



Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

Master's Degree Programme –
Second Cycle

in Languages, Economics and
Institutions of Asia and North Africa

“D.M. 270/2004”

Final Thesis

**Constructing Otherness:
Japanese security and South
Korea foreign policy discourse
2009-2012**

Supervisor

Ch. Prof. Marco Zappa

Assistant supervisor

Ch. Prof. Toshio Miyake

Graduand

Edoardo Pieroni

Matriculation Number 855705

Academic Year

2017 / 2018

要旨

2009年の第45回会衆議院議員総選挙に勝利した、民主党の基本的な方針の中には55年体制の政治制度と離れることがあった。特に、利益誘導や官僚依存の政治システムから脱却し、国民主権の政策を実感することである。外交を巡って、日本国はアジア太平洋地域の国々と信頼に足る外交関係を確立する計画があった。その国々の中では、韓国は日本国と一番近い国家であると言える。両国は文化や民主的な価値観を共にし、米国の同盟国でもある。しかし、日韓間には解決できない問題がある。非常に重要な問題は、竹島問題外交交渉史をはじめ、従軍慰安婦の問題も日韓関係に悪影響を及ぼす。2009年から2012年にかけて、革新的な民主党は「未来志向外交」という標語を支持したが、日韓関係は歴史的な問題で悪化されることが多かった。民主党は未来志向外交にもかかわらず、なぜ韓国と安定した関係ができなかったのだろうか。

本論では、不安定な日韓関係の原因が、両国がお互いに構成した国家アイデンティティーであることを指示する。韓国は、日本の戦争謝罪発言と戦争賠償は不十分であると考えている。一方では、日本国の政治家は十分に補償したと主張し、恩知らずの国とした韓国を非難している。その結果、歴史的な問題が起きるたび、両国の外交は手詰まりに対する。

現代の歴史を見れば、日本国家アイデンティティーを分析するため、明治時代の日本を顧みることが大切だと思われる。その時代、日本国の国家アイデンティティーは二つの脅威に対して構成された。一番は西洋諸国であり、二番は未開のアジアであった。「富国強兵」イデオロギーを基にして、明治日本はアジアに侵入した。戦後では、日本国アイデンティティーは「平和国家」や「商人国家」の国家アイデンティティーに向かっていた。SCAPが作成した日本国憲法の第9条を読むと、日本の武力による威嚇又は武力の行使は永久に放棄されている。ソビエト連邦が崩壊した後、東北アジアの安全保障バランスが大きく変わってきた。というのは、北朝鮮の核開発計画が国際的な規則と反したからである。だから、日本の政府は大洋アジアの国々の信頼を得るために「未来志向外交」の方針を採用した。

この論文は、2009年から2012年にかけての民主党の公式の外交言説を分析して、日韓関係の破綻を述べるという目的がある。

本論は、3つの章に分かれている。

第1章では、国際関係学の背景を説明する。次に、国際関係学における「主体性と構造」問題に基づいて、本稿の認識論の方向を示す。その後、徹底的な社会構成主義の学説を踏まえて、国家アイデンティティーにおける安全保障を解説する。最後には、方法論上のアプローチを切り出して、研究の設計を組み立てる。

第2章では、日本国の国家アイデンティティー変化を紹介する。日本の様々な国家アイデンティティーを鑑みると、安全保障に対して変わる脅威によってアイデンティティーが変化していくことを説明する。

第3章では、韓国に関する民主党の公式の外交言説を分析する。最初に、竹島問題外交交渉史、従軍慰安婦、北朝鮮の問題を歴史的に記述する。批判的言説分析の一次資料としては、内閣会議の談話、総理大臣の談話、外務省の文書などを利用する。さらに、新聞や調査結果は世論に関するのデータを示す。

Table of Contents

1 Introduction.....	p. 5
2 Chapter 1: Theory and Methodology.....	p. 9
2.1 A brief outline of International Relations theory.....	p. 9
2.2 How to face a theoretical impasse.....	p. 11
2.3 Towards a common epistemological ground.....	p. 13
2.4 Identity narratives and ontological security in International Relations....	p. 16
2.5 Japanese security and IR: when identity started to matter.....	p. 22
2.6 Securitising identity through discourse: constructing the Other.....	p. 28
3 Chapter 2: A historical perspective on Japanese state identity.....	p. 34
3.1 Introduction.....	p. 34
3.2 The construction of Japanese identity, part 1: the Meiji Restoration.....	p. 38
3.3 The construction of Japanese identity, part 2: postwar peace.....	p. 51
3.4 Conclusion.....	p. 60
4 Chapter 3: Security issues and South Korea discourse	p. 62
4.1 Introduction.....	p. 62
4.2 The Dokdo/Takeshima territorial dispute.....	p. 63
4.2.1 A case in comparison: the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute.....	p. 67
4.3 Comfort Women.....	p. 70
4.4 North Korea.....	p. 75
4.5 South Korea discourse in Japanese foreign policy 2005-2008.....	p. 80
4.6 South Korea discourse under DPJ.....	p. 86
4.6.1. Hatoyama Yukio: settling the past to secure the future.....	p. 86
4.6.2. Kan Naoto: dynamic defense and domestic hardships.....	p. 90
4.6.3. Noda Yoshihiko: 'economic diplomacy' and the ROK crisis..	p. 94
5 Conclusion.....	p. 100
6 Bibliography.....	p. 103
7 Table of figures.....	p. 120

1 – Introduction

In the last twenty years Japan committed to a series of foreign policy choices which aroused controversy both domestically and abroad. Japan's foreign policy line points towards a fully-fledged sovereignty that has been missing since the establishment of the SCAP. Upon its 2009 General Elections victory, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) promised to break with the previous political culture of pork and patronage endorsed by conservative leaders, pursuing a more Asia-focused foreign policy. Despite initial enthusiasm, the resurgence of controversies like the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute and the Comfort Women issue jeopardized the establishment of future-oriented relations with South Korea, with which Japan shares deep cultural roots and democratic values. Why, despite the delicate security balance in Northeast Asia, has Japan failed to establish stable and harmonious relations with the Republic of Korea (ROK) under a more progressive government?

What this study would suggest is that, behind the diplomatic slips between Japan and the ROK, lie ideological determinants that refer to how both states construct their national identity narratives vis-à-vis each other. Despite being close commercial partners and US allies, Tokyo and Seoul face a diplomatic deadlock each time they are confronted with issues belonging to the negative past. Indeed, Japan's claims of 'future-oriented relations' and 'face past squarely' seem to be vague pledges rather than serious commitments to progressive foreign policy. South Koreans are very sensitive to historical memory, and seems that for Seoul Japan is still trying to escape past responsibility¹. The rationale behind that, would be suggested, has to be found in a narrative of 'superiority' that Japanese leaders and élites have been constructing whenever confronting Asian 'Others' in times of international instability.

1 "Korea irked by Japan's 'overreaction' to court rulings", *The Korea Herald*, 29 November 2018, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20181129000681>.

Historically, we could trace back the origins of such narratives already in the upheaval of the Meiji Restoration. The incorporation of *kokutai* ideology, Western-modeled institutions and industrialization united Japan under the slogan of *fukoku kyōhei*, legitimizing Tokyo's imperialist policies in East Asia. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which tragically marked the end of the Pacific war between Japan and the Allied Powers, imposed a shift on Japanese national identity. The Pacifist constitution drafted in 1947 by the SCAP prohibited the use of force as a means of settling international disputes, and directed Japan towards the occupation of an 'an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth.'². This radical change led Tokyo to find its leadership role in the world via economic prosperity and cooperation, establishing new narratives as *heiwa kokka* (peace state) and *shōnin kokka* (merchant state). The early nineties and the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought about further change in Japanese foreign policy-making. The fall of the 1955 system, together with the non-transparency of North Korea's nuclear program, reshaped Japanese political scenario and state identity narratives. A rapprochement with the Republic of Korea started under the auspices of a *mirai shikō gaikō*, a foreign policy aimed at establishing future-oriented ties by bearing the burdens of a painful past. However, official apologies and monetary compensation offered by Japan never managed to curtail South Korea's anti-Japanese sentiments. To the present day all administrations, included the government of the Democratic Party of Japan during 2009-2012, failed to reach stability with Japan's closest neighbouring state.

Research in the field of International Relations studies has started to look with interest at Japanese identity from the 1990s. Realist scholars like Kenneth Waltz (1993) and Christopher Layne (1993) claimed that Japan would have eventually remilitarized as a 'great power' by resorting to nuclear weapons. Neoliberal perspectives, like the one embraced by Funabashi (1992), tried to explain Japanese abnormality as both 'economic giant' and 'military dwarf' by stressing Japan's ancillary role to the US hegemon. In contrast with the materialist approach, Norm-constructivists such as Peter Katzenstein (1993) and Thomas Berger (1993) purported that Japanese antimilitarism was justified

2 From the preamble to The Constitution of Japan.
https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html.

by a shared commitment to pacifism as a cultural norm.

Although, Japanese identity has been seen as an independent variable by scholars focussing both on material (Realists/Liberals) and ideational factors (Norm-constructivists). A different approach in constructivism points out that identity is an ongoing process of intersubjective meaning making constructed through relational interactions. As Wendt (1992) first suggested, is the encounter with a significant 'other' that defines a state's identity and interests. The theoretical background adopted in this work reflects the cutting-edge approach of what is currently defined as 'relational constructivism', finding its main inspiration for the study of Japanese identity in works such as Hagstrom and Gustafsson (2015) and Tamaki (2010).

The aim of the present work is to analyze how the official foreign policy discourse of the 2009-2012 DPJ administration constructed the image of the South Korean 'other', considering domestic and international obstacles to full cooperation. The reasons behind the choice of timespan and object of analysis are multiple: 1) The DPJ led coalition set the creation of a united Asia-pacific community as his main foreign policy objective since the Hatoyama cabinet (September 2009-June 2010); 2) The DPJ government based its South Korea foreign policy line on the principle of 'future-oriented ties', promising humanitarian cooperation and cultural exchange to reinforce relations; 3) Despite the previous points, the resurgence and mishandling of controversies like the Dokdo/Takeshima territorial dispute and the Comfort Women issue severely put to test diplomatic ties.

The structure of the thesis will be as follows. In the first chapter, a brief outline of the main paradigms of IR theory will be laid out. Then, the epistemological groundings to overcome a theoretical impasse will be proposed by introducing the Structure-Agency problem in International Relations theory. What will follow is a comprehensive account of constructivist scholarship on state identity narratives and security. A consistent theoretical background in IR scholarship on Japanese identity will contextualize my case study. Finally, the methodological approach will be introduced and a research design constructed.

The second chapter will present an interpretative framework of how Japanese state identity changed over time. In particular, attention will be paid to the way Japan

shaped its identity vis-à-vis East Asia and the Western world in two macro-periods: the Meiji Restoration and the Postwar. Different articulations of identity will be described and analyzed, also pointing out possible resilient aspects pertaining to all of them. Will be also stressed how the South Korean 'other' has been constructed in light of the changing interests in Japanese security policies.

The final chapter will focus on the analysis of official Japanese foreign policy discourse with regard to South Korea, as it has been articulated during the 2009-2012 DPJ administration. At first, a historical perspective on relevant issues, i.e. the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, the Comfort Women and the threat posed by North Korea, will give a basic understanding of the main concerns behind Japanese policy-making vis-à-vis the ROK. The main object of analysis will be cabinet session speeches, Prime Minister speeches and Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives. Articles from Japanese, Korean and international press will serve as further empirical evidence providing data on public opinion.

2 – Chapter 1: Theory and Methodology

2.1 – A Brief Outline of International Relations Theory

To begin with, an introduction of IR theory and a summary of the fundamental assumptions of its three major schools of thought will be outlined: Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism³. All of them are applicable to theory-pertinent cases, but none of the three can provide alone as a rule of thumb in analyzing international politics. The following account will summarize the basic premises behind every theory and some of the intellectual blind spots undermining them.

The realist paradigm is grounded on the concept of power and how the distribution of it regulates interaction among states. Forefathers of twentieth century realist theory are figures such as Hans Morgenthau (1946) and Edward Carr (1961). In the late seventies, Kenneth Waltz (1979) claimed that the international system is of anarchic nature and state actors seek either their own preservation or world domination⁴. By focussing on the centrality of military power and the persistence of conflict, realist theory counters the relatively naive idea that supranational institutions and regulations can preserve peace among nations. The sheer exercise of force, or the deterring effect of its potential use, is what expands one's domination sphere. During the Cold War period, Structural Realism was the mainstream school of thought in International Relations studies. Although, with the end of the US-USSR conflict and the rising threat of non-state terrorist organizations after 9/11, the realist viewpoint had been consistently scaling down in influence. Kissinger's nuclear deterrence was more of a self-fulfilling

3 A more detailed summary of the three schools of thought, which is also the basis for my introduction, is provided by Snyder in Snyder, Jack. "One World, Rival Theories", *Foreign Policy*, November-December 2004, pp. 52-62.

4 Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1979, pp. 116-123.

prophecy rather than efficiently implemented policymaking.

Notable critics of realism were scholars like Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1977), whose theory of complex interdependence started to shatter some commonplaces in world politics already in the late seventies. While retaining the importance of military power in international relations, the two authors contended that complex transnational ties between states have successfully limited the use of force to solve issues⁵. Their basic theoretical premise contributed to the consolidation of what is defined as the Neoliberal approach in IR. Its basic tenets are the following: democratic peace, global economic ties and shared commitment to international norms. The realist emphasis on conflict cannot account for progress in relations between nations via commerce and democracy. Indeed, democratic states usually do not fight each other, but combat belligerent authoritarian regimes to make the world a safe haven for democratization. Nonetheless, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the initial enthusiasm for the spread of democratic values was soon to meet disillusion. In fact, not all democratization processes result peaceful or successful, and ethnic turmoil can easily bring to civil war. A notable case is the one of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In a context of sociopolitical fragmentation, the rise of Serbian nationalism among Bosnians and its subsequent instrumentalization by Milosevic led to the purge of Bosnian muslims.

In their diversity, both Neorealist and Neoliberal hypotheses embrace the aspects of rationality and self-interest in policymaking. On the contrary, for constructivists the main drivers in international politics are ideas, values and the élites. In their view, social reality is shaped by influential ideas, cultural aspects and social identities. The philosophical groundings of constructivism are to be found in the idealist tradition, but several schools of thought in continental philosophy provide a fertile soil for contamination. A most-known advocate of constructivism is Alexander Wendt, who in his paramount article of 1992 asserts that the self-help structure of world politics itself is a social construct⁶. State actors' configurations are intersubjectively constructed, creating a pool of knowledge over time that contributes to the establishment of a relatively stable concept of self and others. Hence, a sovereign state identity is an ongoing cognitive process. Constructivism is better at describing how norms and ideas

5 Keohane, Robert and Nye, Joseph Jr. *Power and Interdependence*. New York, Little Brown, 1977.

6 Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is what States Make of it", *International Organization*, 46:2, (1992).

shape state action, but sometimes averts attention from the institutional, strategic or material conditions in which new ideas are likely to emerge⁷.

The theoretical outline sketched above is inevitably very concise, but points out clearly enough the basic assumptions underlying the three principal IR paradigms. The growing complexity of world politics and diplomacy calls more and more for approaches privileging theoretical eclecticism⁸. Hence, political analysis should be research-driven in order to avoid ideological deadlocks. In this respect, a fruitful comparative approach, or an attentive analysis including both material and ideational factors, are a safe ground for unbiased study.

2.2 – How to face a theoretical impasse

As outlined above, all of the three main IR paradigms have consistent theoretical power to explain how different forces shape the scenario of world politics. Nonetheless, as Lake (2013) claims, paradigms in International Relations are typically incomplete. On their own they are insufficient in explaining and predicting specific outcomes and behaviours, hence their core assumptions need to be augmented by auxiliary assumptions⁹. The rigidity of a well entrenched paradigm, both in hard sciences and social sciences, is well likely to bring about stagnation rather than progress. Champions of each paradigm tend to defend their assumptions against detractors' charges of insufficiency or incompleteness. Adherence to proving one's theory instead of following a research-driven approach has the effect of not contributing to scientific knowledge. Paul Feyerabend, an advocate of methodological anarchism¹⁰, has clearly articulated his views on the dogmas about scientific knowledge in his work *Against Method*:

7 Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories", p. 62.

8 One of the greatest advocates of theoretical eclecticism is Peter Katzenstein. See Katzenstein, Peter. *Rethinking Japanese Security*. London, Routledge, 2008, pp. 32-46.

9 Lake, David. "Theory is dead, long live theory: The end of the Great Debates and the rise of eclecticism in International Relations", *European Journal of International Relations*, 19:3, 2013, p. 573.

10 Feyerabend's thesis that untethered progress in scientific research is only attainable through liberty of action is strongly influenced by J. S. Mill's views on his essay *On Liberty*.

It is clear, then, that the idea of a fixed method, or of a fixed theory of rationality, rests on too naive a view of man and his surroundings. To those who look at the rich material provided by history, and who are not intent on impoverishing it in order to please their lower instincts, their craving for intellectual security in the form of clarity, precision, 'objectivity', 'truth', it will become clear that there is only one principle that can be defended under *all* circumstances and in all stages of human development. It is the principle: *anything goes*.¹¹

The maxim that "anything goes" is surely striking at first, and possibly voluntarily provocative. However, Feyerabend's adamant stance for epistemological pluralism and critique of dogmatism would certainly support theoretical eclecticism. In order to achieve objective knowledge, ideas have to be compared with other ideas too, and not with experience alone. Theories are generally supported by facts, but certain facts cannot emerge at all if no alternative or contradictory theories are taken into account. The importance of auxiliary assumptions is the main point in Feyerabend's account of the scientific revolution. Copernicus's break with traditional Aristotelian physics, i.e. one grounded on a geostatic cosmology, paved the way to the principle of relativity, later endorsed by Galileo. In Feyerabend's words, Galileo:

[...] is one of those rare thinkers that who wants neither forever to *retain* natural interpretations nor altogether to *eliminate* them [...] He insists upon a *critical discussion* to decide which natural interpretations can be kept and which must be replaced [...] The senses alone, without the help of reason, cannot give us a true account of nature. What is needed for arriving at such a true account are 'the... senses, *accompanied by reasoning*. Moreover, in the arguments dealing with the motion of the earth, it is this reasoning, it is the connotation of the observation terms and *not* the message of the senses or the appearance that causes troubles.¹²

Observation terms can ultimately act as trojan horses for theories, and one should escape the trap set by a strict devotion to empiricism. In this sense, would be

11 Feyerabend, Paul. *Against Method*. London, Verso, 1993, pp. 18-19.

12 Ibidem, p. 58.

sufficient to consider the difference between observed motion and real motion. For example, the celestial sphere seems to be moving around the earth during the day, but only looks so if we observe the sky and at the same time ignore Earth's rotation period. Thus, an external criterion of comparison is necessary to discover hidden contradictions. Counterintuitives and new languages of observation can help us disentangle context-dependent ambiguities and paradoxes. In the following section, attention will be paid on how epistemology and ontology in IR are to be problematized for a better understanding of state behaviour. Starting by introducing Wendt's (1987) pioneering article on the relevance of the structure-agency issue in IR, some more recent literature on the topic will be also provided.

2.3 – Towards a common epistemological ground

So far, it has been pointed out that a pluralist approach can successfully contribute to the creation of objective knowledge. Nonetheless, in order to successfully support research, different theories need to find a common epistemological ground¹³. To try to shed more light over this issue, An introduction of the Agent-Structure problem as it has been addressed in the field of IR is necessary. As one of the central objects of debate in social theory, it concerns the primacy of either structure or agents in the shaping of human behavior. In this sense, the structure-agency issue is not only a problem of social epistemology, but also of social ontology at large. The interpretation, or rather the problematization of what is called the duality of structure¹⁴, is crucial for understanding deadlocks in well-established theories in the field of social sciences.

To illustrate the structure-agency problem, Alexander Wendt (1987) presents a critical comparison of two mainstream IR theories, namely Neorealism¹⁵ and World-System Theory¹⁶, in which he challenges the explanatory power of the two approaches

13 Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is what States Make of it", *International Organization*, 46:2, 1992, p. 425

14 This term, encapsulating the mutually constitutive character of agency and structure, has been coined by the sociologist Anthony Giddens in his book *Central Problems in Social Theory*.

15 The foundational text of political Neorealism is Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1979.

16 The World-System Theory has been introduced by American social scientist Immanuel Wallerstein in

by pointing out their different understandings and explanations of the system 'structure'. Wendt claims that the weakness undermining both theoretical models lies in the ontological priority that each theory confers to their main units of analysis. Neorealist analysis targets the behaviour of state actors in light of their own single interest, all in the frame of the anarchic structure of international politics. The World-System Theory focuses instead on a macro-level, relations-of-unequal-exchange-driven policymaking. Wendt argues that by posing one unit of analysis as pre-given and foundational of state behavior we would inevitably constrain the explanatory power of a theory, in the likes of a chicken-or-the-egg dilemma. Drawing from the theory of structuration¹⁷, based on the mutually dynamic relationship between structure and agent, Wendt asserts:

Structuration theory, then, conceptualizes agents and structures as mutually constitutive yet ontologically distinct entities. Each is in some sense an effect of the other; they are "co-determined." Social structures are the result of the intended and unintended consequences of human action, just as those actions presuppose or are mediated by an irreducible structural context. This understanding of the agent-structure relationship is made possible by conceptualizing each from the start as ontologically dependent upon the other, by conceptualizing agents in terms of the internal relations that define them as such, and by conceptualizing social structures as existing only through the medium of the agents and practices that they constitute.¹⁸

In his appreciation of structuration theory for the cause of International Relations studies, Wendt also explains how the structurationist approach requires a foundation of what is defined as realist philosophy of science, or scientific realism¹⁹. As a philosophical position, scientific realism rose largely in contrast with Logical

his three volumes of the work *The Modern World-System*, edited respectively in 1974, 1980 and 1989.

