforts.

Such Chinese behaviour has defied many realists' predictions. Realists have long made the point that power transitions within the international system have often led to military conflict, and the Asia-Pacific region is no exception. Scholars such as John J. Mearsheimer argued that rising powers such as China are rarely satisfied with the status quo and seek regional or global hegemony.⁶ Even among those who may not necessarily subscribe to Mearsheimer's particular brand of 'offensive realism', the geopolitical characteristics of East Asia were cause for concern. Thomas J. Christensen argued in 1999 that East Asia was particularly prone to security dilemmas because the 'region [was] characterized by major shifts in the balance of power, skewed distributions of economic and political power within and between countries...still relatively low levels of intraregional economic interdependence, anemic security institutionalization', long-standing territorial issues and historical animosity.⁷ Aaron L. Friedberg has also echoed this view and voiced his concern that in the event of the decline of U.S. power the Asia-Pacific would be characterised by multipolarity, resulting in 'an acceleration in the...East Asian arms buildup'.⁸ However, to this date neither have we seen a security dilemma emerge in the region, nor a Chinese attempt to seek hegemony at the expense of the U.S.

In an attempt to explain this puzzle, scholars have recently forwarded the notion that Asian states have been willing to accommodate a rising China. In one of the most recent contributions in this field, David C. Kang has argued that hierarchy has been the norm of Asian international relations (as opposed to 'anarchical' intra-European relations, which International Relations theory often bases its assumptions on), and that this historical identity continues to inform Asian states' behaviour vis-à-vis China. The implication here is that because of the 'positive historical experience of hierarchical systems' in the region – usually under the Chinese empire – the states of the region 'may...have transferred their traditional comfort with beneficial and stable hierarchical systems' to the PRC.⁹ As Kang argues:

East Asian states view China's reemergence as the gravitational center of East Asia as natural. China has a long history of being the dominant state in East Asia, and...it has a worldview in which it can be the most powerful country in its region and yet have stable relations with other states in it.¹⁰

We may take issue with Kang's arguments on a number of points. One of the more obvious is the danger of historical essentialism: it is very difficult to prove that states' identities as members of the Chinese-dominated tribute system are unproblematically

⁶ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001)

⁷ Thomas J. Christensen, 'China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma', *International Security* (vol. 23, no. 4, 1999, pp. 49-80), p. 49

⁸ Aaron L. Friedberg, 'Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia', *International Security* (vol. 18, no. 3, 1993/4, pp. 5-33), p. 31

⁹ Evelyn Goh, 'Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia', *International Security* (vol. 32, no. 3, 2007/8, pp. 113-157), p. 150

¹⁰ David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power and Order in East Asia*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 4

passed down from generation to generation. Furthermore, since the end of the nineteenth century, Asian states have adopted and internalised many institutional features of the European international system, and we can never be certain as to which of these two identities (as an ‘Asian state’ steeped in the traditions of the East Asian international order or as a member of the sovereign states system) will prevail over one another and why.¹¹ A second and perhaps more salient point is that it is simply too early to say whether Kang’s argument that Asian states are increasingly accepting China’s rise holds true. A recent survey conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs has found that 45 % of Indonesians and 39% of Vietnamese are ‘either “somewhat” or “very” uncomfortable with the idea of China one day becoming the leader of Asia’. In South Korea, the figure rises to 77%.¹²

This sentiment seems particularly pronounced in Japan, which is the main focus of this paper. The same survey found that 89% of Japanese were uncomfortable with the prospect of China becoming the leading power in Asia. Another poll carried out by the Japan Cabinet Office in 2007 also revealed that only 34% of respondents felt ‘friendly feelings (親しみを感じる)’ towards China, while those who did not reached 63.5%. Similarly, when polled about the general state of Sino-Japanese relations, 68% believed that bilateral relations were ‘not good (良好だと思わない)’, as opposed to 26.4% who believed that relations were ‘good’.¹³

The fact that Japanese sentiments towards China are characterised by antipathy, however, does not mean that Tokyo is attempting to balance against China or build up some form of regional coalition aimed at the PRC. While Japan remains cautious of China’s growing power, its military spending has hardly increased. Similarly, while Japan has strengthened its security cooperation with the United States (U.S.) under the auspices of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance, its main threat remains North Korea. Japan does not face immediate coercion from the PRC like Taiwan does, and while territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands have yet to be resolved, Beijing has so far shown restraint in its dealings with Japan over this issue. Furthermore, ‘Japan has shown little sensitivity to the problem of relative gains from trade between itself and China’.¹⁴ This

¹¹ The process of China and Japan’s socialisation into the Westphalian sovereign states system is explored in detail by Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of ‘Civilization’ in International Society*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) and Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan’s Encounter with European International Society*. (London: Routledge, forthcoming 2009).

¹² The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, ‘Soft Power in Asia: Results of a 2008 Multinational Survey of Public Opinion’, p. 5. Available at: <http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/POS_Topline_Reports/Asia_Soft_Power_2008/Chicago_Council_Soft_Power_Report-Final_6-11-08.pdf>

¹³ See Japan Cabinet Office, ‘Gaikō ni kansuru yoron chōsa’, <<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h19/h19-gaiko/2-1.html>>, accessed on 29 September 2008. Interestingly, in this survey the percentage of those thinking that Sino-Japanese relations were good had actually risen from 21.7% in the previous survey, no doubt reflecting the post-Koizumi diplomatic thaw which has taken place between Tokyo and Beijing.

¹⁴ Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, ‘Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy’, *International Security* (vol. 22, no. 4, 1998, pp. 171-203), p. 182

further suggests that Japan does not see its relationship with China as inherently zero-sum, as states locked in a security dilemma would tend to do.