17 The theory of structuration pertains to the field of sociology, and it studies the creation and reproduction of social systems by analyzing both structure and agency. The main scholar usually associated with structuration theory is Anthony Giddens, but important studies about the agent-structure relationship have been also carried out by theorists such as Roy Bhaskar and Pierre Bourdieu.

18 Wendt, Alexander. "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory", *International Organization*, 41:3, 1987, p. 360.

19 As Wendt (1987) himself points out, there is no correspondence between scientific realism and political realism or neorealism in International Relations.

Positivism, challenging the empiricist argument of making law-like assumptions about observable realities. The contribution that scientific realism can provide to political science is, as Wendt purports, to undermine the dichotomy between the empiricism-based "scientific" approach and the supposedly "un-scientific" character of hermeneutics and critical theory²⁰.

Hagström and Gustafsson (2015) propose a relational model of security identity articulation divided into three layers, for the purpose of analyzing identity resilience and change in light of the agent-structure dilemma. To each layer corresponds a different degree of institutionalization and agency constraint, and each one of the layers is simultaneously constituted and mutually influential. The most sedimented layer of state identity is the one in which a certain state actor perceives itself in relation to other actors in hierarchical terms, i.e. as either superior or inferior. It is the core of the state identity architecture, and also what constrains state agency at the highest degree. The intermediate layer is where descriptions of self and other(s) are concretely articulated. The process of "othering" is often associated with a dichotomised view of the actors taken into consideration. Positive definitions of Self like "rational" and "democratic" are usually in line with what is regarded as superior in the hierarchical frame of world politics. Conversely, representations of "emotional" or "non-transparent" others are examples of negative differentiation or non-compliance with virtuous standards in the international community. However, in some cases relations of differentiation are established in a positive or neutral form, facilitating integration and fostering a sense of collective identity with other similar actors. Ultimately, the least institutionalized layer is where policies and political issues are discussed and where actors' agency is least constrained. Articulations and understandings of identities at this level have consequences for potential change in other layers of identity²¹.

The relational model proposed by Hagström and Gustafsson is of great help in overcoming obstacles that we could encounter if we essentialize identity. Later on in the chapter, will be demonstrated how some IR literature, especially pertaining to the

20 Wendt, Alexander. "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory", *International Organization*, 41:3, 1987, p. 370.

21 Hagström, Linus and Gustafsson, Karl. "Japan and identity change: why it matters in International Relations", *The Pacific Review*, 28:1, 2015, pp. 5-7.

rationalist current, have treated the identity and the interests of a state as independent variables, hence missing the potential for change that a more context-dependent approach could allow.

2.4 – Identity narratives and ontological security in International Relations

The study of identity in IR, if not biased by clichés and ideological stereotypes, can provide a profound insight on what drives states decision-making. Traditional approaches on statecraft and strategy have attached much value to order and predictability in international politics. Although, more often than not, states' actions do not correspond to states' capabilities or to what political analysts expect to happen. Rational behavior can be undermined by a strong commitment to a shared social configuration, which is shaped by the ideas of the actors perceiving themselves as part of that very configuration. Wendt (1992) argued that the self-help system and power politics are nothing more than social constructs, hence no essential features of international anarchy²². In his view, it is the intersubjective construction of meaning, rather than rational choice, that affects security choices. In this light, the balance of threats rather than the balance of power is what determines state agency:

Competitive systems of interaction are prone to security "dilemmas," in which the efforts of actors to enhance their security unilaterally threatens the security of the others, perpetuating distrust and alienation. The forms of identity and interest that constitute such dilemmas, however, are themselves ongoing effects of, not exogenous to, the interaction; identities are produced in and through "situated activity." We do not *begin* our relationship with the aliens in a security dilemma; security dilemmas are not given by anarchy or nature.²³

In this framework of Self versus Other the state of anarchy, based on Waltz's (1959) definition of it as a condition in which no sovereign body regulates interactions among autonomous nation states, is hardly the cause of security issues. The following figure explains how Wendt sees the process of state interaction.

22 Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is what States Make of it", *International Organization*, 46:2, 1992, p. 392

23 Ibidem, p. 407

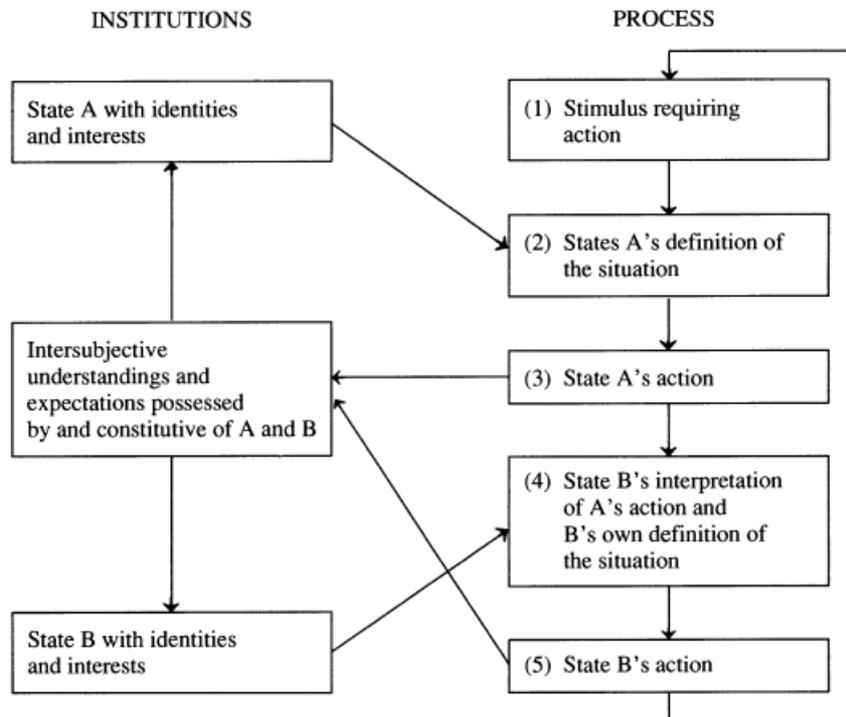


Figure 1.1 – *The codetermination of institutions and process, in Wendt (1992)*

States, at the initial stage of their encounter with outsiders, do not begin their relationship in terms of competition, neither they do in terms of cooperation. Through their interaction processes, they create a set of assumptions about each other around which concepts of Self and Other are stabilized²⁴. Thus, according to the outcomes of these interaction processes, identities and interests are intersubjectively constructed, and can vary over time and depending on the context. What remains as independent variables, according to Wendt, are the very processes of interaction.

By setting the encounter with the 'other' as the situation where identities and interests are shaped, we eschew the rigid mindset of rationalist reductionism. The

²⁴ *Ib.*, p. 405

complexity arising from the interplay of domestic and international factors calls for a pluralist view of state interests and identities. In this respect, how can we account for continuity of identity, and how can states pursue policies that are apparently irrational or cost-ineffective? I think that a critical appraisal of ontological security theory in IR can help us shed more light over those questions.

First of all, a definition of the notion of ontological security is needed. Scottish psychiatrist Robert Laing (1955) has introduced the term 'ontological insecurity' in his essay *The Divided Self*. In it, he claimed that individuals experience a fracture in their sense of identity as they perceive a continuous state of danger around them. English sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991) borrowed Laing's definition, claiming that ontological security is what gives a sense of stability and cohesion in the life of an individual. The foundation for this assumption is that the meaning of existence is found in a continuum of positive and stable mindset. Whenever an occurrence is potentially undermining the consistency of one's identity configuration, the ontological security of an individual is at stake. This opens up the space for actions aimed at reinstating the threatened identity, with outcomes that can possibly elude rationality. Steele (2008) extends the scope of the theory from the field of sociology to the one of International Relations. According to him, states, like individuals, can pursue actions that serve a self-identity need even at the cost of one state's physical security. The state is considered a social construct with deeply embedded variables, such as culture, identity and social hierarchy. All together they contribute in the formation of a biographical narrative of the state self which political actors tend to reinforce. Such biographical narratives are then articulated through official discourse and language, which of course does not always come in verbal form, but can also extend to military endeavours and war memorials²⁵. Hence discourse, in the words of Lupovici, "enables the actors' understanding of the social world of which they are part, and it constitutes and defines the social parts and practices of this world"²⁶. According to Lupovici (2016), the ontological security paradigm is divided into two main schools of thought. The first one, of which Steele is a

25 Hansen, Lene. *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*. London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p. 21.

26 Lupovici, Amir. *The Power of Deterrence. Emotions, Identity, and American and Israeli Wars of Resolve*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 80.

most representative scholar, suggests that states experience ontological insecurity through autobiographical self-narratives. His agent-level approach is focused on how a state actor is able to tell a coherent narrative of itself, and how gaps between its self-narrative and agency can undermine its sense of self. On the other hand, a second branch of scholars like Jennifer Mitzen (2006) and Bahar Rumelili (2014) concentrate their work on how ontological security is obtained via the routinization of relations with significant others²⁷. More specifically, their relational approach emphasizes Others, instead of Selves, in shaping processes of attainment or loss of ontological security.

The role of emotions can be critical for the formation of state narratives. The importance of *shame* for foreign policy choices is illustrated by Steele's discussion of the Kosovo crisis and the NATO countries. He argues that humanitarian intervention in Kosovo was strongly driven by a sense of shame generated by the missed opportunity of preventing genocidal events in the past:

[...]the remorse observed in the discourse of powerful states – certain genocides (like Rwanda) produce “shame” precisely because they could have been more easily averted and powerful states were the ones most capable of confronting those situations. Both the powerful state and, somewhat less importantly, the international community share this obvious interpretation. An ontological security interpretation sees the act of ignoring such crises, when they are easily preventable, as seriously imperiling a sense of self-identity formulated by (certain) powerful states’ biographical narratives. There are higher costs with non-intervention because such inaction produces shame and “strips away an agent’s sense of continuity in the world.”²⁸

The greater the power of a state in influencing the course of events in the world, also the greater the responsibility towards missed chances to change situations. With their freedom of choice and as champions of western liberal values, NATO powers felt a

27 For further insight into the two scholars' theoretical stance see Mitzen, Jennifer. "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma", *European Journal of International Relations*, 12:6, 2006, pp. 341-370; Rumelili, Bahar. *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties*. New York, Routledge, 2014.

28 Steele, Brent. *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-Identity and the IR State*. New York, Routledge, 2008, p. 70.

strong sense of shame when confronted with the haunting ghosts of Rwanda or Srebrenica. In a similar way, also Martha Finnemore (2003) contends that laws and institutions contribute in generating a sense of responsibility, which in turn induces compliance with shared goals and purposes²⁹.

The above example dealt with how the ontological security of a collective of states is dependent upon a macro-narrative, i.e. the one pertaining to western, liberal values. If we want to look closer at how a single state, micro-level narrative works we can refer to Zarakol (2010) and her account of Japanese denial of war crimes. She argues that through the Meiji Restoration Japan aimed at proving the West that they did not belong to 'uncivilized' Asia, and that political élites bolstered a sense of superiority that would ultimately legitimize imperialism³⁰. She eventually affirms that Japan, as a great power frustrated by the incapacity to anchor itself in either the western or the eastern world, is split between efforts that keep it away from the Asian community (e.g. the rearmament efforts) and the international system (e.g. no apologies for state crimes)³¹. Even though Japan has made some efforts towards war apologies³² after the publication of her article, this issue is still ongoing since Tokyo has not yet exposed itself enough to discuss these issues thoroughly with its closest and most important neighbours³³.

Also, historical collective memory, and related war memorials, have proved to be powerful drivers of security dilemmas. More precisely, Karl Gustafsson (2014) has

29 Finnemore, Martha. *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2003, pp. 160-161.

30 Zarakol, Ayse. "Ontological (In)security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan", *International Relations*, 24:1, 2010, pp. 16-19.

31 Ibidem, p. 18.

32 See for example Abe's statement in the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, where he timidly addressed the Comfort Women issue by claiming "We must never forget that there were women behind the battlefields whose honour and dignity were severely injured". The complete statement can be found at https://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201508/0814statement.html.

33 Despite sincere attempts at direct apologies and openness to dialogue by the DPJ 2009-2012 administrations, a positive image of a Japan recognizing its wartime responsibilities was jettisoned by history textbooks scandals and claims of sovereignty over disputed territories. For a recent stance over Comfort Women, see this article in The Japan Times <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/12/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-rejects-kangs-new-apology-call-comfort-women-issue/#.XDacPPZFxPY>. Furthermore, on how Abe called for an exempt for future Japanese generations to apologize, see "Japanese PM Shinzo Abe stops short of new apology in war anniversary speech", *The Guardian*, 14 August 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/14/shinzo-abe-japan-no-new-apology-second-world-war-anniversary-speech>.

showed how processes of institutionalization of memory in victimized countries can influence bilateral relations³⁴. His work focused on how the Chinese government adopted representations of past victimhood to reassert Chinese identity, and the ways they triggered a reinforcement of Japanese nationalist narratives. He explains how the Chinese Communist Party has enacted a plan of comprehensive patriotic education, stressing Chinese identity as one dedicated to the War of Resistance³⁵ with its past aggressors through war memorial exhibitions. In turn, Japanese political actors have pointed out how anti-Japanese education is a threat to future oriented ties, and called for a moderation of the way in which Japan was depicted in Chinese war museums.

At the end of this all-encompassing appraisal of the ontological security paradigm, I would like to introduce a critical perspective over its tenets. So far, all the accounts of the theory that I described deal with how actors tend to maintain a stable narrative of the self and view change as anxiety-inducing. Although, what if possibilities for a change could actually entail the attainment of a more stable identity? Why states would just favor preservation over adaptability in case of existential threats? In that respect, Browning and Joenniemi (2017) provide an interesting perspective in desecuritisation and positive change. Their main point is that identity is to be seen as something constantly changing, and as the achievement, rather than the root, of ontological security³⁶. The securitisation of a political issue can be even more anxiety-inducing than an act of desecuritisation, insofar as it creates a sense of instability both at the level of Self and Other. Also Rossdale (2015) agrees that mainstream ontological security scholarship excessively focuses on the idea that actors seek after a stable narrative, overshadowing fractures and plurality within political narratives. He argues that political critique cannot be held at a safe distance, i.e. by focusing only on what is desirable or not for political actors. It should instead aim at analyzing a subject's existential contingencies, for contradictions and opacities offer a space for change and

34 Gustafsson, Karl. "Memory Politics and Ontological Security in Sino-Japanese Relations", *Asian Studies Review*, 38:1, 2014, p. 73.

35 Museums on the War of Resistance organize exhibitions dealing with the struggle of the Chinese population during the years of Japanese occupation (1937-1945). The most important of these structures is located in Beijing, nearby the Marco Polo Bridge. The Marco Polo Bridge incident of 1937 escalated into a battle that started Japanese invasion.

36 Browning, Christopher and Joenniemi, Pertti. "Ontological security, self-articulation and the securitisation of identity", *Cooperation and Conflict*, 52:1, 2017, pp. 37-40.

different articulations of the Self³⁷.

In this section, a comprehensive theoretical framework on how state narratives and identities can be drivers of political action has been laid out. For the purpose of this research, the understanding of how a state identity is formed and articulated through discourse is of central importance.

2.5 – Japanese security and IR: when identity started to matter

Issues in Japanese security have been a fertile soil for complex multidisciplinary approaches in IR studies, especially after the collapse of the economic bubble. Before actually delving into the theoretical debate, a short historical background to locate the economico-political pathway of post-war Japan until the early nineties can prove useful. After that, early 1990s neorealist analyses on Japanese military strategies will be examined. It will be noted how, following the tenets of neorealist theory, there has been a tendency to think of Japan as an emerging great power if it only wanted to acquire nuclear armaments. In contrast to that view, insights from some notable scholars defined as Norm-Constructivists will also be provided.

Since the end of World War II up to the late 1980's, Tokyo has been able to maintain relatively stable relations with its most significant others in East Asia. Territorial disputes remnants of colonial past were set aside after initial turmoil, as Japan pursued normalization of relations with South Korea and China³⁸. Thanks to the American Umbrella and the canons of the Yoshida Doctrine the Japanese economy managed to recover and flourish. Absence of international competition in the internal market granted survival to all industrial sectors, even the most feeble ones like agriculture and construction. On the other side, virtuous companies like Toyota or Panasonic were constantly outcompeting their American counterparts in terms of sales.

37 Rossdale, Chris. "Enclosing Critique: The Limits of Ontological Security", *International Political Sociology*, 9, 2015, pp. 369-386.

38 Normalization of relations with South Korea and China was made official after the signature of the 1965 Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (accessible at <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20583/volume-583-I-8471-English.pdf>) and the 1978 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China (accessible at <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/treaty78.html>) respectively.

These chronic trade surpluses eventually triggered pressure from US Congress on granting a series of concessions on import tariffs and exchange rates. Thus, Japanese economy was destined to open up to global markets. The high appreciation of the dollar during the 1980-1985 period led to a forced stabilization of the international currency market, and the yen had to undergo revaluation. Due to that, Japanese banks decided to lower real interest rates on loans down to zero in order to stimulate domestic demand. The ensuing wave of spending spree caused a steep increase in the price of assets and real estate, paving the way for the growth of the economic bubble. The burst of the bubble was only a matter of time: the Bank Of Japan decided to keep price inflation in check by sharply raising interest rates in 1990, and the collapse of Japanese economy followed³⁹.



Figure 1.2, US-Japan GDP growth compared 1961-1995, World Bank

The long period of stability granted by American protection and the country's isolationism allowed Japan unprecedented economic growth. The domestic implosion of

³⁹ This historical excursus has been adapted from Rosenbluth, Frances and Thies, Michael. "Japan's Postwar Political Economy". In *Japan Transformed*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2010.

the asset bubble shook the country's very foundations, opening up debate in international study on what would have Japan's foreign policy choices been in the short to the mid term. As we will see, the post-bubble situation was the moment in which the 'identity' of the actor Japan started to matter in IR studies. Scholars were essentially divided between two definitions of Japan: one as a 'great power state' and the other as a 'culturally antimilitaristic' country.

The economic debacle inflicted a hard blow on Japan, but some notable political scientists still regarded the country as next in line for aspiring to the role of great power⁴⁰. Especially, neorealist scholars argued that Japanese lack of military independence was an anomaly, and that Japan had to boost its military capability to become a central actor in global affairs. Kenneth Waltz (1993, 2000) contended that Japan effectively desired to earn the status of global power, mainly due to its increased regional activity and the seeking of prominence within international institutions⁴¹. For him, technological monopoly alone would not provide enough deterrence, and the great power Japan should have eventually to resort to nuclear armaments. He claims:

How long can Japan and Germany live alongside other nuclear states while denying themselves similar capabilities? Conflicts and crises are certain to make them aware of the disadvantages of being without the military instruments that other powers command. Japanese and German nuclear inhibitions arising from World War II will not last indefinitely; one might expect them to expire as generational memories fade.⁴²

Waltz's emphasis on the importance of nuclear weapons for a fully-fledged global power is shared also by Christopher Layne (1993). Although, if Waltz contended that to a great economic power should correspond an equivalent military capability⁴³, Layne viewed that, historically, Japan's aims of achieving the status of great power were mainly driven by its strong vulnerability. Thus, he gives precedence to foreign policy

40 See for instance Waltz (1993), Layne (1993) and Funabashi (1991), all of which will be discussed in the section.

41 Waltz, Kenneth. "The Emerging Structure of International Politics", *International Security*, 18:2, 1992, p. 61.

42 Ibidem, p. 67.

43 Ib., p. 64.

concerns as the reason why states militarize⁴⁴. He concludes that, as a side-effect of unipolarity⁴⁵, America's hegemonic role would be challenged by Japan if the latter would have become competitive enough as a great power.

As what pertains to realism, no state that can be identified as 'great power' could escape the framework of nuclear deterrence. However, the race to nuclear armaments and the fear of escalation entailed by it seem to have the aspect of a self-fulfilling prophecy. John Mueller (2010) argues that deterrence theory is tactically redundant. In his words, the technological obsession about nuclear weapons has

[...] inspired a concomitant assumption, or assertion, that because the weapons exist, war must inevitably follow, that is weapons and arms races, not people, that principally and inexorably cause war. This perspective has led to decades of intense, and mostly futile and unnecessary, anguish over arms control and disarmament issues---or gimmicks.⁴⁶

In a similar fashion, Jacques Hymans (2006) observed how states actually possessing the technology to get the bomb did not eventually produce nuclear weapons. This gap between capabilities and outcome has to be seen as a result of how leaders perceive and shape what Hymans defines as 'National Identity Concepts', i.e. their sense of belonging to the hierarchies in the international scenario⁴⁷.

Continuing on the line of geopolitically essentialized power identity in IR scholarship, we can see how Funabashi (1992) gave a different interpretation of Japanese identity. Adopting a neoliberal perspective, he claimed that Japan, due to its binary characterization as 'economic giant' and 'military dwarf', should have pursued a twofold foreign policy line: namely, strong engagement for world peace and the path of military self-restraint⁴⁸. In his view, Japanese leadership role had to be ancillary to the

44 Layne, Christopher. "The Unipolar Illusion. Why New Great Powers Will Rise", *International Security*, 17:4, 1993, pp. 28-31

45 Layne states that the fall of the Soviet Union after the end of the Cold War marked a shift from bipolarity to unipolarity in international politics.

46 Mueller, John. *Atomic Obsession. Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al-Qaeda*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. xii.

47 Hymans, Jacques. *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation. Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 46.

48 Funabashi, Yoichi. "Japan and the New World Order", *Foreign Affairs*, 70:5, 1991, p. 66.

American hegemon, so that Japan could reassert a new image of itself in the world as a 'global civilian power'⁴⁹.

So far, the discourse about Japanese identity has revolved around how material factors, i.e. nuclear armaments for realists and economic capabilities for liberals, could define Japanese foreign policy choices. In contrast to that, the rising current of Normative Constructivism had immediately challenged such a materialist position. They suggested that common cultural norms and national identities had a major part in influencing a state's antimilitaristic stance. Peter Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara (1993) proposed a dyadic critique of both neorealist and neoliberal analysis. The former held that Japan was next in line to achieve the status of nuclear superpower, while the latter pushed for an image of Japan as a more competitive and less interventionist state seeking peace and profit instead of military power. Rather than that, Katzenstein and Okawara purported that Japanese policy was shaped by a mutually constitutive structure of domestic determinants and shared norms⁵⁰. They argued that Japan's economic vulnerability and high dependence on raw materials, given geographical position as an isolated island state, helped creating a strong commitment to collective hard work and technological superiority. In turn, Japanese security had to be pursued by developing an unparalleled defense technology. The idea of a Japanese defensive identity clearly resonated with the lessons of World War II and with the pacifist clause in the article 9 of the Constitution of Japan. Furthermore, they contended that the Japanese despatch of minesweepers during the Gulf War had found support even in public opinion, as it fit the frame of a proactive approach to pacifism⁵¹.

The view of a Japan unlikely to become a major military power was also shared by Thomas Berger (1993). In his perspective, the militaristic takeover of the 1930s and the subsequent war with America taught a lesson to be long remembered in Japanese collective memory. He argues that the disaster of the war and the American usurpation fostered a sense of opposition to militarization, an opinion which was shared both by the élites and the population at large⁵².

49 Ibidem, p. 8.

50 Katzenstein, Peter and Okawara, Nobuo. "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms and Policies", *International Security*, 17:4, 1993, p. 85.

51 Ibidem, p. 108.

52 Berger, Thomas. "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism", *International*

In more recent times, Kuniko Ashizawa (2008), a scholar influenced by the first wave of norm-constructivism, offered a broader view over the study of identity in international politics. More precisely, she warned from the potentially overly deterministic approach of considering a state 'identity' as the most prominent driver behind policymaking. In her words: "Identity serves as a major source in determining foreign policy, yet its function is, by nature, context-dependent. A state has multiple identities, each of which may persist, evolve, or cease to exist over time."⁵³

As we have seen, both from the neorealist/neoliberal and the norm-constructivist sides, Japanese identity has been treated as something either already determined by the structure of international anarchy or as an essentially domestic feature. However, what further studies in constructivism have pointed out is that identity is part of an ongoing process, i.e. of intersubjective meaning making through relational interactions with significant others. Following Wendt (1992), considering identity as a dependent variable in foreign policy can help us understanding why certain kinds of external pressures do not necessarily imply fixed reactions by states. Although, we should also take into account the stabilizing effect that identity has on the social framework, whose collective perception helps in maintaining a social narrative that inevitably influences the choices of political élites.

Security, 17:4, 1993, p. 120.

53 Ashizawa, Kuniko. "When Identity Matters: State Identity, Regional Institution-Building, and Japanese Foreign Policy", *International Studies Review*, 10:3, 2008, p. 594.

2.6 – Securitising identity through discourse: constructing the Other

The recent linguistic turn in IR constructivism has seen the rise of post-structuralism and discourse studies as the theoretical backbones of political analysis⁵⁴. Now, some of the most relevant contributions to Discourse Studies and securitisation in IR will be presented. Main reference will be Hansen's (2006) comprehensive manual on how to conduct a discourse analysis in foreign policy, which in turn has the imprint of post-structuralist authors in social and political theory, like Derrida (1976; 1978), Laclau and Mouffe (1985), and Michel Foucault (1970; 1974; 1977; 1984). IR articles taken into consideration will be mostly pertaining to Japanese Studies. Also, the discussed articles are possibly going to provide a contrast with the previous debate on norm-constructivist accounts of Japanese identity in International Relations.

According to scholars of relational constructivism, political actors articulate their sense of "self" vis-à-vis others through discursive representations. The negative or positive differentiations of the self against the other(s) pinpoint the discrepancies or similarities between two discursive entities, which can eventually vary over time. Language is thus considered as a political tool, reproducing particular subjectivities or identities while at the same time excluding others⁵⁵. Hansen (2006) provides a model of identity differentiation based on the assumption that meaning is constructed through a juxtaposition of two different signs, a privileged one and a devalued one. She gives the example of how a woman was perceived compared to man in dominant nineteenth century discourse, through positive 'processes of linking' and negative 'processes of differentiation'⁵⁶.

54 State-of-the-art studies, some of which are going to be introduced in greater detail later, are Epstein, Charlotte. "Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics", *European Journal of International Relations*, 17:2, 2010, pp. 327-350 and "Constructivism or the eternal return of universals in International Relations. Why returning to language is vital to prolonging the owl's flight", *European Journal of International Relations*, 19:3, 2013, pp. 499-519; Hagström, Linus and Hanssen, Ulv. "War is peace: the rearticulation of 'peace' in Japan's China discourse", *Review of International Studies*, 42, 2016, pp. 266-286; Lindgren, Yenn and Lindgren, Petter. "Identity Politics and the East China Sea: China as Japan's Other", *Asian Politics and Policy*, 9:3, 2017, pp. 378-401; Chan, Michael. "The discursive reproduction of ideologies and national identities in the Chinese and Japanese English-language press", *Discourse & Communication*, 6:4, 2012, pp. 361-378.

55 Hansen, *Security as Practice*, p. 16.

56 Ibidem, p. 17.

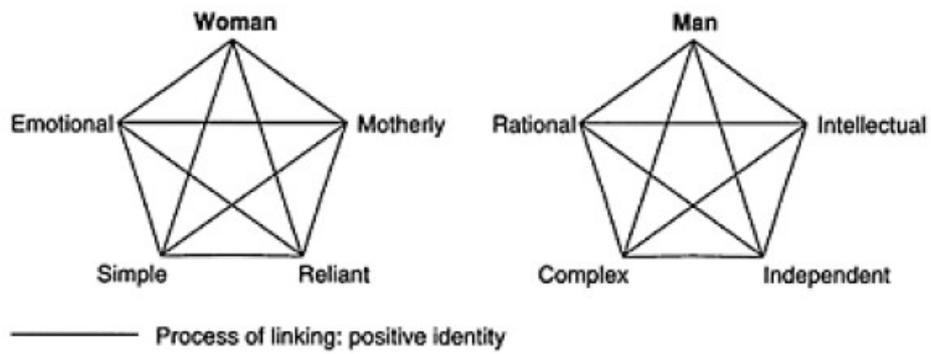


Figure 1.3 – *Process of linking*, in Hansen (2006)

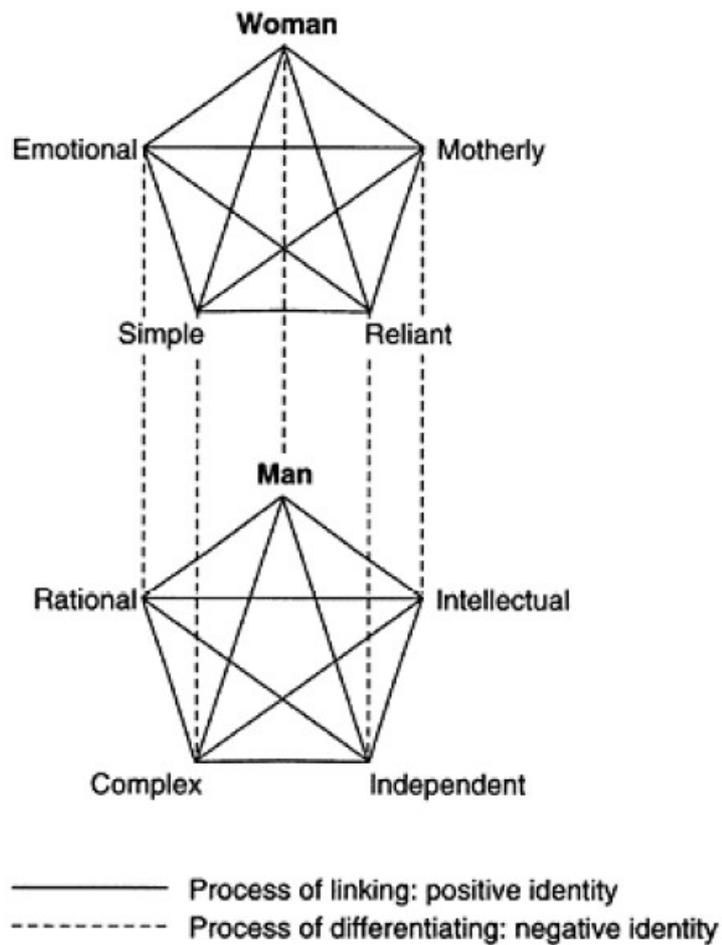


Figure 1.4 – *Linking and differentiation*, from Hansen (2006)

A positive process of linking defines the identity of a subject or actor, which is then negatively differentiated by juxtaposing it to another one. Both processes are enacted simultaneously in the construction of identity. The way articulations of identity are established through language is strongly structured, i.e. it relies on a stable architecture of meaning. Nonetheless, language is at the same time intrinsically unstable, as it strives to fix a meaning around an enclosed totality. It follows that any discourse trying to establish itself as dominant will always present fractures and discontinuities. In the words of Laclau and Mouffe (1985):

This field of identities which never manages to be fully fixed, is the field of overdetermination. [...] such a system [of discourse] only exists as a partial limitation of a 'surplus of meaning' which subverts it. Being inherent in every discursive situation, this 'surplus' is the necessary terrain for the constitution of every social practice. [...] it determines at the same time the discursive character of any object, and the impossibility of any given discourse to implement a final suture.⁵⁷

The lack of fixity in discourse is what allows for rearticulation and appropriation of signifiers. In that respect, Hagström and Hanssen (2016) provide a notable example of how the signifier 'peace' has been rearticulated in Japan's China official discourse. Through the analysis of official statements and parliamentary debates of the Japanese Diet, they found how the concept of peace has changed its definition over different periods of time. They first introduce Japanese identity construction in 1972. In that period peace was on the rise globally and Japan, as a fully fledged democracy, was nurturing a sense of superiority compared to other Asian states. China was seen as a backward and substandard country, but Beijing's western friendly moves⁵⁸ persuaded Japan that a *pax sinica* through normalization of relations was a viable option. On the other hand, Japanese peace identity discourse changed significantly in the early 2010s, a

57 Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London, Verso, 2014, pp. 97-98.

58 Especially the rapprochement with US, which began with Henry Kissinger's meetings with Zhou Enlai and Nixon's official visit to Beijing, all in 1971. See <https://china.usc.edu/getting-beijing-henry-kissingers-secret-1971-trip>.

period constellated by diplomatic turmoil and dispute flareups⁵⁹. Infact, in front of a China which was still backward yet now threatening and untrasparent, the only way to achieve peace was to take properly deterring defensive measures: *si vis pacem, para bellum*. Thus, we can see how the authors have pointed out a shift in the perception of the Chinese issue: from one of exceptionalization (with possibility of integration) to one of securitisation (China is beyond redemption)⁶⁰.

It has to be noted that identity discourse can also be articulated in a language which is not the one of the 'speaking' actor. As argued by Chan (2012), state media happen to target international audiences with identity narratives that coincide with official governmental lines. Following Van Dijk (1998), he stresses how the media reinforce national ideologies by making three points: first, the reproduction and legitimation of ideas aid group interests; second, cognitive frameworks of collecitve belonging foster negative differentiations of others; finally, the dynamic aspect of identity construction favors different articulations according to different contexts. His findings are that, despite evidence of commodified journalistic practice when trying to address audiences abroad, ethnocentrism is still prominent in global-span news reporting⁶¹.

As already expounded by Wendt (1992), security issues are not pre-given, immanent threats to the stability of states. They are issues articulated as problems when so-called *securitising actors* refers to them as such. Immigration is one clear example of what can be perceived as a threat to national security. It entails several policy measures aimed at reducing the risks of letting the potentially dangerous Other within a state's frontiers. Securing borders, fostering nationalist sentiments and sending illegal migrants back to their country of origin are among the most common ones. They reflect one of the basic assumptions of political philosophy as originally formulated by Thomas Hobbes, namely that states ground their agency on glory, gain and *fear*⁶².

The main framework into which security issues arise is the one of identity

59 Specifically, the exacerbation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu crisis and the subsequent rise of nationalist sentiments in China.

60 Hagström, Linus and Hanssen, Ulv. "War is peace: the rearticulation of 'peace' in Japan's China discourse", *Review of International Studies*, 42, 2016, pp. 274-286.

61 Chan, Michael. "The discursive reproduction of ideologies and national identities in the Chinese and Japanese English-language press", *Discourse & Communication*, 6:4, 2012, p. 362.

62 Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviatano*, Milano, BUR Rizzoli, 2011, pp.127-133.

construction vis-à-vis others. According to Wendt (1992), identities and interests are subject to change, and so are issues having the potential to threaten that very identity. Hence, it follows that security issues are context and subject dependent. They produce uneven power relations, e.g. the ostracization of ethnic minorities or ideological constructs about different, unfathomable Others. The creation of a securitising rhetorical structure helps in crystallizing a mainstream identity/security discourse. Decision makers and political élites are the main agents who contribute to establish a dominant discourse within a society, by representing the feelings and perceptions of the population⁶³. External actors are then either inscribed into a framework of integration (exceptionalization) or into one of antagonism (securitisation).

The methodological approach of this discourse analysis will consist in an intertextual research on how Japanese-South Korea discourse is shaped in official statements and newspaper media. The research design, based on Hansen (2006), will be composed of four parts:

- 1) As the 'self' component, what will be considered is Japan and its identity construction process vis-à-vis the South Korean other, in light of the animosity resurging from foreign policy issues;
- 2) Textual sources, as already introduced, will consist of official statements of Prime Ministers and their cabinet, ministerial statements and diplomatic documents, and newspaper media. The rationale behind the choice of texts is that both are widely attended sources, and both contribute to the creation of a unified, state-level discourse;
- 3) The period to be analyzed will be the 2009-2012 timelapse, when the administration of the more progressive Democratic Party of Japan made promise of pursuing more future-oriented ties with Asian neighbors;
- 4) Two foreign policy controversies of burning interest will be taken into consideration as objects around which the identity discourse will be articulated: the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute and the Comfort Women issue. Attention will be also paid to other Asian actors, such as China and North Korea, which contribute

⁶³ Lupovici, *The Power of Deterrence*, pp. 80-81.

relevantly in the shaping of the security environment in Northeast Asia.

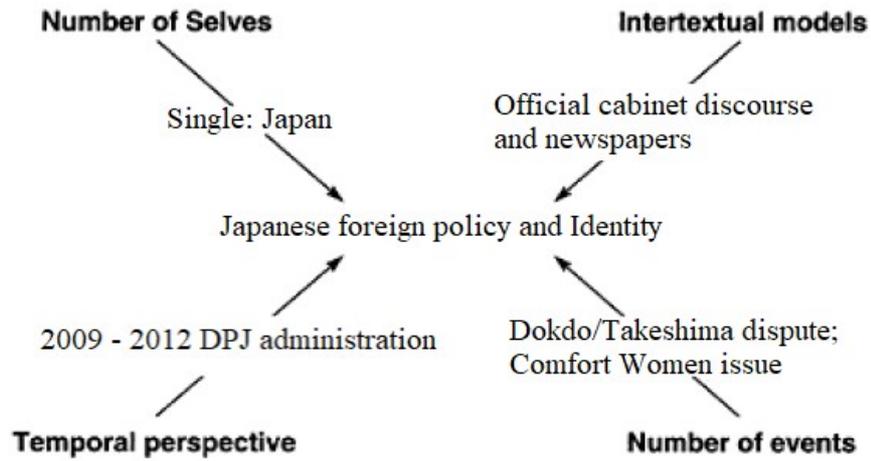


Figure 1.5 – Research design model, adapted from Hansen (2006)

3 – Chapter 2: A historical perspective on Japanese state identity

3.1 – Introduction

As it has emerged from speeches of the DPJ Prime Ministers, Japan has been often labeled as a country that should be 'trusted by the international community'⁶⁴ and as an actor 'tackling global challenges'⁶⁵. South Korea too has been defined as a state endorsing 'the values of democracy, freedom and market economy', and by such principles also contributing to 'world peace'⁶⁶. The closeness of the ROK with the model of advanced, liberal-capitalist countries favors a positive identification in the eyes of Japan. One cannot forget that, given the status of US ally for Korea, the security axis Japan-ROK-United States is one of the most prominent in Northeast Asia. Moreover, in the context of Asian regionalism, DPJ leaders have pursued a policy called *mirai shikō gaikō*, literally 'future-oriented foreign policy', which was based on trust-building processes through economic dynamism and cultural exchange⁶⁷. Over this latter foreign policy line, the Japan-ROK-China triad leads the way. However, it seems that the way Tokyo conceived such *future*, even under the more liberal 2009-2012 administrations, has eventually been unilateral. The ghosts of a 'negative past', which is still heartfelt by the majority of Koreans⁶⁸, happen to reify backwardness in Japan-ROK relations as 'a predominant mode of representing Korean otherness against which the Japanese self needs to reassert its legitimacy'⁶⁹. In other words, in the eyes of the ROK Japan is trying to forget about the past and eschew responsibility, whereas Japan claims of having dealt sufficiently with history and sees Korea's assertions as disqualifying. Another fact not to be ignored is that, during the DPJ government, territorial issues and wartime related

64 https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200909/16policies_e.html.

65 https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201009/24un_naigai_e.html.

66 https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201008/10danwa_e.html.

67 https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200910/09kyoudou_e.html.

68 The latest survey on public opinion conducted by the Genron NPO finds that 50.6% of interviewed Koreans has a bad impression of Japan, with 'historical issues' and 'territorial disputes' being the foremost factors influencing negative feelings. Despite an evident reduction of the Bad/somewhat bad impression variable over time, one cannot underestimate the impact that eventual flareups could have on it. The complete survey can be accessed at this link: <http://www.genron-npo.net/en/180618.pdf>.

69 Tamaki, Taku. *Deconstructing Japan's Image of South Korea. Identity in Foreign Policy*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 111.

controversies arose with China as well. In 2010 a Chinese fishing boat collided with a Japanese patrol ship near the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, causing the arrest of the captain⁷⁰. In July 2012, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda publicly announced that the Japanese government was considering to acquire the disputed islands from their private owner, provoking the umpteenth diplomatic standoff between Tokyo and Beijing⁷¹. Despite the obvious differences between China and Korea, there is no doubt that Japan's unwavering position is perceived as a remnant of its colonial rule in both countries.

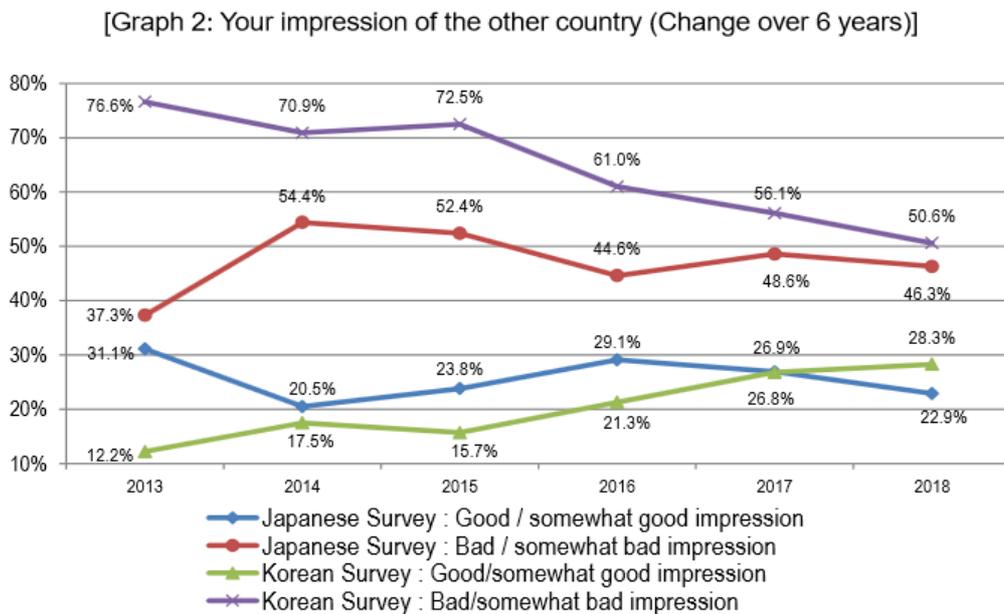


Figure 2.1 – *Your impression of the other country*, from The 6th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll , The Genron NPO (2018)

In the previous chapter we have noted how the converging of a two-level discourse, one domestic and the other international, reflects the construction of Japanese security identity. At the domestic level, narratives of *exclusively defense-oriented*⁷²

70 "Japan-China row escalates over fishing boat collision", *The Guardian*, 9 September 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/sep/09/japan-china-fishing-boat-collision>.