The aim of this paper is to provide a broad overview of Japanese reactions to a rising China, and explore the reasons why, despite a strong sense of antipathy (which is reciprocated by China), Tokyo's broad China strategy is not characterised by balancing behaviour. I argue that mainstream thinking on Japan's China strategy can best be described as 'hedging'. While China's growing political and economic integration into the international community has allayed much of Tokyo's fears of the emergence of a hegemonic China, Japanese suspicions towards the PRC and its rising power have persisted. In addition to the oft-mentioned opaqueness of Beijing's military spending, this can be attributed to three factors: the limited effects of 'liberal commercialism'; the weak institutionalisation of East Asia; and Japan's own torn identity as a member of 'Asia', the 'Western camp', and a state that believes itself to be worthy of 'great power' recognition. While the first two are by no means unique to Japan, it is the last factor which leads to both Sino-Japanese competition over influence and 'great power' recognition, exacerbating mutual insecurities and preventing Japan's acceptance of China's rise.

Japan Eyes the Rise of China

In many respects, the process by which Japan has dealt with China's rise mirrors that of its Asian neighbours. Japan's policy towards China had been predominantly characterised by 'liberal commercialism', which was undergirded by a strong belief that engaging with the PRC and tying it down in a cobweb of dense economic relations would foster cooperative relations and be conducive towards the emergence of a benign China. The Japanese also held a sense of guilt emanating from its aggression in the region, and this also led to sentiments that Japan had a special moral responsibility to promote Chinese economic growth as a way of atoning for historical wrongs.

Such views have undergone a shift in recent years. The first reason for this was the structural changes which took place in the international system as a result of the end of the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant that the PRC was no longer a partner in Japan's confrontation with Moscow. Beijing's own rapid military build-up began to worry the Japanese.¹⁵ Even worse, the Chinese demonstrated their willingness to use their newly-found military power in the late 1990s: Beijing carried out missile tests in the Taiwan straits and conducted nuclear tests, ignoring Tokyo's protests. It also began to display what was perceived as an aggressive, expansionary nationalism, laying claim to the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and seizing the Spratly Islands. These incidents 'exposed the limits of Japan's economic leverage on China's international behaviour',¹⁶ and, according to some commentators, forced the Japanese to engage in 'reluctant realism'

¹⁵ Gerald Segal, 'The Coming Confrontation between China and Japan?', *World Policy Journal* (vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 27-32)

¹⁶ Murata Kôji, 'Domestic sources of Japanese policy towards China' in Lam Peng Er (ed), *Japan's Relations with China: Facing a rising power*. (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 40

and hedge against China.¹⁷ Second, generational changes in Japan's political scene have meant that the pro-PRC figures who played a key role in the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations in the 1970s and 1980s have gradually faded from the scene. The younger generation of Japanese policy-makers are, Ming Wan argues, 'largely indifferent to and unfamiliar with China. Though considering China to be important, they do not see the country as a special case in Japan's foreign relations.'¹⁸ The result is a greater tendency to adopt a more sober and critical attitude towards the PRC.

Why Japan has not balanced against China

However, Tokyo's behaviour since the emergence of the 'China Threat' theses suggests that Japanese policy-makers do not believe that they are locked in a security dilemma with the PRC, and neither do they think that Sino-Japanese relations are inherently zero-sum in nature. Instead, the mainstream of Japanese policy-thinking vis-à-vis China can be categorised as either 'cooperative engagement with a soft hedge' or 'competitive engagement with a hard edge', as suggested by Mike Mochizuki.¹⁹ The former believes that 'it is possible to work with the new Chinese leadership to stabilize relations' and 'that the risks and costs for Japan of striving for a cooperative relationship are much lower than that of confronting China in a "zero-sum" competition',²⁰ while the latter tend to be less sanguine about China's rise and focuses more on growing Chinese assertiveness in political and territorial disputes with Japan. Despite these differences, it is important to note that neither group see China as an immediate threat to the survival of the Japanese state, and are in favour of consolidating Sino-Japanese political interactions and trade.

There are a number of factors which can account for this line of thinking. First, the continuing presence of the U.S. has been crucial. One of the key reasons that potential security dilemmas have been managed in the context of Sino-Japanese relations is Tokyo's choice to continue to link its security policy to the U.S.-Japan alliance. This provides Japan with the security against China's increasing power, and helps dampen Japanese desires to 'internally balance' against China. Japanese thinking behind this policy is similar to that of Southeast Asian states, who 'seek indirectly to deter potential Chinese aggression or domination, by facilitating a continued U.S. military preponderance in the region'.²¹ There is thus considerable convergence between Japan and much of the rest of the Asia-Pacific which accepts a regional hierarchy with the U.S. occupying the top

¹⁷ Tanaka Akihiko, *Ajia no naka no nippon*. (Tokyo: NTT shuppan, 2007), pp. 144-146. A detailed examination of the potential military threat from China by Japanese scholars can be found in Amako Satoshi (ed), *Chûgoku wa kyôji ka*. (Tokyo: Keisô shobô, 1997).

¹⁸ Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Interaction, Logic and Transformation*. (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 2006), p. 279. A similar point is raised by Murata, 'Domestic sources of Japanese policy towards China'.

¹⁹ Mike M. Mochizuki, 'Japan's shifting strategy toward the rise of China', *Journal of Strategic Studies* (vol. 30, no. 4, 200y, pp. 739-776), p. 756

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 761

²¹ Goh, 'Great Powers and Hierchical Order in Southeast Asia', p. 136

layer, provided Washington is viewed as ‘a sheriff or “honest broker” of regional security’, a position that ‘relies on its position as a superpower external to the Asian region.’²²

Second, the PRC’s engagement and socialisation into the international community since the 1990s has played a crucial role in allaying Japan’s fears. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime has tied its legitimacy to its ability to raise the living standards of its populace. To attain this objective, it is crucial that China remains engaged in the world economy. As argued by Japanese who advocate ‘cooperative engagement’ with China, the Chinese leadership has accepted that in an increasingly interdependent world, it pays to cooperate and establish a reputation as a ‘status quo’ player, and adhere to international treaties and norms faithfully. This means that Beijing knows that it is in its own interest to help maintain a stable international environment, and Japanese analysts understand this. Writing in 1997, when the hyperbolic ‘China Threat’ theses were garnering much attention, Amako Satoshi noted that ‘...as far as political intentions are concerned, there are no overt intentions in China of attaining world hegemonic status’, and that ‘American Cold War-thinking which sees China as a “new evil empire” are exaggerated. What China has always emphasised is its desire “to attain national power that would resist foreign interference”’.²³ This optimistic view of China has been repeated more recently by Japanese scholar Takahara Akio, who noted that ‘there is no change in [China’s] goal of securing a peaceful international environment for economic development’.²⁴ While Conservative nationalists continue to paint a highly threatening picture of the PRC and its ambitions, this view has yet to gain mainstream status.²⁵