71 "China and Japan: a dangerous standoff over the Senkaku islands", *The Guardian*, 17 September 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/sep/17/china-japan-dangerous-standoff>.

72 See MOD, Annual White Paper, 2010, part II: "The Basics of Japan's Defense Policy and Build-up of

security/military policies would suggest that national interest gravitates around what could be defined as 'defensive deterrence', to be achieved through the stabilization of the global security environment. In turn, this means that a proactive cooperation with external actors, in terms of what could be understood as 'interdependence', is a most sought after strategy in the light of such national interests. In this respect, how can we explain the mishandling of issues pertaining to a painful past? What does Japan have to gain from lack of trust in a complex security environment such as the one in Northeast Asia? It could be suggested that Japan, in line with the theoretical background developed in the first chapter, happens to stick to a state narrative that is ontologically significant in determining the relations with its most significant others. It could also be proposed that this narrative is articulated following both domestic and international determinants, and either reinforced or integrated into a stronger framework for identification.

Needless to say, the role that historical memory plays in establishing/threatening such state identity narratives is of paramount importance. As argued by Gustafsson (2014), memory is somehow collectively institutionalized, and it allows for the creation of group narratives which provide ontological security to a whole society⁷³. It should be also noted that such institutionalization processes can ultimately conflate with nationalist sentiments, both for victims and aggressors alike. One cannot ignore for example how, every time a Japanese Prime Minister visits the Yasukuni Shrine, either officially or unofficially⁷⁴, turmoil arises in former colonial states⁷⁵. As Koga (2016) contends, such visits brought about cancellations of bilateral meetings and diplomatic

Defense Capabilities'. The subsequent 2011, 2012 and 2013 Annual White Papers are basically on the same line as the 2010 one in terms of defense policy.

73 Gustafsson, Karl. "Memory Politics and Ontological Security in Sino-Japanese Relations", *Asian Studies Review*, 38:1, pp. 73-74.

74 Consider for example how Koizumi Jun'ichiro used to define his visits as the ones of a private citizen praying for the war dead as a whole. See "Defiant Koizumi visits Yasukuni", *The Japan Times*, 16 August 2006, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2006/08/16/national/politics-diplomacy/defiant-koizumi-visits-yasukuni/#.XFTMAvZFxPY>.

75 The Yasukuni Shrine is a privately run Shinto shrine located in central Tokyo, commemorating the Japanese war victims. The controversy around Japanese Prime Ministers' visits to the temple is due to the fact that 14 A-class war criminals, i.e. those who actively contributed to the planning and the waging of the war, are also enshrined among other war dead. For a profile of these criminals, read the article "Yasukuni Shrine: the 14 'Class A' war criminals honoured by Japan", *The Telegraph*, 15 August 2014, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/11031805/Yasukuni-Shrine-the-14-Class-A-war-criminals-honoured-by-Japan.html>.

intimidation, but surely helped in gathering the consensus of the nationalist fringes of the electorate⁷⁶. Moreover, Japanese Prime Ministers' gifts to the sanctuary are another motive of animosity among neighbouring states⁷⁷.

In the next section, an outline of how Japanese state identity has been constructed throughout recent history will be provided. By focusing on Japan and South Korea, it will be attempted to show how state narratives are articulated on the basis of ideological constructs. For this study in particular, attention will be mostly paid to two extremes over which the state Japan structured its identity: the first one being the geographical dimension of 'East Asia', while the second is Japan's role vis-à-vis the 'International Community'. It will be shown how parallel narratives pertaining to both extremes can clash and intertwine. In the first section of this chapter attention will be paid to how Japan constructed its sense of self vis-à-vis Asia (especially with South Korea) and the Western world during the Meiji Restoration. The second part will then show how the dominant discourse of the postwar 'International Community' influences Japanese foreign policy to this day. A summary will eventually be outlined for conclusive remarks.

76 Koga, Kei. "The Yasukuni Question: histories, logics and Japan-South Korea relations", *The Pacific Review*, 29:3, pp. 331-359.

77 "Shinzo Abe, Japanese Premier, Sends Gift to Contentious Yasukuni Shrine", *The New York Times*, 21 April 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/22/world/asia/shinzo-abe-japanese-prime-minister-sends-gift-to-yasukuni-shrine.html>.

3.2 – The construction of Japanese identity, part 1: the Meiji Restoration

During his Nobel Lecture on December 1994, Japanese writer and intellectual Oe Kenzaburo delivered a speech entitled 'Japan, The Ambiguous, and Myself'⁷⁸, in which he laid bare the deep idiosyncrasies underlying modern Japanese society. According to him, Japan is socially split between two extremes of ambiguity:

This ambiguity which is so powerful and penetrating that it splits both the state and its people is evident in various ways. The modernisation of Japan has been orientated toward learning from and imitating the West. Yet Japan is situated in Asia and has firmly maintained its traditional culture. The ambiguous orientation of Japan drove the country into the position of an invader in Asia. On the other hand, the culture of modern Japan, which implied being thoroughly open to the West or at least that impeded understanding by the West. What was more, Japan was driven into isolation from other Asian countries, not only politically but also socially and culturally.⁷⁹

Upon reading Oe's words, we could start tracing Japanese 'modern' identity formation back to the times of Meiji Restoration, i.e. when Japan started to adopt the political, social and legal models of the West. In fact, the country's opening to the Western world coincided with the end of the *sakoku* (literally, closed country), the isolationist system that has been persisting throughout the whole Edo period (1603-1868)⁸⁰. Notehelfer (2005) considered the impact of the Meiji Restoration as similar to the one that the Taika Reform had in opening Japan to Chinese culture and institutions

78 The title of the lecture itself is hard to translate literally without losing subtlety. The original Japanese reads as *aimaina nihon no watashi*, which almost sounds as 'me of the ambiguous Japan'. It is important to point out how the title of his lecture echoes ironically the one of his compatriot Kawabata Yasunari. Kawabata entitled his 1968 acceptance speech as 'Japan, The Beautiful, and Myself' (in Japanese, *utsukushii nihon no watashi*). Oe decided to detach himself from his Japanese predecessor's view of Japan, as it was imbued with vagueness and remnant of nationalist cultural themes.

79 The whole speech can be found at the following link on the Nobel Prize website:
<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1994/oe/lecture/>.

80 Foreign policy under the Tokugawa Shogunate was very strict. Nobody could be allowed to either enter or leave the country without an official permit, and naval commercial ties were limited to very few foreign populations, namely Ainu, Chinese, Joseon Koreans, Dutch and Ryukyuan. On the *sakoku* question, see Friday, Karl (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Premodern Japanese History*, London: Routledge, 2017.

in the mid sixth century⁸¹. The leaders of the new Japan were compelled to create a centralized nation state in order to be able to compete with Western powers. The threat posed by the Occident was one to be approached gingerly: the imposition of two unequal diplomatic treaties with the United States in 1854 and 1858 was pressuring Japan to find a way to deal with the 'barbarians'⁸². Hence, a group of young and influential *samurai*, headed by figures like Ito Hirobumi and Saigo Takamori, pledged to save Japan from Western colonial rule via a rapid modernization. They intended to counterbalance Western invasion with the very instruments of foreign intruders, from efficient modern institutions to industrialization. Out of this sociopolitical resolve, the tenet of *fukoku kyōhei*, emerged as the guideline for the modern state Japan:

Immediately upon its foundation, the regime embarked on a vigorous program of institution-building designed to fend off Western imperialism. Needless to say, this was an extremely complex and hazardous process, not least because the new regime was founded on a very shaky economic and military base. Since well before the Restoration, leaders of the *bakufu* and major domains had to recognize the necessity of western technology for defense. The prescient among them realized that importing arms would accomplish little in the long run without also building infrastructure and nurturing a cadre of experts familiar with all aspects of Western societies. The Meiji regime continued this program of defense-oriented Westernization under the slogan *fukoku kyōhei* (rich country, strong army).⁸³

The first steps towards modernization included some radical changes in everyday lifestyle: the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, the introduction of meat based meals, western-style clothes for all the strata of the population, ballroom dances and other typically occidental leisure activities⁸⁴. Another fundamental measure was the

81 Notehelfer, Fred. "The Meiji Restoration." In *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, edited by Wm. Theodore de Bary, p. 669. Second Edition. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

82 Indeed, initial protests against the foreign invasion converged into the movement of *sonnō-jōi* (honor the emperor, expel the barbarians). My historical sources about Meiji restoration will mainly come from Notehelfer and Collotti Pischel, Enrica. *Storia dell'Asia Orientale: 1850-1949*, Roma, Carocci Editore, 2013, pp. 49-66.

83 Howell, David. "Visions of the Future in Meiji Japan." In *Historical Perspectives on Contemporary East Asia*, edited by Goldman, Merle and Gordon, Andrew, p. 92. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

84 Collotti Pischel, p. 58.

introduction of compulsory education in 1872, aimed at instilling in the new generations a sense of belonging to the foundational values of the Meiji state. The educational policy was conceived as twofold: elementary education was intended to instruct people ready to serve and work for the interests of the country, while upper education would have been restrictive and very competitive, in order to train the new leadership. Despite an increased rate of literacy, compulsory education came at a high cost for the agriculture, as children were moved away from the fields, and for the state, which had to pay for basic schooling items such as books, shoes and uniforms⁸⁵. Equally important was the creation of an army system based on universal conscription. The new army was not only an apparatus of national defence, but also an ideological tool to foster patriotism in the population⁸⁶.

Also, an overlook on Meiji Japan's economic policies is of help in better contextualizing the evolution towards a fully industrialized capitalist state. The first measure to retrieve funds was represented by a fiscal reform proposed by Okuma Shigenobu in the form of a 3% property tax. Japan was still a largely rural country, and since three quarters of the population resided in the countryside the tax was the foremost source of state revenues. Furthermore, many poor farmers were forced to ultimately sell their specks of land in order to pay taxes, and the economic hardships led them to become the workforce of the newly industrialized country. Farmer's attempts at revolting were harshly repressed by the authorities. The establishment of a heavy industrial apparatus was essential for Meiji Japan, as it would have provided what would have otherwise been imported, especially weapons for national defense. In 1872 the banking system underwent substantial overhaul and the yen was adopted as single currency. In addition, the state contributed with public investment, especially in the strategic sector, and constantly encouraged private funding through fiscal and legal support.⁸⁷

To further emphasize the contrast between Edo and Meiji aesthetics, I will present now a graphic comparison of two prints by two artists belonging to each era, respectively Torii Kiyonaga (1752-1815) and Yamazaki Toshinobu (1857-1886).

85 Ibidem, p. 59.

86 Ib., p. 59.

87 Ib., pp. 60-61.



Figure 2.2 – Meeting in front of the Shrine (right side of the diptych), Torii Kiyonaga, 1784, Yamatane Museum of Fine Arts.



Figure 2.3 – A Glance at the Distinguished Figures of the Meiji Period (right side of the triptych), Yamazaki Toshinobu, 1877, Museum of Fine Arts Boston.

The pictures above offer a clear view on how traditional Japanese art has been influenced by the modernization movement. In Yoshinobu's picture, the imprint of western aesthetics is evident in how the characters are depicted. The uniforms and headgears are reminiscent of the ones worn by the Habsburg army in Austria, as well as the facial hair and mustache style. The stern glances and stiff postures also suggest a sense of pride and assertiveness that are totally absent in Torii's figures. The relaxed atmosphere of the Shrine meeting, conveyed by the delicate chromatic tones and the loosely vaporous garments, is swept away by the geometrical unrest of uniform wrinkles and the vivid contrast of the colors. However, one can still see how the Chrysanthemum Seal, i.e. the national crest adopted by the Japanese Imperial family, is represented in the background, indicating a firm attitude towards conservation of traditional values and symbols.

Japan's new leaders view was crucially shaped by the results of the so-called Iwakura Mission. Main figures of the Restoration movement, together with some dozens students, embarked on a sojourn abroad for two years both in Europe and the United States. One aspect of foremost interest for those intellectuals, especially as observed by Kido Takayoshi⁸⁸, was the replacement of imperial arbitrary exercise of power with the rule of law. He in fact pointed out how, by limiting those in power through constitutional order, western states managed to make their citizenry serve the country with a deeper sense of responsibility⁸⁹. One cannot also forget how the Meiji constitution was based on the British and Prussian models, mixing elements of both absolute and constitutional monarchy⁹⁰.

One of the consequences of the Iwakura Mission ferments was Japan's aim of invading Asia. Not all the leaders had unanimous opinions on that: Saigo Takamori's proposal of conquering Korea was rejected in favor of Okubo Toshimichi's policy line of peace and reforms⁹¹. Although, Japan considered the control of the Korean peninsula

88 Kido Takayoshi, together with Okubo Toshimichi and Saigo Takamori, is considered as one of the 'Three Great Nobles of Restoration', i.e. very important figures in contributing to the modernization of Japan during the Meiji period. The following Japanese website contains a more detailed (yet simple) description of the three leaders: <https://nihonsi-jiten.com/isinno-sanketu/>.

89 Notehelfer, pp. 679-680.

90 Hein, Patrick. *How the Japanese Became Foreigners to Themselves: The Impact of Globalization on the Private and Public Spheres in Japan*. Berlin, LIT Verlag, 2009, p. 72.

91 Notehelfer, p. 683.

as essential after having managed to establish privileged commercial ties via the Treaty of Ganghwa Island in 1876⁹². As the Yi dynasty of Korea (1392-1897) was an authoritarian regime possibly even more secluded than the Tokugawa one, Japan had an ambivalent posture towards the Korean peninsula: not only the new Japanese empire needed to expand its territorial scope, but also wanted to help Korean modernizers to imitate the Japanese model⁹³. The first step towards the annexation of Korea was to defeat China. The first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) ended with the victory of Japan and the imposition of the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Among its provisions was the ending of Korean tributary relationship with the Qing empire⁹⁴. On the other hand, the triumph in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 allowed Japan to eliminate Russian control over Manchuria and to subsequently have its way to Korea cleared. The victory of Japan against a major western power reinforced significantly its identity as Asia's preeminent nation on the world's stage⁹⁵.

The invasion of Korea was not, as already introduced above, a smooth operation. The two opposite sides were spearheaded by Saigo Takamori, a charismatic patriot attached to old samuraic order (who also never visited the west), and by Okubo Toshimichi, a bureaucrat less devoted to samuraic values and leaning towards internal order and progress. For what regards Saigo, his letters to Itagaki Taisuke, a prominent Meiji statesman, offer a clear perspective on the importance of a quick war with Korea:

Last evening I visited the prime minister's residence and discussed my plan with him in great detail. . . . However, I could not help feeling uneasy when he said that he would wait until the return of the [Iwakura] mission. [...] if we sent an envoy to tell the Koreans that we have never to this day harbored hostile intentions and to reproach them for weakening the relations between our countries, at the same time asking them to correct their arrogance of the past and strive for improved relations in the future, I am sure that the contemptuous attitude of the Koreans will reveal itself. They are absolutely certain, moreover, to kill the envoy. This will bring home to the entire nation the necessity of punishing their crimes. This is the

92 Chung, Young-lob. *Korea under Siege, 1876-1945: Capital Formation and Economic Transformation*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 42.

93 Collotti Pischel, p. 64.

94 Ibidem, p. 65.

95 Ib., p. 66.

situation that we must bring to pass if our plan is to succeed.⁹⁶

Okubo, who did not share Saigo's straightforward military proclivities, had a long-range vision and cold logic that won the council of state's approval over the former's dramatic call for war:

Some argue that Korea's arrogance toward our country is intolerable. But as far as I can see, the reasons for sending an envoy extraordinary seem to be to look for a positive excuse for war by having him treated arrogantly and discourteously. We would then dispatch troops to punish them. If this is the case, it is clear that this venture is to be undertaken, not because the situation makes it unavoidable or because there is no other way, but rather because the honor of the country will have been sullied and our sovereignty humiliated. I consider such a venture entirely beyond comprehension, as it completely disregards the interest of the people. It would be an incident occasioned by the whims of individuals who have not seriously evaluated the eventualities or implications. These are the reasons why I cannot accept the arguments for undertaking this venture.⁹⁷

Even if Okubo managed to persuade the state council in the short term, he was eventually assassinated by samurai loyalists in 1878, possibly as a consequence of Saigo Takamori's failure and death in the Satsuma rebellion⁹⁸. After the death of the Three Great Nobles of Restoration, most of the power remained in the hands of Ito Hirobumi, who had eventually be appointed as the first Japanese Prime Minister in 1885, an entitlement he would have eventually held for four times. It was actually the fate of Ito, who was killed in 1909 by a Korean nationalist, that motivated Japan to pursue a hard line in the subjugation of Korea. The event caused a substantial reprimand from Japan, as the army general Terauchi Masakata was sent to bloodily repress the assassination: an estimate of around 20.000 people⁹⁹ would have been killed. In the month of August

96 Excerpt from *Dai Saigo zenshu*, vol. 2, pp. 754-756, cited in Notehelfer, p. 684.

97 Excerpt from Kiyosawa, *Gaiseika to oshite Okubo Toshimichi*, p. 31, cited in Notehelfer, p. 688.

98 The Satsuma rebellion was fought between former Samurai's of the Satsuma Domain against the Imperial Army of Japan. The Satsuma faction, led by Saigo Takamori, believed that the Meiji modernization would have weakened Samurai's social and economic privileges, while the rapid cultural change was seen as a betrayal of the *sonnō-jōi* doctrine.

99 As reported in Collotti Pischel, p. 216.

1910 Tokyo announced the annexation of Korea under the Japanese name *Chōsen*. The new name for the nation was not the only cultural imposition faced by Korea: until the end of World War II Koreans were obliged to learn Japanese language as the official one, and most of the efforts of the colonial educational system were aimed at the erasure of Korean language and culture. The Japanese government also pursued developmental policies: it established a dense network of railways all over the peninsula, while at the same time constructing manufacturing industries in the south and heavy industries in the north. It goes without saying that the real beneficiary of such a rapid industrialization was intended to be Japan. No profits were shared with Korean workers, and extensive military oversight would guarantee total control over industrial activities.¹⁰⁰

Apart from clear strategic reasons to pursue Asian expansionism, what was the ideological grounding that could legitimize Meiji era colonialism? Tamaki (2010) suggests that the convergence of the *kokutai* polity together with a vision of 'Pan-Asianism' is what justified Japan's task to ward off Western powers from vulnerable Asia¹⁰¹. Traditionally, the term *kokutai* referred to the ethnocentric foundational myth of Japan: it could be translated literally as 'body/essence of the state/nation', defined through the Emperor figure as the progenitor of the Japanese people eternally devoted to him. Basically, the concept of *kokutai* holds an exquisitely mythological significance. In fact, its origins can be found in traditional Japanese theogony, i.e. the divine lineage of the imperial line stemming from the sun goddess Amaterasu¹⁰². In this respect, it could be interesting to draw a parallel between the figure of the Japanese Emperor as 'body of the state' and the Hobbesian image of the Leviathan, the 'artificial man' or 'COMMONWEALTH'¹⁰³ that encapsulates the whole of society. Also notable how in both figures temporal and pastoral power coalesce to form the *simulacrum* of a unitary sovereign.

The figure of the Emperor was much revered in early twentieth century Japan. Maruyama (1961) reports that, in the case of fire of school buildings, schoolmasters would rush into the flames to save the emperor's portraits from burning¹⁰⁴. Furthermore,

100Collotti Pischel, pp. 215-216.

101Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image of South Korea. Identity in Foreign Policy*, p. 62.

102Ibidem, p. 63.

103Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviatano*. Milan, BUR, 2015, p. 5.

104Maruyama, Masao. *Nippon no Shisō*, pp. 31-32, quoted in Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image of*

the importance of *kokutai* for Meiji leaders is also stressed by Kitagawa (1974), as he argues that, despite the creation of a modern nation-state based on western standards, they shaped it following the theocratic model of *kokutai*¹⁰⁵. To reinforce these hypotheses, one can see how the concept has been introduced into late nineteenth century Japanese politics. The preamble to the Meiji constitution, drafted in 1889, reads as follows:

Having, by virtue of the glories of Our Ancestors, ascended the throne of a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal; desiring to promote the welfare of, and to give development to the moral and intellectual faculties of Our beloved subjects, the very same that have been favoured with the benevolent care and affectionate vigilance of Our Ancestors; and hoping to maintain the prosperity of the State, in concert with Our people and with their support, We hereby promulgate, in pursuance of Our Imperial Rescript of the 12th day of the 10th month of the 14th year of Meiji, a fundamental law of the State, to exhibit the principles, by which We are guided in Our conduct, and to point out to what Our descendants and Our subjects and their descendants are forever to conform. The right of sovereignty of the State, We have inherited from Our Ancestors, and We shall bequeath them to Our descendants. Neither We nor they shall in future fail to wield them, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution hereby granted.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, the tenets of the *kokutai* were also enshrined in the educational system. The Imperial Rescript on Education, signed by the Meiji Emperor on October 30 1890, was distributed in every school in the Japanese empire, altogether with a portrait of the Emperor. In it, the ideological hallmarks of loyalty to a 'familial' symbolic order were much evident:

Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious; as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty

South Korea. Identity in Foreign Policy, p. 65.

105Kitagawa, Joseph. "The Japanese "Kokutai" (National Community) History and Myth", *History of Religions*, 13:3, 1974, p. 225.