Furthermore, Beijing’s growing integration into the international community has resulted in increased awareness of ‘desirable international behaviour’ and a yearning for social recognition as a ‘responsible’ power. As Alastair Iain Johnston has noted, international organisations can serve as important social arenas in which a state’s conduct is subjected to praise or shaming. Evidence suggests that Beijing has been acutely sensitive to such social pressures.²⁶ Adherence with certain international norms and the establishment of a reputation as a ‘good international citizen’ has come to be seen as a good in itself, particularly among liberal/progressive Chinese policy elites. Although much progress still needs to be made in certain issue areas, international ‘shaming’ has brought about the PRC’s partial compliance, as can be seen from its evolving policies vis-à-vis the international human rights regime or Beijing’s policies in Sudan.²⁷

²² Ibid, p. 151. A similar point is made in Peter Van Ness, ‘Hegemony, not anarchy: why China and Japan are not balancing US unipolar power’, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (vol. 2, no. 1, 2002, pp. 131-150), pp. 134-137.

²³ Amako Satoshi, ‘Chûgoku wa kyôï ka’, in Amako (ed), *Chûgoku wa kyôï ka*, p. 8

²⁴ Lee Jong-won, Matsuda Yasuhiro and Takahara Akio, ‘Chûgoku wa “kyôï” ka: anzen hoshô no jirenma o koeru taiwa o’, *Sekai* (September 2006), p. 103.

²⁵ See for instance Sakurai Yoshiko, Takubo Tadae, Liu Jiangyong and Jin Canrong, ‘“Ikei no taikoku” chûgoku ni tou: pekin gorin nitchû daironsô’, *Bungei shunjû* (no. 9, 2008, pp. 94-112), pp. 106-108.

²⁶ See Alastair Iain Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980-2000*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007)

²⁷ See for example Ann E. Kent, *China, the United Nations and Human Rights: The Limits of Compliance*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) and Bates Gill, Chin-hao Huang,

Finally, the increasing institutionalisation of East Asia has also contributed to tempering the insecurities the rise of China may generate among the Japanese.²⁸ East Asia has recently seen a series of multilateral forums mushroom, ranging from the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), ASEAN+3, the East Asian Summit (EAS) and the Six-Party talks aimed at resolving the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. Today, Kang notes, the ‘leaders of the two countries meet at the annual APEC summit meeting, the ASEAN+3 summit, the Sino-Japan summit (since 1998), the trilateral summit between China, Japan, and South Korea (since 2000), and the Boao Forum (since 2002).’²⁹ These meetings have consequently given the opportunity for Japanese and Chinese leaders to enhance their communication and foster mutual understanding.³⁰ Furthermore – although this does depend on the issue at stake – Japan can make use of the ‘dispute-resolution mechanisms’ in many international institutions in the case of a diplomatic clash with China. This places firm boundaries on both states’ actions, making each others’ behaviour more transparent and predictable: this again serves to reduce uncertainties and fear which are hallmarks of security dilemmas.³¹

Why Japan has not Accommodated the Rise of China

Such developments have nevertheless not been sufficient for Japan to completely accommodate the rise of China, the Japanese continue to adopt a somewhat cautious attitude towards China. As can be seen from the 2008 White Paper of the Japanese Ministry of Defence, factors such as the opaque nature of Chinese military spending and ambiguity surrounding its military modernisation programme (all of which gave rise to the ‘China Threat’ theses in the late 1990s) continue to linger in the minds of Japanese strategic planners.³² The Japanese policy elite and intelligentsia continue to disagree amongst themselves over the degree to which Japan should ‘hedge’ against the PRC. The ‘cooperative engagement’ line, on the one hand, argues for ‘maintaining the US-Japan security alliance’ while stopping short of ‘explicitly characterizing the US-Japan alliance as a tool for balancing or containing China.’³³ The ‘competitive engagement’ line, on the other hand, not only calls for the strengthening of Japan’s security ties with the U.S. but also calls for the cultivation of ‘security ties with other countries...that are also concerned

and J. Stephen Morrison, ‘Assessing China’s Growing Influence in Africa’, *China Security* (vol. 3, no. 3, 2007, pp. 3-21).

²⁸ This point is confirmed by Kang, *China Rising*, p. 177 and Takeshi Yuzawa, ‘Japan’s changing conception of the ASEAN Regional Forum: from an optimistic liberal to a pessimistic realist perspective’, *The Pacific Review* (vol. 18, no. 4, 2005, pp. 463-497), pp. 467-470.

²⁹ Kang, *China Rising*, p. 177

³⁰ Markus Hund, ‘ASEAN Plus Three: towards a new age of pan-East Asian regionalism? A skeptic’s appraisal’, *The Pacific Review* (vol. 16, no. 3, 2003, pp. 383-417), p. 393

³¹ Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, p. 214

³² Bōeishō, *Bōei hakusho* (2008 edition), pp. 46-48, available at: <http://www.clearing.mod.go.jp/hakusho_data/2008/2008/pdf/20010203.pdf>. Accessed 17 October 2008.

³³ Mochizuki, ‘Japan’s shifting strategy toward the rise of China’, p. 762

about Chinese military pressure.’³⁴ It should be pointed out that Japan is by no means unique in its cautious attitude towards China, however. As noted above, despite moves towards accommodating Chinese power in the Asia-Pacific, ASEAN states have continued to ensure the U.S. remains the preponderant power in the region, and have also sought to enmesh the PRC in regional organisations, ‘hoping that institutional membership will constrain potential Chinese aggression by tying China down, and by binding regional states together.’³⁵

However, Japanese suspicions towards the PRC remain one of the highest in the region. This is somewhat surprising. In addition to the aforementioned factors that have tempered the ‘China Threat’ theses, both states enjoy an extremely high level of interdependence. China has been Japan’s largest trading partner since 2004, and Japan is China’s third largest trade partner; both states’ economies are highly complementary. This should make any belligerent Chinese actions towards Japan (and vice versa) extremely costly. However, Sino-Japanese relations have frequently been described as being in a state of ‘cold politics, hot economics (政冷經熱 *seirei keiretsu* or *zhengleng jingre*)’. Are there any factors which make Japan unique in this regard?

Liberal commercialism: overstated influence?

In order to understand the suspicion by which the PRC is held in Japan, it is important to modify our understanding of the benefits brought about by economic interdependence. As Yinan He points out, for economic interdependence to sufficiently influence state policy, ‘the [economic] damage must be sufficiently heavy should the commercial ties be severely compromised in the future’ and ‘the decision-makers should believe that political problems, if not resolved, would ultimately compromise bilateral commercial relations.’³⁶ However, neither China nor Japan are dependent on each other for vital strategic goods, and both states ‘can easily find ready alternatives, albeit at a slightly higher price, to substitute for each other’s export market, manufacturing bases, and industrial products.’³⁷

As regards decision-makers’ beliefs, the recent spat over history between China and Japan demonstrated that neither side believed that their economic ties were important enough to sacrifice other political goals. Prime Minister Koizumi Jun’ichirô’s repeated visits to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine were an ample demonstration that domestic political goals took precedence over Sino-Japanese economic relations, as were Chinese refusals to engage in any dialogue with Japanese leaders in 2005. Neither was the business lobby particularly effective in keeping Sino-Japanese relations on an even keel. Yinan He again notes that Japanese business groups were largely muted in their protests towards Koizumi’s China policies, indicating that they ‘were not single-minded in maximizing

³⁴ Ibid, p. 764

³⁵ Goh, ‘Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia’, p. 129. It should be noted that this Southeast Asian ‘omni-enmeshment’ strategy also targets the U.S. and other key players in the region, and is designed to keep and give all parties a stake in regional order.

³⁶ Yinan He, ‘Ripe for Cooperation or Rivalry? Commerce, Realpolitik, and War Memory in Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations’, *Asian Security* (vol. 4, no. 2, 2008, pp. 162-197), p. 165

³⁷ Ibid.

profit; they too were subject to the countervailing sentiment that Japan's political interest must be defended even if it meant economic loss.'³⁸

This evidence suggests that both China and Japan will not necessarily sacrifice their vital political interests for the sake of maintaining economic relations. Japan is involved in territorial and historical disputes with China, and on both issues Beijing is unlikely to compromise, as the CCP regime cannot risk harming its nationalist credentials and undermining its legitimacy. It can thus be argued that ever-close Sino-Japanese economic relations have been insufficient to push Japan towards accepting that China's rise to power will be peaceful. This of course does not mean that the Japanese have given up on their hope that deepening trade relations would help bring about a benign China, and Japan continues to maintain its policy of liberal commercialism.³⁹ This can be seen from the fact that neither the 'cooperative' nor 'competitive' schools of engagement deny the importance of engaging with China. However, we should also note that even some disputes arising from economic matters have been elevated to 'national' matters by some Japanese conservative nationalists. Takubo Tadae, for instance, blames the Chinese *state* for the recent discovery of poisonous substances in Chinese-made dumplings, and criticises the PRC 'for not apologising' and blaming them for damaging China's image in Japan,⁴⁰ depicting the Chinese state as a fundamentally unethical state unworthy of respect. While Takubo's views may not constitute the mainstream of Japanese society, it does go to demonstrate that even minor irritants can quickly serve to bring about negative Japanese emotions and potentially hinder Japanese acceptance of China's growing international influence.

Weak regional institutions

If economic relations do not alleviate Tokyo's fears of Beijing, the recent 'institutionalisation' of the East Asian region has proved just as ineffective. Much has been made of the role of institutions in helping to reduce fear among states in an anarchical international realm. Neoliberal institutionalists have noted that international regimes and their various rules can – provided the costs of sanctions for breaking them outweigh the benefits – regulate state behaviour, reducing transaction costs and insecurities.⁴¹ Constructivists, on the other hand, have argued that membership norms can exert a powerful influence on states, altering their identities to the extent that they comply with rules because they see this as the *rightful* thing to do.⁴² Recent ASEAN attempts of

³⁸ Ibid, p. 167

³⁹ Nakai Yoshifumi, 'Chûgoku no 'kyô'i' to nitchû, beichû kankei' in Amako Satoshi (ed), *Chûgoku wa kyô'i ka*. (Tokyo: Keisô shobô, 1997), p. 118

⁴⁰ Sakurai, Takubo, Liu and Jin, '“Ikei no taikoku” chûgoku ni tou', p. 112

⁴¹ The classic work is Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984)

⁴² See for instance Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). A critique of constructivist accounts of socialisation in the ASEAN context can be found in Tsuyoshi Kawasaki, 'Neither skepticism nor romanticism: the ASEAN Regional Forum as a solution for the Asia-Pacific Assurance Game', *The Pacific Review* (vol. 19, no. 2, 2006, pp. 219-237).

‘omni-enmeshment’ are based on this thinking, as they ‘share the notion that inviting countries into international or regional organizations can tie them down by creating expectations and obligations through membership. Over time, membership identity in itself may socialise these countries into embracing the principles and norms of the institution.’⁴³

There is no doubt that China’s international behaviour has undergone significant change, and we should not ignore the significance of international institutions that have served to regularise states’ interactions in East Asia.⁴⁴ The recent creation of regional economic institutions and Beijing’s participation has regulated China’s behaviour and reduced the possibility of uncertainty and subsequent security dilemmas arising. This has made the PRC’s rise to power less destabilising than suggested by realist scholars. It is, however, premature to assume that ‘the regular meetings of East Asian government officials and politicians have helped to build a sense of common purpose and identity’⁴⁵ to the extent that the PRC’s ‘regional identity’ would somehow alter its interests to the extent that it would be willing to compromise on what it sees as its vital national goals for the sake of ‘community’ interests.