106The complete text (in english) of the Meiji constitution can be found at the following link:

<http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c02.html>.

and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; 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.¹⁰⁷

Now that the *kokutai* ideology has been outlined, how can one make sense of the *outside* elements that disturb its balance? How did Meiji Japan construct its identity vis-à-vis both Asia and the West, in order to establish itself as a *unique* community? We can here refer to the figure of Fukuzawa Yukichi¹⁰⁸. Born in 1835 to an impoverished samurai, he left his native Kyushu in 1854 to pursue Western military studies in Nagasaki. He then studied Dutch language in Osaka a year later, and moved to Edo in 1858 to establish a Dutch language school that will later on develop into Keio University. He was one of the first Japanese intellectual to visit the west, by going to the United States in 1860 and in Europe in 1862. His accountings of Western culture and institutions were contained in his 1866 book *Seiyo Jijō*, literally 'conditions in the west'. He was one of the most prominent cultural figures of Meiji Japan, and despite his reluctance in entering the government, he wanted to increase Japan's power and independence by introducing western ideas. In 1885, in an editorial anonymously published in the Japanese newspaper *Jiji Shinpō* entitled 'Datsu-A Ron' (De-Asianization), Fukuzawa explained well how Japan had created an entirely new identity:

Though our land of Japan is situated on the Eastern edge of Asia, the spirit of its people has already shaken off the backwardness of Asia to accept the civilization of the West. Unfortunately, however, we have two neighbouring countries, one being called China, the other called Korea. [...] The people of those two countries do not know how to go about reforming and making progress, whether individually or as a country. [...] China and Korea of to-day cannot be of any assistance at all to our

107An english version of the Imperial Rescript on Education can be accessed online at <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/glossary/imperial-rescript-education>.

108The biographical details have been sourced from "Fukuzawa Yukichi", Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Fukuzawa-Yukichi>.

country of Japan. To plan our course now, therefore, our country cannot afford to wait for the enlightenment of our neighbours and to co-operate in building Asia up. Rather, we should leave their ranks to join the camp of the civilized countries of the West. Even when dealing with China and Korea, we need not have special scruples simply because they are our neighbours, but should behave towards them as the Westerners do.¹⁰⁹

The ambiguous aspects of Japanese identity shaped during the Meiji modernization can appear now more distinct. China and Korea, despite being culturally very close to Japan, they still lagged behind in backwardness, hence they could not be included in the plan of fending the West off Asia. In addition to a discourse focusing on the 'underdevelopment' of neighbouring states, racial criteria of supremacy were also a relevant ideological tool. Michael Weiner (1997) reports that several Japanese publications in early twentieth century Japan promoted views of biological superiority of the Japanese people, most of them dealing with themes like 'familial ties' and 'blood bonds'. For example, in a book by Japanese jurist Hozumi Nobushige entitled *Ancestor-worship and Japanese Law* (1901), the author viewed Japanese society as one that always stood on three fundamentals, namely the Imperial family, the regional clan and the family unit, each of them coalescing into a uniformed consanguineous community¹¹⁰.

Every ideological support of a social whole, in order to validate its inherent inconsistency, is in need of an excluded Other. Social structure, and the identity framework it entails, is never established through a positive logic. Indeed, what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue *à propos* social structures is that they are *overdetermined*, in the sense that 'every society constitutes its own forms of rationality and intelligibility by dividing itself; that is, by expelling outside itself any surplus of meaning subverting it'¹¹¹. Processes of 'othering' are thus intended as relational, fruit of social antagonisms

109The text of Fukuzawa's editorial can be found here: <http://www1.udel.edu/History-old/figal/Hist370/text/er/datsua.pdf>. The pdf file comes from the book edited by Stead, Alfred. *The Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources*, Vol. 1, Tokyo, The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1969, pp. 128-133.

110Weiner, Michael. "The Invention of Identity in Pre-war Japan", in *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan*, edited by Dikotter, Frank, p. 99, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1997.

111Laclau, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, London, Verso, 1985, p. 123.

that are projected onto an external disturbing element. It can be seen how the way Laclau and Mouffe problematized issues of social coherence reminds us of securitisation processes. Clara Eroukhmanoff (2017) defines securitisation issues as ones not actually existing out there, but as *articulated* problems¹¹². In other words, such issues are not immanently threatening, but they are seen as such when securitising actors, for instance political élites or activists, refer to them as threatening. For what pertains Meiji Japan, we can see how security was indeed not conceived in universal terms, but rather it was context (Western invasion of Asia) and subject (Japan as non-continental, isolated state) dependent.

One could actually argue that, starting from the ideological foundations around which Meiji Restoration was constructed, Japanese national identity eventually conflated into extreme nationalism and warmongering. Although, it is not in the scope of the present work to discuss the dynamics that brought about Japanese fascism, not least the alliance with Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy. Rather, an outline of the way in which Japanese national identity was shaped by modernization offers a most relevant background for a comprehensive analysis of Japanese state identity. By comparing Meiji and postwar Japanese state identity we can better understand what changed and what is resilient in Japanese security policy until recent times. In the next section of the chapter, an account of postwar Japanese identity narratives will be provided.

¹¹²Eroukhmanoff, Clara. "Securitisation Theory", in *International Relations Theory*, edited by McGlinchey, Stephen, Walters, Rosie and Scheinflug, Christian, p. 104, Bristol: E-International Relations Publishing, 2017.

3.3 – The construction of Japanese identity, part 2: Postwar peace

The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, altogether with the American occupation, marked a watershed moment in Japanese collective identity. The demilitarization imposed by the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers (SCAP) entailed a shift towards pacifism and democratization. We can directly refer here to article 9 of the 1947 constitution of Japan, which imposes the renunciation of war:

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. 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.¹¹³

The new constitution created a fundamental identity disjuncture with the previous system. The impact of defeat and the acceptance of universal principles built the grounds for new ontological narratives, such as the ones pinpointed by Tamaki (2010) as *heiwa kokka* (peace state) and *shōnin kokka* (merchant state). Both narratives resonate with the liberal values encapsulated in postwar institutions and legal agreements, especially the United Nations in 1945 and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947¹¹⁴. One can, for instance, read the following words from the preamble to the MacArthur constitution:

We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship, and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. We desire to occupy an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth. We recognize that all peoples

¹¹³The full English text of the Japanese constitution can be accessed online via this link: https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html.

¹¹⁴The original text of the GATT, signed in Geneva on 30 of October 1947 and entered into force on 1 of January 1948, is accessible via this link: https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/gatt47_e.pdf.

of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want. We believe that no nation is responsible to itself alone, but that laws of political morality are universal; and that obedience to such laws is incumbent upon all nations who would sustain their own sovereignty and justify their sovereign relationship with other nations.¹¹⁵

A more in-depth look to the concepts of *heiwa kokka* and *shōnin kokka*, as well as at the way they intertwined, will better explain their relevance for Japanese postwar state identity.

Japan's commitment to pacifism had been further reinforced in 1951 with the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SFPT) by the then Prime Minister, Yoshida Shigeru. The agreement formalized the end of the state of war between Japan and the Allied Powers, and *de facto* ended the occupation of the American protectorate¹¹⁶. In article 5 of chapter III, Japan is compelled to abide by the tenets of article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. Namely, to settle its international disputes only by peaceful means and to offer the United Nations all the assistance in times of necessity. Article 14 of chapter V also sets forth the obligation for Japan to pay reparations for war damages and suffering.

Although, how would have been Japan able to defend itself without a military force? The article 5 of the SFPT also claimed that the allied powers recognized that Japan, as a sovereign nation, had the right to individual or collective self defense, and that it could have entered into collective security agreements in the future. In this respect, the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America was drafted on the 19th of January 1960¹¹⁷. Article 2 states that both parties would cooperate for the peaceful development of their international relations by promoting stability and well-being. Article 5 proclaims that any attack against either part in the territories under Japanese administration would be dangerous to peace, and thus be acted upon in accordance with constitutional provisions. So, the security

115Ibidem.

116The text of the San Francisco Peace Treaty can be accessed here:

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20136/volume-136-i-1832-english.pdf>.

117Full text is accessible via this MOFA link: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html>.

framework provided by international treaties and the presence of US forces on Japanese territory (as specified in article 6 of the Japan-US Security Treaty) allowed postwar Japan to focus more on economic performance and growth. The Yoshida doctrine, i.e. the economic policy line proposed by Prime Minister Yoshida, was aimed at conceding to the United States as much as necessary but as little as possible, especially in terms of military support. In fact, Tokyo was less preoccupied than Washington about the rise of communism in China, and as Rosenbluth and Thies (2010) argue Japan would have even pursued normalization of relations with Beijing if only the US had permitted¹¹⁸. At the same time, having a strong alliance with the United States would have been surely cheaper than seeking rearmament¹¹⁹.

The other facet of Japanese postwar identity, which was the one of a 'merchant state', can be seen as constructed on two different levels. The first one revolves around the concept of 'interdependence' in an international community. Economic cooperation and exchange are the foundations for a stable security environment, where absence of synergy means no profit, hence no prosperity. On the other hand, a merchant state is also one that needs to trade with external actors in order to supply to its own shortages. It goes without saying, then, that Japan is extremely dependent on the import of energy and raw materials for its economy. One can here draw for instance a parallel with the invasion of Manchuria during the war, an area rich in coal and iron ore¹²⁰. Although, commerce does not only comes in terms of imported raw materials, but also on exports of goods and technology. The latter, especially, has always been a distinctive characteristic of Japanese electronic consumer goods and automotive industry. In January 1977, Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo made clear how resources and technology were fundamental for Japan's security during his inaugural speech to the Diet:

[...] from the point of view of national economy and the people's livelihood,

118Rosenbluth, Frances and Thies, Michael. *Japan Transformed. Political Change and Economic Restructuring*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2010, p. 94.

119In a note on p. 94, Rosenbluth and Thies report that the American government was dissatisfied with Yoshida's stance on defense budget, and it began pushing for the candidacy of the hawkish Hatoyama Ichiro as Prime Minister. In addition, the onset of the Korean war in 1950 was another reason for the US to have a more militarily active Japan as ally.

120"Manchuria." The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th edition. *Encyclopedia.com*.

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/reference/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/manchuria> (accessed online February 8, 2019).

securing natural resources and development of science and technology are both crucial to the country. Japan as lacking in resources means that these issues are of utmost security concern for the survival and well being of the country.¹²¹

Both *heiwa kokka* and *shōnin kokka* narratives can juxtapose successfully, since it is only through a stable and peaceful environment that prosperity can be achieved. So far we have seen how a commitment to 'global prosperity' can favor peace and economic exchange, but is it enough to avoid relations of inequality among states? We can see here how, on the premises of peaceful and merchant 'state', Japan had still a hierarchic perception of itself vis-à-vis other Asian nations. Hagstrom and Hanssen (2016) provide us with a much interesting insight on how early 1970's Japan constructed its identity against neighbouring Asian states. Democratization and pacifism were on the rise globally, and Japanese élites reiterated how their country was genuinely committed not to remilitarize despite economic power:

In the history of all times and places economic great powers have become military great powers. If we had wanted to, we could have chosen the path of a military great power. If we had wanted to, we could have had powerful arsenals. Furthermore, if we had wanted to, we could have had nuclear weapons. But we don't pursue these goals. Our military power is limited to the scope of self-defence. [...] Our surplus power is spent on domestic services. Accordingly we are trying to create a living standard for the Japanese that is the envy of the world. Japan is also trying to serve those countries in the world that are lagging behind. This is a completely new approach for an economic great power.¹²²

The authors argue that this modality of differentiation is reminiscent of the hierarchical framework established in the past, i.e. the one of a Japan as 'superior/developed' state compared to its

121Fukuda Takeo, quoted in Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image of South Korea. Identity in Foreign Policy*, p. 78.

122The quote is from Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo (LDP), and is an excerpt from a Foreign Affairs Committee speech at the House of Representatives, 2 June 1972. The speech part is cited in Hagstrom, Linus and Hanssen, Ulv. "War is peace: the rearticulation of 'peace' in Japan's China discourse", *Review of International Studies*, 42, 2016, p. 275.

'sluggish/underdeveloped' Asian neighbours, still carrying the task of enlightening the laggards¹²³. In this case, the Other was differentiated in terms of exceptionalisation, and thus capable of being integrated in the dominant narratives of the 'international community'¹²⁴.

Going further, how were Japanese and South Korean ties looking during the postwar era? It took actually 20 years after the end of the conflict for Japan and the Republic of Korea to pursue normalisation of relations. The rise of Rhee Syngman¹²⁵ as the first president of South Korea in 1948, a mandate he would have held even in 1952, 1956 and 1960, defined a period of hostility to Japan. The first Korean to obtain a doctoral degree in the US in 1910, during the colonial rule he ardently advocated for the independence of the Korean peninsula from Japanese dominion. With the conclusion of the intra-Korea conflict, he pushed for a strengthening of South Korean sovereignty by proclaiming the Rhee Peace Line in 1952. His aim was to extend the country's territorial waters and to repel attempts at violating the boundaries. Japanese fishing boats were often seized or even fired upon¹²⁶. Eventually, the Report of Van Fleet Mission to Far East of 1954, drafted by the US government, deemed the line as illegitimate under international law¹²⁷. Rhee's authoritarian regime ended in 1960, when he was forced to resign after violently repressing public protests against electoral frauds. It took then three years to the

123Ibidem, p. 276.

124In fact, Japan started to consider normalisation of relations after some West-friendly moves by China, such as the end of US-Sino hostility in 1972, the inclusion in the United Nations in 1971 and the bilateral meetings between Nixon and Zhou Enlai throughout 1972. It should also be noted that the 1972 resignation of Prime Minister's Sato Eisaku, who had been proclaimed *persona non grata* in Beijing, facilitated normalisation.

125Biographical facts on Rhee have been retrieved from "Syngman Rhee", Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Syngman-Rhee>.

126For a detailed account on victims and arrests, one can refer to this archived article from the Shimane prefecture website (Japanese only): <https://web.archive.org/web/20070928121556/http://www.pref.shimane.lg.jp/kochokoho/photo/161/06.html>.

127About the Report of the Van Fleet mission, see this 2014 pamphlet of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the Dokdo/Takeshima territorial dispute: https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/pdfs/takeshima_pamphlet.pdf.

Republic of Korea to have a stable government after the coup d'état of the May 1961¹²⁸. President Park Chung-hee's administration managed to reconnect ties with Japan through the 1965 Treaty of Basic Relations, which nullified the Annexation Treaty of 1910 and settled wartime reparations¹²⁹.

To an extent, the normalization of relations between Japan and the ROK, could have been considered as a convenient move for both countries: Tokyo in search for new business opportunities in a moment of economic expansion, while Seoul was experiencing a dire financial situation. Hence, the psychological damages that Japan inflicted on the Korean population during the colonial rule could be all but repaired by a treaty that was purely focused on economic cooperation.

It won't be surprising at this point to see Japanese élites looking at South Korea as another 'backward' neighbouring country. In fact, South Korea's dependence on Tokyo for financial assistance marked Seoul as 'underdeveloped' and thus in need for an external guidance. However, one cannot forget that in the end the ROK government was the only Korean administrative authority recognised by Japan. The communist regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), founded on the 9th of September 1948, held claims of sovereignty over the peninsula just as the ROK did, but clearly could not meet much favor from Japan. Relations between Tokyo and Pyongyang have always been weak and unstable. A series of abductions of Japanese citizens by North Korean agents, conducted during the 1970s and 1980s, were only officially admitted by the DPRK in 2002. Even if some abducted citizens have been allowed to return to Japan, the issue has not yet been completely solved¹³⁰.

Japan's identity articulation as *heiwa* and *shōnin kokka* did not change much at least until the end of the Cold War. It can be argued that the dissolution of the Soviet Union had a substantial effect in the progress of North Korea's nuclear program. In May

128After Rhee's resignation the ROK state of affairs was in serious disarray. The new democratic government headed by Yun Bo-seon was very volatile, and on the 16 May 1961 a military coup d'état overthrew the existing administration. Park Chung-hee officially took office as member of the Democratic Republican party on 17 December of 1963, despite being *de facto* leader since the 1961 coup. The historical details of this section have been drawn from Fiori, Antonio. *L'Asia Orientale. Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 2010, pp. 51-88.

129The text of the treaty can be consulted online at the following link:

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20583/volume-583-I-8471-English.pdf>.

130About general issues in Japan-North Korea relations, please refer to the following MOFA webpage:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/relation.html.

1992, an inspection of a team from the International Atomic Energy Agency found inconsistencies with DPRK's safeguard agreements regarding the use of two nuclear research facilities. The inspection team concluded that some undeclared plutonium was being stored. Further inspections were obstructed by the government, who in March 1993 announced to retreat from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, except for making a U-turn soon afterwards¹³¹. In this scenario, a safe Japan-ROK alliance could guarantee stability in the region. Already in the 1990 Diplomatic Bluebook, a narrative for a future-oriented relation, or *mirai shikō gaikō*, was shared by leaders of both countries:

President Roh's state visit to Japan, postponed twice for reasons on the Japanese side, took place from May 24 to 26 in 1990. He was the second South Korean head of state to visit Japan following former President Chun's visit 6 years ago, in September 1984. President Roh's visit has laid problems arising from past history, and contributed greatly to the building new Japan-ROK relations that promote the two countries, the collaboration from a global viewpoint toward the 21st century. In reference to the past of the two countries, the Japanese Emperor said at the imperial banquet held in honor of the South Korean President "I think of the sufferings your people underwent during this unfortunate period which was brought about by my country and cannot but feel the deepest regret." And Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu expressed his "sincere remorse and honest apologies for the fact that there was a period in our history in which Japanese actions inflicted unbearable suffering and sorrow on the people of the Korean Peninsula."¹³²

The political upheaval that followed the burst of the economic bubble prompted change in the government. The ruling LDP suffered a major party split in 1993, and lost a vote of no confidence in the parliament on June 18. In the ensuing election they could not re-establish the majority needed to remain in power, and defectors merged into new parties that united with the traditional opposition parties, creating the first non-LDP

¹³¹The following is the link to the fact sheet of North Korea's nuclear safeguards:

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/focus/dprk/fact-sheet-on-dprk-nuclear-safeguards>.

¹³²<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1990/1990-3-1.htm#Item 2>. The Korean Peninsula.

government since 1955¹³³. The JSP leader and Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi delivered his memorable speech of state apologies in August 1995, but was definitely not the first attempt at putting past responsibility under the spotlight of foreign policy. The 1991 Seoul public testimony of Kim Hak-sun about her role as a sex slave polarized attention worldwide. In 1993, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei (LDP) offered official apologies by addressing the issue of Comfort Women.

Since the nineties, the new foreign policy narrative of *mirai shikō gaikō* has been a major feature in Japanese state identity articulation until the present days, especially when referred to South Korea. Moreover, both the LDP and its opposition have endorsed the line of 'future-oriented ties' and state apologies, each with their own degree of genuinity. However, we cannot ignore the effect that this stressing of the *future* has on reiterating *past* negativity through the compulsion of moving forward, instead of challenging it directly:

The narratives of Future enshrines a familiar set of symbols tacitly recognising the nowness of the Past and evoking the urge to move forward, while simultaneously reconstructing Korean otherness as perpetually critical of Japanese self. The very necessity of Future is a potent reminder of the Past that constantly dogs the bilateral relations. In short, *mirai shikō gaikō* constitutes the language through which policy makers in Tokyo reify, and comprehend, this diplomatic social reality.¹³⁴

To sustain these claims, we could have a look at how Tokyo asserts of having dealt with its past regarding Korea. A whole section of the MOFA website is dedicated to searing historical issues, providing extensive quantitative data on material compensations and major official statements of apologies by Prime Ministers¹³⁵. Nonetheless, what do both Japanese and Korean population think about historical issues? The most recent Genron Joint Public Opinion Poll on Japan and South Korea tells us that they are possibly the main driver behind diplomatic turmoil. This is

133Rosenbluth and Thies, *Japan Transformed. Political Change and Economic Restructuring*, p. 96.

134Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image of South Korea. Identity in Foreign Policy*, p. 147.

135https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/q_a/faq16.html.

especially evident when people have been asked about the reasons of unfavorable views of the other.