There are a number of reasons for this. First, the membership rules and other norms which undergird many of the regional institutions are extremely weak, and ‘signing up’ to these norms is hardly a costly move for states to make. One of the most representative of these is the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), which has been held as ‘almost a marker of membership in regional society’ and was a ‘prerequisite for participation at the East Asia Summit’ in 2005.⁴⁶ However, the TAC merely calls for ‘mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations’, non-interference, ‘[e]ffective cooperation’, and ‘[s]ettlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means’.⁴⁷ Its ‘preoccupation with national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states seemed only to reinforce what China viewed as the basic principles of peaceful coexistence. All these agreements in keeping with ASEAN practice were nonbinding and committed China to very little.’⁴⁸ Furthermore, the principles of the TAC derive from the UN Charter and are nothing remarkable; signing up to such treaties is hardly evidence that China’s ‘regional identity’ has been irrevocably altered. China could arguably easily sign up to these principles without compromising its vital national interests – it could, for instance, invoke the norm of non-interference or ‘respect for territorial integrity’ to stake its claim on disputed territory such as the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and reject all international/regional attempts to mediate. Similarly, historical animosity remains

⁴³ Goh, ‘Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia’, p. 123

⁴⁴ Tanaka, *Ajia no naka no nippon*. p. 238

⁴⁵ Richard Stubbs, ‘ASEAN Plus Three: Emerging East Asian Regionalism?’, *Asian Survey* (vol. 42, no. 3, 2002, pp. 440-455), p. 453

⁴⁶ Goh, ‘Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia’, pp. 125-126

⁴⁷ The ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation is available at <<http://www.aseansec.org/1217.htm>>.

⁴⁸ David Martin Jones and Michael L. R. Smith, ‘Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian Order’, *International Security* (vol. 32, no.1, 2007, pp. 148-184), p. 178

extremely powerful among certain states in East Asia, and ‘membership norms’ of various institutions have been unable to overcome this and foster a ‘community’ with a sense of a shared identity.⁴⁹

Second, the lack of enforcement mechanisms in these regional institutions means that it is extremely difficult to force states to pursue communal interests in lieu of national ones. It is true that ‘[c]ontemporary circumstances provide more compelling incentives for substantive cooperation due to the extent to which economic prosperity and security seem to rely more directly than ever before on international cooperation.’⁵⁰ However, in security issues, this is a different matter. Even in issues of transnational terrorism, where one would expect significant incentives for states to cooperate, obsession with sovereignty and domestic political concerns have ‘frustrate[d] intergovernmental or bilateral counterterrorism initiatives, not to mention any notion of a grander communitarian security strategy.’⁵¹ Similar problems dog non-traditional security issues, where ‘there is an emerging consensus that international economic cooperation is a key part of the policy response’.⁵² Regional institutions such as ASEAN have been powerless to prevent the recurrence of environmental security threats in the region: while member states continue to engage in numerous multilateral diplomacy, the lack of effective enforcement mechanism means that very few of the lofty goals for cooperative security are actually realised.⁵³ It is therefore hardly surprising that while China has signed up to the Declaration on Conduct in the South China Sea, ‘[i]n its disputes over the Paracel (*xisha*), Spratly (*nansha*), and Senkaku (*diaoyu*) island groups, China has consistently adopted a delaying strategy and never offered to compromise...[the Declaration on Conduct] focused only on broad confidence-building measures, not sovereignty and dispute settlement.’⁵⁴ This point is also visible from the fact that neither the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN+3, nor the EAS were able to resolve the bitter dispute between Beijing, Tokyo and Seoul caused by Koizumi’s visits to Yasukuni Shrine. The fact that Sino-Japanese-Korean relations could degenerate into an ‘unnatural situation in which [Japan’s] communications with its neighbours were completely severed’⁵⁵ attests to this lack of ‘shared interests and purposes (and possibly even values)’ that are a hallmark of a ‘community’.⁵⁶

Consequently, the growing institutionalisation of East Asia has had limited impact on the transformation of Japan’s ambivalent views of China. Japan had initially hoped to make use of regional organisations to ‘promote confidence building measures...with

⁴⁹ This point is made by Gilbert Rozman, *Northeast Asia’s Stunted Regionalism: Bilateral Distrust in the Shadow of Globalization*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁵⁰ Nick Bisley, ‘East Asia’s Changing Regional Architecture: Towards an East Asian Economic Community?’, *Pacific Affairs* (vol. 80, no. 4, 2007/8, pp. 603-625), p. 615

⁵¹ Jones and Smith, ‘Making Process, Not Progress’, p. 172

⁵² See *ibid*, pp. 174-175 and Bisley, ‘East Asia’s Changing Regional Architecture’, p. 606

⁵³ Bisley, ‘East Asia’s Changing Regional Architecture’, p. 615

⁵⁴ M. Taylor Fravel, ‘Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China’s Compromises in Territorial Disputes’, *International Security* (vol. 30, no. 2, 2005, pp. 46-83), p. 62

⁵⁵ Tanaka, *Ajia no naka no nippon*, p. 306.

⁵⁶ Bisley, ‘East Asia’s Changing Regional Architecture’, p. 607

respect to the transparency of military programmes' (particularly China).⁵⁷ Tokyo's attempts to introduce preventive diplomacy into the realm of intra-state security issues, however, got rejected by both the Chinese and ASEAN states, who feared interference in their domestic affairs.⁵⁸ Beijing also acted as a spoiler by advocating 'security cooperation in non-military areas and pressed for modest CBMs [confidence building measures], which were largely irrelevant to transparency of the key areas of each country's defence policy, while it simply sidestepped proposals for more meaningful and practical military CBMs'. Japan's expectations towards regional organisations are thus limited. With reference to the ARF, Takeshi Yuzawa argues that there is now 'a more pessimistic realist perspective from which' the ARF is only expected to 'make a modest contribution to the regional balance of power by performing certain limited functions.'⁵⁹ It is thus hardly surprising that Japanese commentators continue to claim that the purposes of the PRC's military expansion, its strategic doctrine, and its policy decision-making remain unclear, and that leads Japan to classify China's rise as a potential 'risk', if not an immediate threat.⁶⁰

Clashing identities with China

The final factor which limits Japan's accommodation of China's rise is related to psychological factors based on Japan's own conceptions of its identity as a (potential) great power. The first reason which limits Japanese accommodation of China's rise is related to its own identity as a 'frustrated great power' which means that Japan believes itself to be entitled to the recognition and influence of a great power.⁶¹ As Yong Deng notes, 'China and Japan are critically important to each other's great-power aspirations, but neither has granted the other the recognition it seeks', and this dynamic results in considerable antipathy between the two states.⁶² Takahara Akio claims:

Japan has a superiority complex towards China because of its economic and societal development – such as its rule of law, level of educational attainment, its level of hygiene – but holds Chinese culture in reverence. Japan has an inferiority complex vis-à-vis China with regard to history and tradition. In contrast...China has a superiority complex over Japan in terms of culture, civilisation, tradition, and its international political status. However, there is still a big economic gap between the two states, and the living and educational standards of the Chinese populace...remain low....One reason that Japanese

⁵⁷ Yuzawa, 'Japan's changing conception of the ASEAN Regional Forum', p. 467

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 472

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 480

⁶⁰ Lee, Matsuda and Takahara, 'Chûgoku wa "kyôji" ka', pp. 106-107

⁶¹ I have discussed the issue of 'frustrated great powers' with reference to China and Japan in greater detail in Shogo Suzuki, 'Seeking "Legitimate" Great Power Status in Post-Cold War International Society: China and Japan's Participation in UNPKO', *International Relations* (vol. 22, no. 1, 2008, pp. 45-63).

⁶² Yong Deng, *China's Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 188. A similar point is also made by Takashi Terada, 'Forming an East Asian Community: A Site for Japan-China Power Struggles', *Japanese Studies* (vol. 26, no. 1, 2006, pp. 5-17), p. 17 and Sonoda Shigeto, "'Nashonarizumu geemu" kara nukedeyo', *Sekai* (July 2005), p. 81

have poor views of China could be because of a sense of anxiety over their eroding economic superiority.⁶³

Regional multilateral forums – where both states remain ‘deeply concerned that the other might be perceived to be dominating the proceedings’ – have so far been the stage where this rivalry has been played out.⁶⁴ Japan’s motives for participating in regional organisations were partly linked to its desire to seek ‘a new approach toward the regional security of Asia’ and ‘advance [Japan’s] own perspectives for regional order’, and demonstrate that Tokyo was prepared to play a more active role in the international politics of the region commensurate with its economic power.⁶⁵

China’s growing regional influence and Japan’s own indeterminate identity as both an Asian power and member of the Western camp, however, has diminished Tokyo’s influence in such regional organisations. Japan’s foreign and security policy are inextricably linked with the U.S.-Japan security alliance. This means that Tokyo has to consider ‘US suspicion regarding Japan’s long-term commitment to the Japan-US alliance’⁶⁶ and antipathy towards any efforts to construct regional groupings which are perceived to exclude Washington. Japan’s own efforts to establish an Asian Monetary Fund in the wake of the Asian financial crisis drew a sharp rebuke from American officials,⁶⁷ and Japan’s pro-U.S. leanings have also brought it in opposition to Malaysian efforts to establish an East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC). While this has at times limited Tokyo’s ability to play a role as a ‘great power’ in Asia, China – which faces no obstacles of this kind – has been able to increase its influence in the region.

This appears to have caused a considerable sense of insecurity among the Japanese,⁶⁸ and statements by Lee Kuan Yew that ‘[i]t has become the norm in Southeast Asia for China to take the lead and Japan to tag along. Since Japan is unable to recover its economy, it has no choice but to allow China to take the initiative’ must surely have exacerbated their anxieties.⁶⁹ Japanese fears are consequently expressed through their attempts to counter the PRC’s growing clout by influencing the membership of regional organisations. Within the ASEAN+3 – which can trace its intellectual origins to the relatively ‘closed’ membership of the failed EAEC – Japan has proposed a more open regional grouping.⁷⁰ Similarly, the 2005 EAS was marred by Sino-Japanese bickering

⁶³ Kuroda Atsuo and Takahara Akio, ‘Chûgoku wa “kyôji” nanoka’, *Sekai* (November 2002), pp. 252-253

⁶⁴ Bisley, ‘East Asia’s Changing Regional Architecture’, p. 610

⁶⁵ Kuniko Ashizawa, ‘Japan’s approach toward Asian regional security: from “hub-and-spoke” bilateralism to “muti-tiered”’, *The Pacific Review* (vol. 16, no. 3, 2003, pp. 361-382), pp. 372-373. Also see Hund, ‘ASEAN Plus Three’, p. 398.

⁶⁶ Yuzawa, ‘Japan’s changing conception of the ASEAN Regional Forum’, p. 480

⁶⁷ Tanaka, *Ajia no naka no nippon*. p. 220

⁶⁸ Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 146, strongly supports this assertion. For a comprehensive treatment of Sino-Japanese rivalry and its implications for the developing world, see June Teufel Dreyer, ‘Sino-Japanese Rivalry and its Implications for Developing Nations’, *Asian Survey* (vol. 46, no. 4, 2006, pp. 538-557).

⁶⁹ Cited in Terada, ‘Forming an East Asian Community’, p. 6.

⁷⁰ Hund, ‘ASEAN Plus Three’, p. 400; Samuels, *Securing Japan*, p. 146.

over membership. As Mohan Malik writes: ‘Believing that the EAS, with more countries participating, would provide a counterbalance to China’s growing influence, Japan favoured equal opportunity [to participate] for India, Australia and New Zealand’,⁷¹ and opposed the PRC’s attempt to narrow membership on geographical grounds.