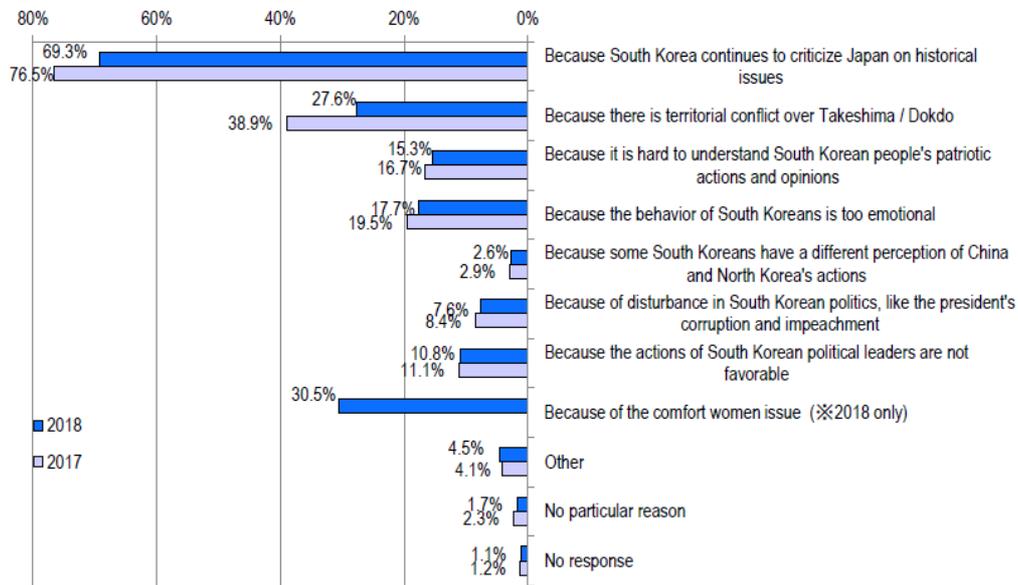


Figure 2.4 – Reason for having a bad impression (Japan), The 6th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll , The Genron NPO (2018)

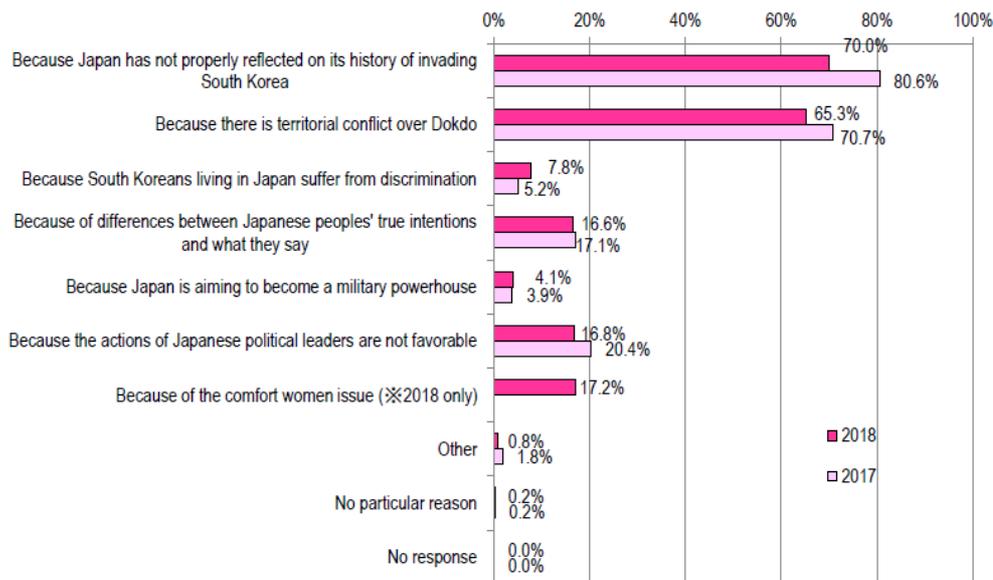


Figure 2.5 – Reasons for having a bad impression (South Korea), The 6th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll , The Genron NPO (2018)

As it is evident, both populations have significantly different views on how past issues have been dealt with. The South Koreans are adamant on their stance over colonialism, as the entries about invasion and the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute strike very high percentages. Whereas, Japanese people seem to find it difficult to cope with constant criticisms about wartime past. It then seems that, at the present day, both states mainly articulate their identities vis-à-vis each other in opposite ways: Japan as an actor that effectively dealt with its responsibilities by offering material compensation and (more or less) genuine apologies, while South Korea as pretending a more serious approach in apologizing and facing the past, possibly different from the one offered by Japan's economic diplomacy.

3.4 – Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how Japanese state narratives had different articulations throughout recent history. One can see how both international and domestic factors shaped such identity, but we could essentially point out a fundamental feature underlying each narrative, i.e. one pertaining to the securing of interests through leadership. During the Meiji era, Japan undertook its colonial rule under the slogan of *fukoku kyōhei*, countering Western invasion of Asia by using Occident's very own instruments. The postwar years, characterized by a push towards pacifism imposed by the SCAP constitution of 1947, saw Japan asserting its leadership through economic power and bilateral diplomacy. US's nuclear umbrella granted the most secure background for doing so. However, the end of the Cold War marked a shift towards a different commitment in Northeast-Asia oriented foreign policy. The dissolution of the Soviet Union rendered its Asian satellites exposed to America's grasp. Hence, Japan had to reshape its policy and try to fill the gap with neighbouring countries, especially with a US ally such as South Korea. Nevertheless, despite sincere attempts at apologizing

from Japan, the ROK never found them as satisfactory enough. In addition, flare-ups of historical issues are routinary, regardless of how delicate the security environment could be and how much progress had been previously made in bilateral relations. One could ultimately claim that Japan, at its innermost, still considers itself as the leading actor in Northeast Asia. The ways in which the South Korean 'Other' has been constructed at least point to such a direction.

4 – Chapter 3: Security issues and South Korea discourse

4.1 – Introduction

This last chapter will be divided into two sections. The first will present a historical outline of the security issues which mostly affect Japan-ROK relations: The Dokdo/Takeshima territorial dispute, with a small comparative section presenting the Senkaku/Diayou territorial controversy which sees Japan and China as sovereignty contenders; the Comfort Women issue, which regards many Asian nations at large but only the ROK related affairs will be presented here; North Korea and its nuclear program, altogether with the issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by the DPRK. Sources used will be official documents and treaties, with the adding of relevant informations retrieved from widely attended newspapers and websites, both local and international. The historical part will possibly serve as a consistent background for the reading of the subsequent section, in which most of the debated questions will resonate with what has been previously written.

The second part will deal with the official foreign policy discourse in Japan-ROK relations, focussing on the 2009-2012 DPJ government. Main sources of analysis will be Prime Minister statements, official diplomacy documents and press conferences, ministerial statements and newspapers.

4.2 – The Dokdo/Takeshima territorial dispute

Territorial disputes in international relations are undoubtedly among the most painful issues that states have to address. The case of Dokdo/Takeshima, an almost uninhabited islet part of an archipelago whose seabed is presumably rich in natural resources¹³⁶, is no exception. To trace down origins of sovereignty, both historically and legally, is possibly of even greater difficulty¹³⁷. The whole controversy is deeply embedded in the historical memories and national identities of both states. As a matter of fact, it keeps resurfacing at every moment when negative differentiations of those state identities, which are articulated through policy-making and official discourse, become more evident. Temporary settlements and agreements are tools of compromise that can only shelve the problem, keeping it ready for the next time in which both states' interests will not converge¹³⁸. In analyzing the issue, both material (energy/strategy) and ideational (nationalism) factors will be taken into account, insofar as they both crucially contribute to the construction of Japanese security identity at large.

Some of the earliest records of alleged Korean control date back as far as the sixth century. As the Japanese name Takeshima would suggest, the island was mainly a source of bamboo logging, also providing fishing resources and arable land. During the years of the Tokugawa shogunate, limited cartographic abilities of governmental functionaries contributed to a general confusion in clearly locating the sites. In fact, it was not uncommon to refer to the same island using different names or just use one denomination interchangeably. For example, the neighbouring island of Ulleungdo

136Estimates about possible oil and gas resources are widely cited in the media, but hardly any strong evidence is provided. See for instance <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19207086>, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-korea-islands/japan-to-take-islands-dispute-with-korea-to-international-court-idUSBRE87A02820120811> or <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/symbolic-politics-dokdotakeshima-dispute>.

137Ch'oe (2015) contends that historical documents belonging to both Japan and Korea lack both geographical rigour and clarity of terminology. Van Dyke's (2007) point is instead that legal claims over contested territories have hardly any definitive implication on sovereignty, since laws and norms are eventually subject to interpretation.

138Emmers, Ralf. "Japan-Korea Relations and the Tokdo/Takeshima Dispute: the Interplay of Nationalism and Natural Resources", *RSIS Working Paper Series*, 212, 2012, pp. 6-8.

would be referred to as Takeshima by Japan until the late nineteenth century, while the isle which is nowadays identified as Dokdo by Koreans was referred to as Matsushima¹³⁹. Furthermore, French navigators coined the term Liancourt Rocks to identify the archipelago during a whaling expedition in the sea of Japan. This high degree of uncertainty paved the way for biased interpretations of international laws and treaties by each nation¹⁴⁰.

A major historical turning point has been the Japanese annexation of the island as *terra nullius* in 1905. The aims of Japanese government were pretty clear: apart from mere exploitation of resources, control over the island would have been of crucial strategic importance in the Russo-Japanese War as a location for naval bases¹⁴¹. The Japanese rule was then protracted until the end of World War II, when the Allied occupation of Japan effectively took over the local administration.

In the postwar period, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) staff worked to reestablish peace and order in East Asia by returning occupied territories. For what pertains Korea, the SCAPIN No. 677 memorandum of 1946 contained clear reference to Dokdo/Takeshima, mentioned there as Liancourt Rocks:

For the purpose of this directive, Japan is defined to include the four main islands of Japan (Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku) and the approximately 1,000 smaller adjacent islands, including the Tsushima Islands and the Ryukyu (Nansei) Islands north of 30° North Latitude (excluding Kuchinoshima Island); and excluding (a) Utsuryo (Ullung) Island, Liancourt Rocks (Take Island) and Quelpart (Saishu or Cheju) Island, (b) the Ryukyu (Nansei) Islands south of 30° North Latitude (including Kuchinoshima Island), the Izu, Nanpo, Bonin (Ogasawara) and Volcano (Kazan or Iwo) Island Groups, and all the other outlying Pacific Islands [including the Daito (Ohigashi or Oagari) Island Group, and Parece Vela (Okino-tori), Marcus (Minami-tori) and Ganges (Nakano-tori) Islands], and (c) the Kurile (Chishima) Islands, the Habomai (Hapomaze) Island Group (including Suisho, Yuri, Akiyuri, Shibotsu and Taraku Islands) and Shikotan Island.¹⁴²

139Ch'oe, Yong-ho. "Japan's 1905 Incorporation of Dokdo/Takeshima: A Historical Perspective", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 13:9:3, 2015, pp. 1-9.

140Ibidem, p. 14.

141Ib., p. 21.

142The Scapin 677 and several more documents related to the dispute can be found at the following link:

Article 6 of the document also states the following: "Nothing in this directive shall be construed as an indication of Allied policy relating to the ultimate determination of the minor islands referred to in Article 8 of the Potsdam Declaration."¹⁴³. The Potsdam declaration, issued in 1945, refers in turn to what has been decided in the Cairo Declaration of 1943 for what pertains to minor islands occupied by Japan:

[...] Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the first World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and The Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China. Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed. The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.¹⁴⁴

Generally vague statements are to be found especially in the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SFPT). Drafted in 1951 and effectively came into force on 28th of April 1952, it contained the ultimate provisions on how to settle territorial restitutions and compensations upon the dissolution of the Japanese Empire. Article 2 of the Treaty addresses Korean independence:

"Japan, recognizing the independence of Korea, renounces all right, title and claim to Korea, including the islands of Quelpart, Port Hamilton and Dagelet."¹⁴⁵

No direct reference to the fate of Dokdo/Takeshima island is pointed out. In that respect, it can be argued that given the high instability of the Korean peninsula in 1951,

<https://www.dokdo-takeshima.com/post-world-war-ii-dokdo.html>.

143Ibidem, art. 6.

144The text of both the Potsdam and the Cairo declarations can be found at

http://rbsearchives.library.ubc.ca/uploads/r/university-of-british-columbia-library-rare-books-and-special-collections/e/c/ecae1ed788d4c9e606fdf31329904e888a0583f89a38a9c5cc212614edae5799/9bed4ea1-519a-4a58-a5ed-f59a32d786c8-rbse_arc_1135_30_15_001.pdf.

145The text of the San Francisco Peace Treaty can be found at this link:

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20136/volume-136-i-1832-english.pdf>.

United States' security interests were the most likely reason behind such indistinctness. Dean Rusk, the hawkish US Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, expressed his views on Dokdo/Takeshima in his notorious 1951 "Rusk Papers". They were official diplomatic correspondence between him and the South Korean ambassador in the US Yang You Chan. In them, he expressed his support for Japanese claims over the island by asserting that '[...] As regards the island of Dokdo, otherwise known as Takeshima or Liancourt Rocks, this normally uninhabited rock formation was according to our information never treated as part of Korea and, since about 1905, has been under the jurisdiction of the Oki Islands Branch of Shimane Prefecture of Japan. The island does not appear ever before to have been claimed by Korea.'. A much clearer position of Washington's military motives is to be found in the October 1952 Despatch No. 659 issued by the American embassy in Tokyo and entitled "*Koreans on Liancourt Rocks*". In a confidential statement, political counselor John M. Steeves wrote the following lines in reference to a previous accidental US bombing of Korean fishing vessels:

The rocks standing as they do in the open waters of the Japan Sea between Korea and Japan have a certain utility to the United Nations aircraft returning from bombing runs in North Korean territory. They provide a radar point which will permit the dumping of unexpended bomb loads in an identifiable area. Therefore in the selection of maneuvering areas by the Joint Committee implementing Japan America security arrangements, it was agreed these rocks would be designated a facility by the Japanese Government and would serve the purposes mentioned above.¹⁴⁶.

As one can deduce from the despatch, the US Government was interested in siding with Japan on the basis of security reasons. The link between the SFPT provisions and the establishment of a Cold War frontier has also been pointed out by East-Asian historian Kimie Hara (2012). She suggests that in both the SFPT and the

146A link where to find the text of the Rusk Papers is the following one: <https://www.dokdo-takeshima.com/the-japan-peace-treaty-and-dokdo.html>.

Okinawa Reversion Treaty¹⁴⁷ territorial issues were perhaps left unresolved on purpose¹⁴⁸. As a matter of fact, the Dokdo/Takeshima island, as well as other disputed lands such as the Senkaku/Diaoyu archipelago, are located in an area delimited by the Acheson Line. Established by US Secretary of State Dean Acheson in 1950 as a defensive geopolitical boundary, it ranged from the Aleutian Islands to the Philippines¹⁴⁹, with the clear purpose of preventing the spread of communism in East Asia.

Japanese claims of Korea illegally occupying the island after World War II are based on the establishment of the so called Rhee Line in 1952, most likely based on the findings of the Report of Van Fleet Mission of 1954¹⁵⁰. Syngman Rhee was the first president of the newly born Republic of Korea from July 1948 until May 1960. His main objectives were the independence of Korea and the eradication of the communist threat. One of his most important steps towards national independence was the proclamation of maritime sovereignty line around the Korean Peninsula, which included the territory of Dokdo/Takeshima. As a matter of fact, any boat trespassing the boundary line would have been seized by the Korean Navy. It could hardly be denied that those most affected by these security measures were Japanese fishermen. Furthermore, the absence of even basic bilateral relations between the two states rendered the issue effectively unsolvable. In 1965, the Agreement Between Japan and the Republic of Korea Concerning Fisheries¹⁵¹ was signed to facilitate mutual cooperation in an area of contested waters. The fishing agreement repealed the Rhee line and its provisions, but was just a tool for shelving a momentarily minor issue in favour of economic and diplomatic progress.

147The text of the Okinawa reversion treaty can be accessed here: <http://ryukyu-okinawa.net/pages/archive/rev71.html>.

148Hara, Kimie. "The San Francisco Peace Treaty and Frontier Problems in the Regional Order of East Asia: A Sixty Year Perspective", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 10:17:1, 2012, pp. 3-4.

149Ibidem, p. 4.

150For the perspective on how the Rhee line is considered by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, consult the following MOFA webpage: https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/takeshima/page1we_000064.html.

151The agreement is cited in Bukh, Alexander. "Shimane Prefecture, Tokyo and the territorial dispute over Dokdo/Takeshima: regional and national identities in Japan", *The Pacific Review*, 28:1, p. 53.

4.2.1 – A case in comparison: The Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute

The Senkaku/Diaoyu controversy between Japan and China has been characterized by diplomatic developments akin to the Dokdo/Takeshima issue. Even in this case, both material and ideational forces have driven the conflict over the course of history. But what seems to equate the two disputes, is their function as thermometer of security disequilibria between Japan and its Chinese and Korean rivals.

China argues that already in the 14th century the Ryukyu sovereign was paying tributes to the Ming dynasty, which had some delegates sent to the islands as a response. At the end of the 19th century, the Empress Cixi issued a decree stating that the Diaoyu islands were being donated to a Chinese court alchemist for having harvested plants and herbs in the archipelago¹⁵². Although, Beijing's historical claims of sovereignty are more a pretense of dominion rather than effective juridical evidence. On the other hand, Tokyo's assertions stand on the provisions of the Treaty of Shimonoseki¹⁵³. As the official document marking the end of the Sino-Japanese War, it left free interpretation to the Japanese officials regarding which territories annexed after the conflict were originally Chinese possessions. Under China's view, the archipelago had to be considered part of the island of Formosa, while Japan sees the sovereignty over the Senkaku to be valid under international law in terms of occupation of *terrae nullius*¹⁵⁴.

The dispute started to polarize the interest of China and Taiwan after a study conducted in 1968 by the then United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. The US pushed for a fishing agreement and the normalization of relations between Tokyo and Taipei would soon have followed¹⁵⁵. In mainland China, interests in the exploitation of resources were looming large already, and Beijing's have to be found through late 1971 and early 1972. The PRC asserted its sovereignty rights based on historical reasons and defined the Okinawa Reversion Treaty as nothing more than an

152Bastianelli, Rodolfo. "Diaoyu/Senkaku, storia delle isole contese tra Cina e Giappone", Limesonline, 10 January 2013, p. 2 <http://www.limesonline.com/isole-senkaku-scenari-attuali-di-una-disputa-antica-tra-cina-e-giappone/41312>.

153The text of the Shimonoseki Treaty can be found here: <https://china.usc.edu/treaty-shimonoseki-1895>.

154See the claims of Japan at the related Q&A section of the MOFA website: https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/qa_1010.html.

155The fact is reported in Eldridge, Robert. *The Origin of U.S. Policy in the East China Sea Island Dispute*. Oxon, Routledge, 2014, p. 225.

instrument with which deprive China of seabed resources¹⁵⁶. Despite some attempts to legally contest Japanese rights in the exploitation of territorial waters, China eventually decided to pursue full diplomatic relations with Tokyo, dropping its previously assertive tones. Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai decided to downplay the controversy by claiming that it arose only after the oil discovery, and that the matter should not have been hampering the relationship between two major actors in East Asia¹⁵⁷. Such an immediate turn of events seems striking at a first glance, but given China's *Realpolitik* attitude it can be justified by grounding the change on the region's balance of power. In fact, Beijing's move was driven by the ever-growing Soviet threat. In 1969, the island of Zhenbao Dao became the stage of a violent conflict between China and USSR over the Sino-Soviet border dispute, fostering an already existing political divergence of the two communist regimes¹⁵⁸.

The process of normalization culminated with the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, signed on the 12th of August 1978. Although, during the process of negotiating peace, the Fishing Boat Incident could have seriously jeopardized the delicate building-up of the Sino-Japanese cooperation. In April 1978, a group of armed fishing boats appeared in the waters surrounding the Senkaku/Diaoyu, carrying big banners with written claims of sovereignty over the islands. The Chinese government stated that the incident was expected but not intentional, while Tokyo could not be satisfied by such an excuse in times of fragile diplomacy. Upon further Japanese protests, China retreated all the vessels from the waters around the archipelago and claimed it would have dealt with the problem domestically¹⁵⁹. Notwithstanding some doubts about Chinese ambiguity from the side of Japan, the negotiations went on smoothly until the final agreement reached in the aforementioned peace treaty.

In order to accomplish full rehabilitation of Japan-China relations and put aside the harmful dispute about the Senkaku/Diaoyu, both the contestants agreed on a compromise known as the Shelving Formula, a tacit agreement by which Japan

156Hyer, Eric. *The Pragmatic Dragon: China's Grand Strategy and Boundary Settlements*. Vancouver, UBC Press, 2015, p. 183.

157Ibidem, p. 185.

158For a comprehensive account of the Sino-Soviet conflict, see Kuisong, Yang. "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969: From Zhenbao Island to Sino-American *Rapprochement*", *Cold War History*, 1:1, 2000, pp. 21-52.

159Hyer, p. 184.

committed not to build any permanent building or installation on the islands, while China undertook not to send any naval patrol in the maritime area surrounding the islets¹⁶⁰. Despite some decades of relative peace and good relationships, flare-ups eventually arose as the security scenario in Northeast-Asia evolved towards stagnant instability.

4.3 – Comfort Women

The locution 'Comfort Women' is an heterogeneous one. The term itself, which is a translation of the Japanese *jugun ianfu*, is an euphemism generally indicating all the girls and women who were part of a controlled system of prostitution under the Japanese colonial rule. Either because forced by poverty or possibly directly abducted by members of the military, they provided sexual services to soldiers and officers of the Japanese Army. Given the scope of the Japanese rule during the second World War, the institutionalization of the Comfort Women system covered several colonized states, ranging from the Korean Peninsula until South-East Asia¹⁶¹. Also, the numbers of how many have been effectively lured into comfort stations vary significantly according to the sources. For example, the Japanese historian Ikuhiko Hata (1999) calculated that approximately 20.000 women served as licensed prostitutes¹⁶², whereas a Chinese study cited in Rose (2004) summed up to a total of 410.000¹⁶³. Digits aside, what is mostly object of debate at the present day is whether Japan did enough efforts to recognize his wartime crimes and apologize to victims. In this section, I will proceed by tracking down in time the steps that Japan took in order to address the issue of Comfort Women, and given the focus of my study, I will limit my research to South Korea. My account will be very short and introductory, as it will serve as a support to the analysis of

160Liao, Tim et al. *The China-Japan Border Dispute: Islands of Contention in Multidisciplinary Perspective*. Farnham, Ashgate Publishing, 2015, p. 20.

161An exhaustive account focusing on the historical background, direct testimonies and moral responsibilities, is provided in the United Nations Human Rights Council Report of the 4th of January 1996, written by human rights advocate and lawyer Radhika Coomaraswamy. The link to the official document is the following: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/commission/country52/53-add1.htm>.