The second factor which limits Japanese acceptance of China’s rise to power is Japan’s own identity as a democratic state. Most pertinent to our discussion here is the rise of the ‘China Threat’ theses. While these arguments focused primarily on the potential for the PRC to threaten the global balance of power, it is important to note that they were closely linked to Western ambivalence towards China’s one-party system of rule as well. In the wake of the collapse of the Communist bloc and the ‘liberal triumphalism’ of the West, Legitimate membership of the post-Cold War international community began to be linked to democratic governance and respect for human rights.⁷² Theories of democratic peace also furnished the idea that authoritarian states were more likely to go to war with democracies. Democratic governance was now seen as inextricably linked to *global* order. A responsible ‘great power’ had the moral duty to champion these two causes for the sake of international peace. It thus became extremely difficult for the Western great powers to treat China as an equal partner that could cooperate alongside them to further these goals. It is interesting to note that the Chinese have demonstrated acute awareness of this fact. As Pang Zhengqiang noted, ‘China is a country which is trying hard to integrate into the international community, but still has not to this day been completely accepted by this community, which is dominated by the Western countries.’⁷³

While Tokyo’s lingering fear of Chinese military power remains important, we should not underestimate the degree to which Japan’s identity as a member of the Western camp also makes it harder for it to accept China’s claim to great power status. Beijing’s brutal suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations contributed significantly to a downturn in China’s image. As Ming Wan notes:

An image of China as a nondemocratic violator of human rights also sharpened Japan’s image of itself as a more mature democracy. Japanese no longer felt morally inferior to Chinese after Tiananmen....It became difficult to imagine a special relationship with China when the two nations are so different politically.⁷⁴

Recent Sino-Japanese disputes over history have served to further this sentiment. In addition to feeling a sense of fatigue with apologising to China, there has been an increasing number of Japanese voices that argue that Beijing cynically engages in ‘anti-Japanese education (*han nichi kyôiku* 反日教育)’ and criticises Japan about its imperialist

⁷¹ Mohan Malik, ‘The East Asia Summit’, *Australian Journal of International Affairs* (vol. 60, no. 2, 2006, pp. 207-211), p. 210. Also see You Ji, ‘East Asian Community: A new platform for Sino-Japanese cooperation and contention’, *Japanese Studies* (vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 19-28), for a detailed discussion of different visions of East Asian regional integration.

⁷² See Ian Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

⁷³ Pang Zhengqiang, ‘Zhongguo shi daguo ma’ *Shijie zhishi* (no. 1, 2007, pp. 16-27), p. 19

⁷⁴ Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, p. 163. For a typical statement that confirms this point, see Komori Yoshihisa, ‘Ko Kintô “yasukuni hinan” wa sekai no hijôshiki’, *Bungei shunjû* (August 2005), p. 161.

past as part of its attempts to bolster its domestic legitimacy.⁷⁵ This results in a feeling that China is a fundamentally unethical state that cannot be trusted to utilise its authority and power to uphold the normative fabric of the international community. It has also tended to make the Japanese less inclined to compromise with the PRC, leading to sustained criticisms of the pro-China Japanese diplomatic factions.⁷⁶

Conclusion

The manner in which Japan has coped with the PRC's rise to power can be best described as 'partial accommodation' and in this respect it does not depart radically from the route followed by many other states in the region that have hedged against China's rise. Tokyo has maintained its basic policy of seeking to deepen economic interdependence and engage China through a multitude of international organisations, and in this sense it has been accommodating of China's growing influence in the international community. At the same time, the Japanese have yet to be completely reassured by the PRC's 'charm offensive' which aims to project the image of a benign rising power. As Takahara notes, '[since] nobody knows what is going to happen to China in the future, until we establish a relationship based on trust, it is rational [for Japan] to hedge against the possibility that China might seek hegemony'.⁷⁷ Tokyo has thus maintained its alliance with the U.S. to ensure that U.S. preponderance is sustained in the region.

What perhaps makes the Japanese case substantially different from its counterparts such as ASEAN or South Korea is the fact that Japan – like China – is a state that has been a great power at some point in its history, and this seems to play a unique role in exacerbating insecurities between the two states to a degree not seen in the rest of the region. Although China's rise appears to trigger some form of status anxiety among the Japanese (as noted above), Japan's own attempts to carve out a position as a great power tends to induce a knee-jerk reaction from the Chinese, who often charge this as the first step towards the re-militarisation of Japan.⁷⁸ While this accusation is somewhat rhetorical and exaggerated, it is important to acknowledge that the view that Japan should play a

⁷⁵ While such Japanese arguments often have their own political agendas and should not be taken at face value, similar points have been made by a number of scholars. See Yinan He, 'Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950-2006', *History and Memory* (vol. 19, no. 2, 2007, pp. 43-74); Erica Strecker Downs and Philip Saunders, 'Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism: China and the Diaoyutai Islands', *International Security* (vol. 23, no. 3, Winter 1998/1999, pp. 114-146); Suisheng Zhao, 'A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* (vol. 31, no. 3, 1998, pp. 287-302); and Caroline Rose, *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations: a case study in political decision-making*. (London: Routledge, 1998).

⁷⁶ See for instance Ishihara Shintarô, 'Pekin orinpikku o danko boikotto seyo', *Bungei shunjû* (June 2005), pp. 95-96 and Nakanishi Terumasa, 'Ogoreru "chûka teikoku" hisashikarazu', *Bungei shunjû* (October 2001), p. 194.

⁷⁷ Lee, Matsuda and Takahara, 'Chûgoku wa "kyôï" ka', p. 108

⁷⁸ The classic work which makes this point is Allen S. Whiting, *China Eyes Japan*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). For a highly polemical Chinese viewpoint, see Zi Shui and Xiao Shi, *Jingtï riben junguo zhuyi*. (Beijing: Jincheng chubanshe, 1997).

greater international security role has traditionally been strong among political elites which Christopher W. Hughes calls ‘Japanese Gaullists’. Such individuals contend that ‘the true path towards normality’ – moving beyond the much derided image of ‘economic giant, political pygmy’ subservient towards other states – ‘is the removal of constitutional prohibitions on the use of force, the expansion of Japan’s independent military capabilities, the equalisation of roles in the US-Japan alliance and the eventual abrogation of the security treaty with the US’.⁷⁹ It is thus not surprising that this particular group has been one of the loudest proponents of the ‘China Threat’ because ‘doing so is helpful to the normal nation-alists who have long sought to make Japan more muscular and who are now in power.’⁸⁰ Unfortunately, many of the ‘Japanese Gaullists’ are also highly critical of the post-war international settlement which placed strict limitations on Japan’s ability to project its military power, and tend to hold revisionist historical views that tend to dilute or deny Japan’s historical wrongdoings.