162Hata's study and methods of calculation are reported in <http://www.awf.or.jp/pdf/0170.pdf>, pp. 10-11.

163Rose, Caroline. *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the Past, Looking to the Future?*. London, Routledge, 2004, p. 88.

Japanese security identity in general.

After the signing of the 1965 treaty of normalization of relations with Korea, Japan established the basic provisions for compensation in terms of economic aid. Tokyo settled direct reparations by providing around 300 million dollars in goods and services and at least 200 millions in loans over the following ten years. In exchange, the ROK would have waived any right to ask for further reparations¹⁶⁴. Following these provisions, any matter dealing with material restitutions and compensation would have been settled forever. At least, the problem has effectively been sidestepped for several decades due to pragmatic reasons. In fact, economic development and cooperation were prioritized by the ROK government until the early nineties, when the establishment of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan (KCWS) helped spreading awareness on the issue both domestically and worldwide¹⁶⁵. The first important direct testimony is most likely the one of Kim Hak-sun, human rights activist and war survivor. During a public news conference in Seoul in the August of 1991, she openly declared of having served as a sexual slave for the Imperial Japanese Army at the time of the colonial rule¹⁶⁶. Her powerful assertions on how the Japanese government tried to deny the existence of Comfort Women shook all the world. It was then clear that such an unresolved emotional conflict had to be unearthed, for past responsibilities could not have been ignored anymore. Japanese historian Yoshimi Yoshiaki (1992) searched for various documents in the Self Defence Ministry archives, and proved the involvement of the Japanese government in the maintenance of comfort stations for Japanese soldiers on duty¹⁶⁷. After the discovery, the KCWS submitted a petition to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to investigate on the Comfort Women issue and urge the Japanese government to pay reparations to victims, a request which had eventually been included in the UNHRC official agenda¹⁶⁸.

On the Japanese side, official excuses were first stated in 1993 by the Chief

164Ishikida, Miki. *Toward Peace: War Responsibility, Postwar Compensation, and Peace Movements and Education in Japan*. Bloomington, iUniverse, 2005, p. 21.

165Jonsson, Gabriel. "Can the Japan-Korea Dispute on "Comfort Women" be Resolved?", *Korea Observer*, 46:3, 2015, p. 22.

166"Comfort women': living, harrowing mark of history", *The Korea Herald*, 17 August 2014, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20140817000197>.

167"In Japan, a Historian Stands by Proof of Wartime Sex Slavery", *The New York Times*, 31 March 2007, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/31/world/asia/31yoshimi.html>.

168The fact is reported in Jonsson, p. 10.

Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono. Referring to Yoshimi's research, he claimed that Japan would have paid full attention to the matter and made efforts to face the past squarely:

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. [...] 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.¹⁶⁹

However, it is only in 1995 that the Japanese government offered an unprecedented set of apologies, altogether with a critical view on nationalism. The then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, member of the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP), delivered a historically significant speech on the 50th anniversary of the of World War II. By grasping the ideal of postwar pacifism in Japan, he stressed the importance of learning from the lessons of history:

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. Building from our deep remorse on this occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, Japan must eliminate self-righteous nationalism,

¹⁶⁹<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html>.

promote international coordination as a responsible member of the international community and, thereby, advance the principles of peace and democracy.¹⁷⁰

The basic tenets expressed in the Murayama Statement were mirroring the Asian Women's Fund project. Officially established in 1995 under Maruyama's auspices and operative until 2007, it was aimed at providing atonement money to victims of sexual enslavement for welfare and medical expenses, as well as serving as an historical lesson for future generations¹⁷¹. However, the fund faced lambasting criticism from KCWS and the Korean media, as they claimed the Fund was just a disguising façade for the Japanese government to avoid its legal responsibilities¹⁷². One possible cause for such radical claims has to be found in the private nature of the fundings. The reason why the fund was privately financed has to be found at the domestic level. As argued by Kumagai (2015), the Ruling Parties' Project to Deal with Issues Fifty Years After the War, a joint project between members of the ruling Socialist Party and the LDP, had a hard time finding a common ground on which to implement plans of compensation¹⁷³. The strong nationalist sentiment of the hardline conservatives pushed for the absence of any direct involvement of the government in the fund. Hence, the ruling coalition had to compromise by limiting the government contribution to organisational expenses, while the whole of the atonement money would have come from private donations. In addition, what discredited Japan's genuinity even more was the rise of a revisionist discourse during the nineties. Nagano Shigeto, Minister of Justice under Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro, and former general of the Japanese Imperial Army, claimed in 1994 that the Rape of Nanjing¹⁷⁴ perpetrated in 1937 by Japanese soldiers was mere fabrication, and that Japan's war against China was not an aggressive one¹⁷⁵. Even more

170 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>.

171 The formation of the project and its objectives can be found at the following website: <http://www.awf.or.jp/e2/foundation.html>.

172 Jonsson, p. 13.

173 Kumagai, Naoko. "Ontological Security and Japan's Ideological Debate over Compensating Wartime 'Comfort Women'", *Social Science Japan Journal*, 18:2, 2015, p. 150.

174 The term Rape of Nanjing usually refers to a series of crimes against humanity that the Japanese Imperial Army perpetrated on the Chinese population during the second Sino-Japanese War. Apart from the mass-murder character of the events, one should avoid conceiving genocidal rape as just a by-product of wartime violence, but as a case of gender violence. In that respect, see Jones, Adam. *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*. London, Routledge, 2006, pp. 329-331.

175 "Japan's Hata Reprimands Justice Chief", *Washington Post*, 5 May 1994,

notably, the 1995 Director General of the Management and Cooperation Agency Takami Eto, went as far as saying that Japan did good things during its colonial rule on the Korean Peninsula¹⁷⁶.

No surprise then that an anti-Fund block would eventually arise among activists and media, both in Korea and in Japan. The absence of a productive dialogue between Japanese nationalists and anti-Fund liberals led to an ideological antagonization of both parts, fostering additional unrest¹⁷⁷. Further criticism also emerged after seven victims accepted payment sums in secrecy in 1997, with the money sent via a ghost company under the name of Asia Dialog. Since most victims had requested direct compensation from the Japanese state, those who accepted the money had been blamed of selling their dignity to the aggressor, even if they were actually suffering financial hardships¹⁷⁸.

The fund eventually wrapped up in 2007 after payments to recognized living victims were completed. In numbers, the Asian Women Fund arranged atonement money for a total of 364 comfort women, with private and public economic aid summing up to about 1.7 billion yens¹⁷⁹.

Notwithstanding the Fund's activity, the Comfort Women issue was all but settled. Apparently, the various Japanese governments that followed the dissolution of the AWF never managed to offer the image of a state shouldering full responsibilities for its war crimes. Already in 2007, the then Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe (LDP) asserted that the women that served as sexual slaves for the Japanese Army were not actually coerced into it, justifying his claim by saying that there is no concrete evidence to prove otherwise¹⁸⁰. Also, initiatives and symbolic gestures continuously reinstate the importance of the issue in current Japan-ROK relations. In December 2011, at a Comfort Women rally in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul, participants unveiled a statue of a young girl dressed in traditional garments, requesting further apologies from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1994/05/05/japans-hata-reprimands-justice-chief/0a2be858-12e1-4777-b73e-79ec08a4d347/?utm_term=.5be3630fa343.

176 "Japanese massacre claim infuriates China", *The Guardian*, 14 July 2003,

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/jul/14/japan>.

177 Kumagai, pp. 146-147.

178 The episode of the secret payment is reported in Jonsson, pp. 14-15.

179 The approximate calculations are based on the data provided in the AWF website:

<http://awf.or.jp/e3/dissolution.html>.

180 "Japanese PM denies wartime 'comfort women' were forced", *The Telegraph*, 3 March 2007, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1544471/Japanese-PM-denies-wartime-comfort-women-were-forced.html>.

Tokyo¹⁸¹. Another statue commemorating the comfort women, called 'Women's Column of Strength', has been installed in San Francisco in September 2017, with the event causing the ire of Osaka mayor Hirofumi Yoshimura¹⁸². At the actual state and without a complete admission of responsibilities, the Comfort Women issue seems to be a problem far from its solution¹⁸³.

4.4 – North Korea

Ultimately, one cannot have an all-encompassing view of Japanese security issues without taking into account the role of North Korea, and the way fluctuations in bilateral relations in turn influence Japan-ROK and Japan-US ties. In this section, a brief historical account of the major problems in Japan-North Korea relations will be outlined. The main issues of concern between Japan and North Korea are two: first and foremost DPRK's nuclear program, which also poses a serious threat at the regional level in Northeast Asia, and the abductions of Japanese citizens that took place during the 1970s, which were officially admitted by Pyongyang only in 2002.

The Korean peninsula has been the object of interest of many foreign actors since the late nineteenth century. The first Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) was fundamentally fought for exercising influence over Korea¹⁸⁴. The Treaty of Shimonoseki

181 "Korea 'comfort women' put up statue at landmark rally", *BBC News*, 14 December 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16185314>.

182 Since both Osaka and San Francisco were 'sister cities', the Osaka mayor decided to cut ties with its US counterpart since he considered the gesture as a break in trust. See "Osaka drops San Francisco as sister city over 'comfort women' statue", *The Guardian*, 4 October 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/04/osaka-drops-san-francisco-as-sister-city-over-comfort-women-statue>. The installation of the statue was financially backed by a privately organized movement called Comfort Women Justice Coalition. For more information, see their website: <http://remembercomfortwomen.org/>.

183 For what pertains discourse and identity, it is interesting to note how the Japan Times has recently retracted 'misleading terms' when addressing Comfort Women. Specifically, the editors of the newspaper, which is the oldest English-language one in Japan, wished to swap the phrasing 'women forced to provide sex for Japanese troops' with the more ambiguous 'women who worked in wartime brothels'. See the Guardian article "'Comfort women': anger as Japan paper alters description of WWII terms", *The Guardian*, 30 November 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/30/japanese-paper-sparks-anger-as-it-ditches-ww2-forced-labour-term>.

184 Kim, Samuel. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 2.

declared Korea as an entity independent from Chinese control, but the fate of the peninsula was bound to no autonomy. By achieving victory in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905, Japan managed to impress the Western powers and to gain 'paramount political, military and economical'¹⁸⁵ interests over Korea. Japan's invasion of Korea led to its annexation in 1910, and the peninsula would have experienced Japanese colonial rule for the subsequent 35 years. After the defeat in the Second World War Japan had to renounce every sovereignty right over Korea, which in turn would have been split in two territories by the US army colonels Charles Bonesteel and Dean Rusk. During a foreign affairs ministers conference in Moscow in the December of 1945, it was decided that the whole peninsula would have achieved independence after a transitional phase of 5 years, regulated by both the US and the Soviet Union¹⁸⁶. Nonetheless, the gradually increasing fracture between Washington and Moscow prefigured a complicated time for the two Koreas. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was officially formed as a state on 9 September 1948, countering the proclamation of the ROK government as the sole legitimate political authority on the Korean peninsula¹⁸⁷. Tension arising from both governments about the control of the peninsula led to an inevitable conflict, which sparked with DPRK (backed by the Soviets and Mao's China) fighting the ROK (supported by the US) in the Battle of Ongjin on the 25 of June 1950¹⁸⁸. The Korean War protracted until the armistice of July 27 1953.

Having shared Japanese colonial rule with the South, sentiments against Japan in the DPRK were basically inevitable, also given the former's closeness to the US and the *de facto* outpost role for the war of containment. A relatively good climate of *détente* characterized Northeast Asia during the early seventies¹⁸⁹, but tension started to rise seriously during the 1980s. On October 9 1983, an assassination attempt against ROK president Chun Doo-hwan and his cabinet by North Korean agents occurred in Rangoon, Burma. Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Shintaro Abe invited the

185See article 2 of The Portsmouth Peace Treaty, accessible via the following link:

<http://www.portsmouthpeacetreaty.com/process/peace/TreatyText.pdf>.

186Fiori, Antonio. *L'Asia Orientale. Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010, p. 58. The part of the book dedicated to the Korean war is found at the pp. 60-70.

187Ibidem, p. 60.

188Ib., p. 64.

189See for example the rapprochement of US and China through 1971 and the normalization of Japan-China relations in 1972.

countries involved to a calm reaction, while severely condemning DPRK's government¹⁹⁰. In the December of the same year, the crew of a Japanese cargo ship, the *Fujisan-maru*, had been captured after a North Korean defector fled to Japan as a stowaway during one of the ship's stops in the port of Shimonoseki¹⁹¹. In early 1988, Japan imposed sanctions on North Korea after the sabotage of a South Korean jet that caused the death of 115 people¹⁹².

The 1990s started optimistically, with the official visit to Pyongyang of a delegation of 40 members of the Japanese Diet, both from the ruling LDP and the SDPJ opposition. The result of the talks was the issuance of a Three-Party Joint Declaration, in which the Japanese part promised to apologize for the colonial rule, to offer war compensation, and to pursue the normalization of relations. On the DPRK side, the President Kim Il-sung would have released the imprisoned crew of the the *Fujisan-maru*¹⁹³. Moreover, the 1991 admission of both Koreas to the United Nations renewed hope for a progress in peaceful relations¹⁹⁴. However, a series of incidents throughout the decade turned Japan-DPRK diplomacy sour. The 1991-1992 normalization talks rounds met with failure, since the parts involved could not agree over the questions of wartime compensations and the release of informations about Japanese nationals who migrated to the DPRK in the 1960s¹⁹⁵. A May 1992 inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency found North Korea's safeguard agreements regarding the use of two nuclear research facilities as suspicious¹⁹⁶. When asked for more in-depth inspections, Pyongyang refused to allow visits to its nuclear facilities and threatened to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Moreover, the 29 and 30 of May 1993 the DPRK successfully launched four missiles towards the direction of the

190"Burma says agents of North Korea set blast that kiled 21", *The New York Times*, 5 November 1983. <https://www.nytimes.com/1983/11/05/world/burma-says-agents-of-north-korea-set-blast-that-killed-21.html>.

191"North Korea holding ship and four men", *Upi*, 15 December 1983.

<https://www.upi.com/Archives/1983/12/15/North-Korea-holding-ship-and-four-men/5707440312400/>.

192"Japan to Remove Sanctions against North Korea", *The New York Times*, 13 September 1988.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1988/09/13/world/japan-to-remove-sanctions-against-north-korea.html>.

193Hagström, Linus and Soderberg, Marie. "Taking Japan-North Korea Relations Seriously: Rationale and Background", *Pacific Affairs*, 79:3, 2006, p. 377.

194See the United Nations Security Council Resolution 702: <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/702>.

195Hagström and Soderberg, p. 378.

196On the IAEA inspection, see the following link: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/focus/dprk/fact-sheet-on-dprk-nuclear-safeguards>.

Japanese Noto peninsula, with the weapons eventually sinking into the Sea of Japan¹⁹⁷.

On March 9 of 1995, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was formed, with Japan being one of the founding members. The main task of KEDO was to encourage the dismantling of North Korea's nuclear programme by supplying alternative sources of energy, and promoting environmental protection and nuclear safety policies¹⁹⁸. The organization was born on the base of an agreement between the US and North Korea, under which the DPRK would have frozen its current nuclear program and exchanged graphite-moderated reactors for light-water reactors. Nonetheless, Tokyo withdrew its financial support via KEDO after Pyongyang successfully launched a Taedepong-1 missile over Japanese airspace without permission in 1998¹⁹⁹.

An unprecedented turn of events occurred in September 2002, during a meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro and DPRK President Kim Il-sung. The matter of foremost importance for Japan was the release of the Japanese citizens abducted during the 1970s and 1980s. For the first time in diplomatic history, Kim admitted that the North Korean regime kidnapped 12 people, and offered apologies promising that there will not be recurrences in the future²⁰⁰. On the other hand, Koizumi expressed his apologies for wartime violence, and that further efforts would have been made towards the normalization of relations²⁰¹.

Upon Koizumi's visit, five abductees were allowed to visit Japan, but at the time they were supposed to return to North Korea the Japanese administration refused and urged for the return of the abductees' relatives²⁰². Needless to say, relations between the two countries were back to *ground zero*. In addition, the DPRK returned the supposed remainings of a dead abductee, Yokota Megumi, in November 2004. Forensic analysis conducted soon afterwards by Japan determined that the body was not hers, sparking the

197The following webpage offers a most detailed chronology on DPRK's trade and development of missiles during 1992-1993: <https://www.nonproliferation.org/chronology-of-north-koreas-missile-trade-and-developments-1992-1993/>.

198About the KEDO program, see their website: http://www.kedo.org/au_history.asp.

199"North Korea fires missile over Japan", *The Guardian*, 1 September 1998.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/1998/sep/01/northkorea>.

200About Koizumi's visit to Pyongyang, see the following link: https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/index.html.

201For the outcome of the talks, see the text of the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/pyongyang.html.

202Hagström and Soderberg, p. 383.

fury of the Japanese government and public opinion²⁰³.

In order to mitigate the security climate and reach peaceful cooperation with the DPRK, the six-party talks were created in 2003. Participants to the talks were North Korea, South Korea, Japan, the United States, China and Russia. Rounds were hosted in Beijing, and multilateral dialogue found continuity up until 2008. Failure in establishing further talks was caused by North Korea's withdrawal in April 2009, after the United Nations Security Council found a DPRK alleged satellite test in violation with the Resolution 1718²⁰⁴. In most recent times, attempts at resuming the talks have been made by China in 2017, but little progress towards it has been detectable.

203"Japan protests N. Korean lie about abductee", *NBC News*, 8 December 2004, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6679111/ns/world_news/t/japan-protests-n-korean-lie-about-abductee/.

204The following link offers a detailed chronology of the six-party talks and relative incidents: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/6partytalks>.

4.5 – South Korea discourse in Japanese foreign policy 2005-2008

Official foreign policy discourse during the years preceding the 2009-2012 DPJ led administration should be presented first. As a starting point of the Japan-Korea relations analysis, the resurgence of the Takeshima territorial dispute will be first considered. Given the previous introduction on diplomatic history, the issue will be analyzed starting from recent times, since the territorial dispute, even if apparently dormant, has always been lingering in the wings of Japanese foreign policy²⁰⁵. Hence, this account will start by focusing on one episode that brought back public attention to the controversy, i.e. the ordinance of the Takeshima Day by the Shimane Prefectural Office in 2005. The event marked the hundredth anniversary of the annexation of the islet as part of Korea to the Japanese territory. The two main interpretations on why the Prefectural Office made such a bold move are divergent. Hosaka and Togo (2012) argue that it was a retaliatory move to protest the provisions of the new 1998 fishing agreement between the Republic of Korea and Japan²⁰⁶. However, Alexander Bukh (2015) claims that the ordinance was an attempt to reinforce Shimane Prefecture's 'regional' identity vis-à-vis Tokyo and the central government²⁰⁷. His analysis of Shimane governmental papers and interviews with local fishermen shows how the fishing agreement did little to no harm to the Shimane fishing industry. He finds that the prefecture perceived the territorial dispute and the fishing agreement as two separated issues, and that the Prefectural Office possibly instrumentalized the alleged material

205Official claims of illegal occupation by Koreans can be found already in the first, 1987 issue of the *gaikō seisho*, the Japanese official Diplomatic Bluebook. It can be found at this link:

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/1987/s62-30101.htm>.

206The agreement was mainly aimed at solving fishing zone boundaries problems related to the contended islet. For a brief account, see "Japan, South Korea reach fishing accord", *The Japan Times*, 25 September 1998, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/1998/09/25/national/japan-south-korea-reach-fishing-accord/#.XD34J_ZFxPY.

207Bukh's main point is that Shimane Prefecture felt 'victimized' and 'unnoticed' by the central government regarding its territorial claims over Takeshima, while the dispute over the Northern Territories (as part of Hokkaido) was prioritized by Tokyo.

losses derived from the agreement to reinforce its Takeshima Day campaign²⁰⁸.

Soon after the approval of the Takeshima Day ordinance, official responses were relatively cold. Prime Minister Koizumi's comment was almost neutral, as he just claimed that "there are two different points of view over the Takeshima issue"²⁰⁹. The Minister of foreign affairs, Nobutaka Machimura, went as far as observing that there was no need to enact such an ordinance, and deemed the act as only an emotional fit of Shimane Prefecture inhabitants²¹⁰. In an official statement in response to the Republic of Korea National Security Council's reaction to Takeshima Day, Minister Machimura addressed the territorial issue as follows:

Although there has been a difference in stance between our two countries on the issue of Takeshima Island, to invite emotional confrontation between us is not beneficial for either country, and the Government of Japan considers that it is necessary to respond to the situation from a broader perspective in view of Japan-ROK relations as a whole, including the issue of fishery, while being aware of the stances of both countries which are already known.²¹¹

On the 26th of April 2005, the South Korean government decided to enforce a law on the ecological sustainability regarding the use of Takeshima and its territorial waters. One clause contained in the law reads that the Korean state had legal jurisdiction and territorial rights over the island²¹². The reply of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was immediate. The very next day, the foreign affairs press secretary expressed his 'deep sense of regret' for the mutually incompatible views, strongly requesting that Seoul does not let happen again such activities that 'stir up the sentiments of both populations'²¹³. To an extent, Tokyo's determined yet relatively mild reaction was all but nationalistic.

208Bukh, Alexander. "Shimane Prefecture, Tokyo and the territorial dispute over Dokdo/Takeshima: regional and national identities in Japan", *The Pacific Review*, 28:1, pp. 57-59.