In this context, it is understandable that Japan’s attempts to become a ‘normal’ state immediately arouses the suspicion of the Chinese. Ming Wan also argues that the Chinese themselves admit that ‘Japan’s rising military capability and its stronger alliance with the United States are shaping a security structure in Asia dominated by the two nations at the expense of China and others’, and constitute a ‘block to China’s own great-power aspirations’.⁸¹ China resolutely opposed Japan’s attempts to become a permanent member of the UNSC – a goal long held by Tokyo as a symbol of great power status – on the grounds that Japan’s lack of repentance for its war crimes did not entitle it to be bestowed the power and moral authority given to other great powers.⁸² However, this in turn leads to a growing sense of resentment among the Japanese that China is cynically attempting use the ‘history card’ to prevent Japan from becoming a ‘normal country’.⁸³

Whatever the PRC’s real motives may be, its invoking of historical memories to undermine Japan’s claims to great power status has considerable mileage in Asia to this very day. This could further ‘[shake] postwar Japanese assumptions that Asia is where it can “return to” when it sees fit and East Asia needs Japan as a gateway to the West.’⁸⁴ This may offer a partial explanation for why Tokyo has increasingly sought recognition from the Western liberal democracies as a ‘great power’. Japan has, for instance, strengthened its alliance with the U.S. and contributed troops to the ‘coalition of the willing’ that aims to reconstruct Iraq into a liberal democracy. It has also declared its intent to make the creation of an ‘arc of freedom and prosperity (*jiyû to hanei no ko* 自由と繁栄の弧) as one of its pillars of foreign policy.⁸⁵ All of this arguably helps to demonstrate that Tokyo is ready to wield its power responsibly by upholding the

⁷⁹ Christopher W. Hughes, ‘Japan’s Re-emergence as a ‘Normal’ Military Power’, *Adelphi Papers* (vol. 44, no. 368, 2004), p. 51

⁸⁰ Samuels, *Securing Japan*, p. 137

⁸¹ Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, p. 123

⁸² Deng, *China’s Struggle for Status*, pp. 192-193

⁸³ See Komori, ‘Ko Kintô “yasukuni hinan” wa sekai no hijôshiki’, p. 159

⁸⁴ Deng, *China’s Struggle for Status*, p. 189

⁸⁵ Tanaka, *Ajia no naka no nippon*, p. 317

normative order of the international community, and shore up its claim to ‘great power’ status. Ironically, this only succeeds in exacerbating Beijing’s insecurities: in China’s eyes, ‘[n]ot only is Japan becoming a more equal ally [to the U.S.] but the purpose of the alliance itself has changed to serve as the cornerstone for regional order in Asia.’⁸⁶

These dynamics suggest that Japan is going to remain one of the most cautious states in Asia when it comes to accommodating or accepting the rise of China. However, this is by no means a given. Firstly, there is no reason to assume that China’s socialisation into the international community will cease in the near future, and we can thus expect further modifications in China’s behaviour. The recent lively debate within China about how the PRC can defy European historical precedents and rise to power without upsetting the status quo provides us with a promising sign that the Chinese are at least seriously engaged in their attempts to reassure the rest of their world that their rise to power is not going to destabilise the international community.⁸⁷ Secondly, recent efforts by China and Japan to engage in joint history research demonstrate that both states are taking the first steps towards overcoming the negative historical memories which have dogged their relations for so long. While a shared historical viewpoint may not be possible to achieve, the process will hopefully contribute towards alleviating negative images of each other, and facilitate the coexistence of two great powers in the region. Finally, it is important to note that Japan’s own desires for great power status are by not monolithic, and we need not presume that the spiral of ‘great power status anxieties’ outlined in this paper will continue. There are calls within Japanese society that Japan should aim to become a ‘middle power’ by eschewing a role in international strategic issues and concentrating on contributing to regional and global order through multilateral diplomacy or the resolution of human security issues.⁸⁸ While many Japanese *do* support a greater international role for Japan, a 2007 Japanese government survey showed that while 76% of the Japanese polled were supportive of Japan’s participation in UNPKO,⁸⁹ 58% indicated that Japan’s role in the international community should be towards ‘resolving global problems such as environmental issues’. This was followed by 44.6% who believed Japan should contribute towards ‘the peaceful resolution of regional disputes, arms reduction and the prevention of nuclear proliferation’.⁹⁰ Japanese popular opinion is hardly supportive of Japan becoming

⁸⁶ Deng, *China’s Struggle for Status*, p. 194. Also see Wu Xinbo, ‘The End of the Silver Lining: A Chinese view of the U.S.-Japanese Alliance’, *Washington Quarterly* (vol. 29, no1, 2005, pp. 119-130).

⁸⁷ See Tang Jin, *Daguo jueqi*. (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2007); Hu Zongshan, *Zhongguo de heping jueqi: lilun, lishi yu zhanlüe*. (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 2006); Peng Peng (ed), *Heping jueqi lun: zhongguo chongsu daguo zhi lu*. (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2005); and Bonnie S. Glaser and Even S. Medeiros, ‘The Changing Ecology of Foreign Policy-Making in China: The Ascension and Demise of the Theory of “Peaceful Rise”’, *China Quarterly* (no. 190, 2007, pp. 291-310).

⁸⁸ See Soeya Yoshihide, *Nippon no “midoru pawaa” gaikô: sengo nippon no sentaku to kôsô*. (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 2005).

⁸⁹ See Japan Cabinet Office, ‘Gaikô ni kansuru yoron chôsa’, <<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h19/h19-gaikô/2-3.html>>, accessed on 29 September 2008.

⁹⁰ See Japan Cabinet Office, ‘Gaikô ni kansuru yoron chôsa’, <<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h19/h19-gaikô/2-7.html>>, accessed on 29 September 2008. Respondents could choose up to two answers each.

a 'military power'. The crucial task, of course, is for Beijing and Tokyo to improve their abilities to reassure each other – and whether or not the Asia-Pacific can witness a peaceful power transition depends very much on whether both sides can achieve this.