209See 濱口、和久。「竹島の日」に不誠実だった日本の政治」、ネットアイビーニュース、2013年2月27日、https://www.data-max.co.jp/2013/02/27/post_16449_hmg_1.html.

210Ibidem.

211The statement can be found in English at <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2005/3/0318-7.html>.

212For more details, see the following publication of the Japanese National Diet Library on foreign legislation: <http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/diet/publication/legis/pdf/02500215.pdf>.

213https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/danwa/17/dga_0427.html.

On the other hand, the Korean population felt much animosity over the institution of Takeshima Day. Fiery protests in front of Seoul's Japanese Embassy included a mother and a son cutting off a finger in sign of dissent, while another man, son of a coerced Korean soldier of the Japanese Imperial Army, set himself on fire²¹⁴.

The following year, the Korean and the Japanese government planned to set a demarcation line for each other's Exclusive Economic Zone in the area surrounding the islet. Needless to say, constant tensions rendered negotiations unfruitful and opened up the space for further discord. Upon knowing that ROK had planned to conduct a unilateral scientific survey in the contended EEZ around Takeshima, on July 4th Press Secretary of MOFA Chiba Akira stated that:

Scientific sea surveys must be conducted in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the present decision by the Government of the ROK is regrettable even in light of the past process of Japan-ROK negotiations. For the ROK to conduct a survey without the consent of Japan within the Takeshima sea zone area, which belongs to Japan, is also incompatible with the claim of the Government of Japan concerning its sovereignty over Takeshima. The Government of Japan cannot condone these acts by the ROK side and again urges the Government of the ROK to either halt or postpone the current survey.²¹⁵

Later in the press conference he stressed how important Japan-ROK bilateral relations are in that both states share 'basic values and broad benefits'²¹⁶, advocating efforts for a future-oriented and cooperative framework from the side of Seoul. Nonetheless, the sea survey had eventually been carried out by Korea, and in response Japan claimed that would have conducted their own marine research at the most appropriate time²¹⁷. Although, the controversy seemed to have been downplayed in the subsequent months, as an additional sixth round for EEZ talks was planned in Seoul for September. Furthermore, PM Abe Shinzo went on an official visit to Seoul in

214 Both facts are reported in "Dispute Over Islets Frays Ties Between Tokyo and Seoul", *The New York Times*, 22 March 2005 <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/22/world/asia/dispute-over-islets-frays-ties-between-tokyo-and-seoul.html>.

215 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/2006/7/0704.html>.

216 *Ibidem*.

217 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2006/7/0705-4.html>.

October to discuss common security issues in relation to North Korea, such as the abduction of Japanese citizens and the development of Pyongyang's nuclear program²¹⁸.

As 2006 came to a close, the following year was characterized by steadfast efforts in promoting cooperation and cultural exchange in East Asia²¹⁹. A joint press statement from the tripartite Japan-China-ROK summit meeting, drafted on January 14th, expressed the shared view that "as important countries in Asia, China, Japan and ROK shoulder great responsibilities in maintaining peace, stability and prosperity in Asia"²²⁰. The Chinese proposal of designating 2007 as the Year of Cultural Exchange among the three nations had resulted into several initiatives, among which the hosting of the 9th edition of the Asian Arts Festival, focused on the culture of the three countries and the starting of a Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youth (JENESYS). This exchange programme was created in order to "deepen mutual understanding among young people who will assume important roles in the next generation in each East Asian country, establish a basis for Asia's stalwart solidarity, and promote friendly feelings toward Japan in each country"²²¹.

This image of an LDP-led Japan striving to cooperate with its neighbours shall nonetheless not surprise us. Already in the 1990s, the establishment of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) forum in December 1997 made Japan, China and the ROK join the member states of the original ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). The objective of the forum was to strengthen cooperation, especially in terms of financial stability. In fact, against the backdrop of the Asian Financial Crisis, which started during the July of 1997, the APT Summit of december 1998 launched the East Asia Vision Group in order to overcome the economic turmoil. It was also an opportunity for several Asian nations to work together and foster a sense of belonging to an 'East Asian Community'²²². In 2002, Japan and other major Asian countries, including China and

218http://japan.kantei.go.jp/abepphoto/2006/10/09korea_e.html.

219A rise in tensions had surely been caused by the DPRK's nuclear test on October 2006. Even Pyongyang's closest ally, i.e. Beijing, condemned the testing, claiming it defied the opposition of the international community. See the Q&A by Glaser, Bonnie. "China's Reaction to North Korea's Nuclear Test", *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 6 January 2016, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/chinas-reaction-north-koreas-nuclear-test>.

220The joint press statement can be found at the following link: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0701/joint070114.pdf>.

221https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2007/5/1173651_826.html.

222On the ASEAN Plus Three, consider the ASEAN Secretariat Information Paper available at this link: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Overview-of-APT-Cooperation-Jul-2018.pdf>.

South Korea, was the original creator of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), an intergovernmental organization with the purpose of strengthening partnership among Asian nations. The scope of the organization is continent-wide, as it attempts to incorporate the interests of the several regional organizations, ranging from the Middle-East to Japan²²³. On the occasion of the third official meeting of the ACD in Beijing, a special trilateral committee formed by China, South Korea and Japan was formed in order to "study, plan, coordinate and monitor cooperation among the three countries, and to submit progress reports to the annual Trilateral Summit meeting"²²⁴.

Moreover, Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) has been a powerful diplomatic instrument for the MOFA. Aiming at helping developing nations by offering economic and technical cooperation, the use of the ODA allowed Tokyo to strengthen its international credibility²²⁵. One must not forget that also South Korea and China have been recipients of Japan's Official Development Assistance²²⁶.

Nevertheless, diplomatic ties were again put to test during 2008. The Japanese Ministry of Education announced the implementation of new junior-high school textbooks guidelines in mid July, which contained references to a set of islets in Shimane Prefecture, including Takeshima, as territories belonging to Japan. In all response, Seoul withdrew its Tokyo ambassador for three weeks, and public protests reached a new level of brutality when people started to decapitate pheasants, Japan's national bird, in front of Seoul's Japanese embassy²²⁷. Documents or statements dating to that period don't suggest any official stance over the textbook controversy, while the *Asahi Shimbun* has criticized the umpteenth diplomatic slip as something from which none of the two parts involved can really gain something²²⁸. In the timespan leading up

223 <http://www.acd-dialogue.org/about-acd.html>.

224 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/asean/acd/joint0406.html>.

225 For a detailed account on how ODA reflects Japan's twofold interest of belonging to the 'international community' while serving 'national interest', see Zappa, Marco. "Help the Poor, Help Ourselves: Merging Individual and Collective Interests in the Official Discourse on Japanese ODA since 2000", *Annali di Ca' Foscari. Serie Orientale*, Vol. 54, 2018, pp. 407-432.

226 <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/cooperation/anniv50/pamphlet/accomplishment2.html>.

227 See "Desolate Dots in the Sea Stir Deep Emotions as South Korea Resists a Japanese Claim", *The New York Times*, 30 August 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/31/world/asia/31islands.html>, and "S. Korea to spurn Japan minister over island row", *Reuters*, 17 July 2008, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-korea-japan-islands/s-korea-to-spurn-japan-minister-over-island-row-idUKT22947320080717>.

228 若宮、啓文。「竹島と教科書 笑っているのは誰か」、朝日新聞、2008年07月21日。

to the establishment of the new government, no notable incidents between Korea and Japan around Takeshima arose, and diplomacy between the two countries went relatively smooth.

So far, an outline of how the resurgence of the Takeshima dispute in the years immediately preceding the establishment of the DPJ government has been provided. We have seen how, especially after the Takeshima Day ordinance took effect, the LDP administration has been very cautious in taking strong positions regarding the territorial dispute, something that South Korea has instead taken with extreme seriousness. In that respect, it can be said that the image of Japan as an unapologetic, former colonial ruler was still vivid in Korean collective memory, and the fiery resurgence of the Comfort Women issue as a central topic of debate under the DPJ Cabinets reinforce this thesis. Whereas, the Japanese regarded South Koreans as ungrateful after all the efforts in compensations. In the next section, an account of Japanese official foreign policy discourse during the Hatoyama, Kan and Noda governments will be provided. Attention will be mainly paid to the general security framework in Northeast Asia, while at the same time focusing on how relations with South Korea developed following diplomatic incidents.

4.6 – South Korea discourse under DPJ

4.6.1 – Hatoyama Yukio: settling the past to secure the future

Straight from the beginning, the official foreign policy line of the DPJ was very proactive in nature. Prime Minister Hatoyama²²⁹, during a press conference on basic policies, stressed that the new governmental coalition, formed by the DPJ, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP), marked the first step towards a transformation of Japanese politics since the 1955 System²³⁰. The two pillars upon which the new stateship would be founded were 'true popular sovereignty' and 'substantive regionalism'²³¹. If the first tenet would have been observed by breaking the links with a long-established pork barrel politics²³², the second one was to be implemented by taking a foremost role in the creation of an Asia-Pacific community. An increased degree of interdependence among Asian nations would have guaranteed a

229The choice of Hatoyama as Prime Minister candidate should not surprise. The Hatoyama family gave Japan four generations of prominent politicians: he is the grandchild of former Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichiro (LDP), while his great-grandfather, Hatoyama Kazuo, served in the Imperial Diet in the last decade of the nineteenth century. His father, Hatoyama Iichiro, was a member of the House of Councillors, for whom Yukio would have become private secretary some years after obtaining his PhD at Stanford University. Moreover, Ishibashi Shojiro, founder of the tire industry giant Bridgestone Corporation, was his maternal grandfather. This biographical sketch has been sourced from "Hatoyama Yukio", Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Hatoyama-Yukio>.

230The 1955 System is a term referring to the Japanese party system from 1955 until 1993, when the LDP uninterruptedly dominated the political scene. Despite fragmentation within the LDP led to a coalition government of opposition in 1993, a new kind of politics would arise only after the electoral reform of 1994. The first election under the new system took place in 1996, again won by the LDP. A detailed explanation on how postwar Japanese politics used to look like, consider Rosenbluth and Thies, *Japan Transformed*, pp. 53-71.

231https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200909/16policies_e.html.

232By pork barrel politics, especially in the case of Japan, I refer to what Rosenbluth and Thies (2010) described as the interplay between politicians, bureaucracy and interest groups, working closely together to achieve mutual interests and secure political control. A landmark case is *Amakudari* (literally, 'descent from heaven'), a practice through which retired senior bureaucrats are employed in public or private corporations and organizations, often in the same field of their ministerial occupation. The practice has been characterized by high degrees of corruption and regulatory laxity in managing industry and markets. For a detailed insight into *Amakudari*, consider Colignon, Richard. *Amakudari: The Hidden Fabric of Japan's Economy*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2003.

stronger, peace-friendly environment within which to tackle delicate issues such as nuclear disarmament and economic crisis. Japan's role in the world, as can be deduced from Hatoyama's words, was one of a proactive and respected global player which is proud of its cultural heritage:

From the present, Japan will contribute to the well-being of the international community through not only activities in the economic field but also those in the areas of the environment, peace, culture, science and technology, creating a country that is trusted by the international community. We must build a country and a society whose people can once again hold great pride in being Japanese. In the twenty-first century, the role that Japan can play between the two great powers of United States and China, and indeed the role that the Japanese people and Japanese culture can play in the international community, are certainly quite significant.²³³

In occasion of his first overseas trip to Seoul on the 9th of October 2009, Prime Minister Hatoyama did not miss the chance to stress the importance of Japan-ROK relations, as would be the case for two countries which are part of the nucleus of the East Asian community and share deep common values. ROK President Lee Myung-bak opened the Joint Press Conference by stating that Japan and Korea were 'intimate as well as nearby', and that relations would have been developed 'in a future-oriented manner with sincerity and an open heart, while facing the past squarely'. In that respect, Hatoyama too pointed out how historical issues had to be faced sincerely by Japan, but he nonetheless expressed the concern that among the Japanese population there are contrasting emotions regarding the ideas in the Murayama Statement²³⁴:

I have always said that we must have the courage to consider the issue of history in a future-oriented manner, to look at history squarely. I intend to give this thinking a

²³³https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200909/16policies_e.html.

²³⁴The so called Murayama Statement, or *Murayama Danwa* in Japanese, was released by the then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in the August of 1995, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. In it, Murayama expressed apologies for the damages and suffering that Japan caused to the other nations during the conflict. Its impact was very significant as it was the first time for a Japanese Prime Minister to apologize so openly, and the drafting of the statement also required the full approval of the members of the Cabinet. An english version of the full text is available at this link <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>.

very important position among the new government's ideas. In other words, the importance of the Japanese government and each Japanese citizen to understand the thinking represented by the so-called Murayama Statement goes without saying. This is a matter which greatly affects Japan-ROK relations; since we must restrain the emotions that tend to run hot, as I've said it will take some time for all the Japanese people to assimilate this thinking; I seek patience in this regard.²³⁵

However, the nucleus of a strong East Asian community would not be complete without China, an emerging economic powerhouse and prominent member of the six-party talks²³⁶. Beijing was possibly the closest interlocutor of Pyongyang at the time, and its cooperation in a trilateral axis together with Japan and ROK was of vital importance to promote pacifism and keep at check fluctuations in North Korea's nuclear programme. Infact, the 10th of October leaders of the three countries met in the tenth anniversary of the Japan-China-ROK cooperation. Apart from general remarks about economic cooperation, global concerns and cultural exchange, North Korean denuclearization and its possible integration within the international community were the most discussed issue. When asked on this point, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said:

China has thus far made efforts for the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and a resumption of the Six-Party Talks. This process conforms with United Nations Security Council resolutions and is being pursued due to China's responsibilities as a permanent member of the Council. China also provides assistance to North Korea for the latter's economic development and the stabilisation of its people's livelihoods. This too is consistent with the UN's thinking.²³⁷

235https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200910/09kyoudou_e.html.

236The six-party talks are a series of multilateral meetings aimed at finding a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear weapons programme. States participating to the talks are North Korea, the ROK, Japan, China, the United States and Russia. Official meetings started in 2003 and have stopped after North Korea announced a satellite launch, despite international pressure not to do so. At the actual state, further updates upon resumption of the talks are pending, as Kim Jong-un recently agreed to reopen discussions. See the article "North Korea's Kim told Xi he wanted to resume six-party disarmament talks", *Reuters*, 5 April 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-talks/north-koreas-kim-told-xi-he-wanted-to-resume-six-party-disarmament-talks-nikkei-idUSKCN1HC1DV>.

237https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200910/10JCKkyoudou_e.html.

The aspect of 'consistency' with 'UN's thinking' is not stressed accidentally here. If Japan and Korea had already constructed their identities as states committed to liberal, western-friendly values, China had to appear as an actor genuinely engaged to shared international norms as well. Hagström (2014) has pointed out how the emulation of dominant norms favors recognition and socialization among states, whereas 'abnormal' or 'negative' differentiations of state identity produce threats which are dangerous to a state's existence, and eventually subject to securitization²³⁸. He also proved how, during the 1970s, Japan considered normalization of relations with China especially in light of the latter's opening to the global economy²³⁹.

Hatoyama's approach to the promotion of Japan-ROK relations has been resolute throughout his whole term of service. For him, building a relationship of trust with neighboring countries was of utmost importance in defining Japan's 'new commitment' to Asia. He centered his foreign policy on concepts such as '*yu-ai*' (literally, friendship) and encouraged the creation of a 'sea of fraternity', in order to establish peace and prosperity in a region where maritime routes are of vital importance for both commerce and cultural exchange²⁴⁰. He kept stressing how Japan-ROK relations would benefit from not 'averting our eyes from the negative history of the past and looking squarely at the prospects of the coming century'²⁴¹ and as Japan had to 'open' itself to free trade and 'resume negotiations on an EPA or FTA between Japan and the Republic of Korea', because Japan 'is not an easy place [for foreigners] to invest'²⁴². Furthermore, Japan's bond with Korea had been reinforced after the sinking of the ROK Navy Pohang class corvette Cheonan. Upon investigations carried out by an international team of experts, the final report concluded that the sinking was due to shockwaves occurring after torpedoes were fired by a North Korean submarine²⁴³. On the 20th of May 2010, the

238Hagström, Linus. "The 'abnormal' state: Identity, norm/exception and Japan", *European Journal of International Relations*, 21:1, 2015, pp. 124-126.

239Hagström, Linus and Hanssen, Ulv. "War is peace: the rearticulation of 'peace' in Japan's China discourse", *Review of International Studies*, 42, 2016, pp. 274-278.

240https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200911/15singapore_e.html.

241https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201001/29siseihousin_e.html.

242https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201003/26kaiken_e.html.

243Details about the accident are reported in the article "S. Korea's final report affirms Cheonan was sunk by N. Korean torpedo", *CNN*, 14 September 2010, <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/09/13/south.korea.cheonan.report/index.html>.

Hatoyama Cabinet issued a statement which directly commented on the event, where the Prime Minister said:

Japan strongly supports the ROK. North Korea's action cannot be condoned by any means, and Japan together with the international community strongly condemns North Korea. In handling this matter, Japan will continue its close coordination and cooperation for regional peace and stability with the countries concerned, including the ROK and the United States.²⁴⁴

Hatoyama eventually stepped down from his office due to low consensus, mainly driven by political scandals and the failure in managing successfully the relocation of the Futenma air base²⁴⁵. Still, in the last trilateral summit between Japan-China-ROK before his resignation in 2010, he announced the issuance of a cooperation document entitled VISION 2020. In it, the direction of future partnership between the three countries was itemized in five points: enhancement of trilateral partnership, sustainable economy and common prosperity, sustainable development and environmental protection, cultural exchange, and joint efforts for international stability²⁴⁶.

4.6.2 – Kan Naoto: dynamic defense and domestic hardships

The change of Prime Minister did not entail much change in policy-making at first. Naoto Kan²⁴⁷, deputy Prime Minister of the Hatoyama Cabinet, built up his agenda

²⁴⁴https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201005/20comment_souri_e.html.

²⁴⁵I am especially referring to the funding scandal that involved the then party secretary general (ex-LDP) Ozawa Ichiro, whose image was still connected to the interest-based politics that was the status quo of the old LDP establishment. The mishandling of the Futenma base relocation brought about the dismissal of Minister for Consumer Affairs Fukushima Mizuho, who was the head of the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDP). In turn, her sacking caused the retreat of the SDP from the ruling coalition. For more details, see "Japan's Ichiro Ozawa charged over funding scandal", *BBC News*, 31 January 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-12322866> and "Japan prime minister faces pressure to resign over Okinawa", *The Guardian*, 1 June 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jun/01/japan-prime-minister-okinawa>.

²⁴⁶https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201005/30JCKkyoudou_e.html.

²⁴⁷Kan's political profile and social background is very much different compared to Hatoyama. First of all, his family was extraneous to politics, since he was raised a son of a salaryman factory manager in

by basically embracing Hatoyama's reformist approach, with the resolution of pushing forward initiatives that had been left halfway through. Foreign policy was no exception to that. It is interesting to see how Kan differentiated two main actors in East Asia, i.e. China and South Korea, when referring to them as diplomatic partners. He referred to the first country as one with whom to 'deepen our mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests', whereas with the ROK Japan had to 'forge a future-oriented partnership'²⁴⁸. One cannot ignore the way how, in the first instance, the phrasing 'common strategic interests' implies a sort of detached view of the partner. In other words, the way China is integrated in the Japanese foreign policy discourse seems to be in terms of how it could 'instrumentally' contribute to a shared 'strategic' aim, with not much space conceded to how to construct a relationship between potentially 'equal' identities. On the other hand, Korea is seen as a partner with which to deepen trust for the sake of a common future, whose only obstacle is represented by 'negative history'. The importance of how Japan perceives itself as a collective identity vis-à-vis others cannot be ignored. In one speech that Kan Naoto gave at the press conference following his G8 and G20 summit meetings participation, he stated:

Foreign policy is not merely a matter of relations with other countries, but rather a question of what kind of country we Japanese want Japan to be. In the context of global society, what sort of nation [do we aspire to be]? as stated in the preamble to the Constitution, do we aspire to be a country that is respected? And what do we do to achieve this goal? I consider that to be the fundamental point.²⁴⁹

What was the goal that Japan had in mind then? Kan's government stance on foreign policy was pointing towards the reinforcement of defensive capabilities and the strengthening of ties with existing allies. The new National Defense Program Guidelines, approved by the government in December 2010, were published in the 2011

southwestern Honshū. He might have not been wealthy or lacking political ties, but was much involved in community activism. He rose to notoriety in 1996, then serving as Minister of Health and Welfare, for having exposed the government's complicity in a pharmaceutical scandal regarding HIV-contaminated blood. However, two personal scandals ruined his public image: the admission of not having paid the nation pension program while in the DPJ in 1996, and the accusation of having had an extramarital affair in 1998.

²⁴⁸https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201006/11syosin_e.html.

²⁴⁹https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201006/27G8G20naigai_e.html.

Defense White Paper. The new guidelines were formulated after a perceived increase of international instability²⁵⁰, together with Japanese territorial peculiarity, called for a revision of overall defensive capabilities. One main point was the streamlining of the Self-Defense Forces for a more dynamic and qualitative approach to security issues, favoring reflexive deterrence over offensive deterrence. This stress on the reflexivity aspect is perfectly illustrated by the almost obsessive anaphora contained in one section of the guideline:

[...] the new NDPG place priority on 1) ensuring security of the sea and airspace surrounding Japan, 2) *response* to attacks on offshore island, 3) *response* to cyber attacks, 4) *response* to attacks by guerrillas and special operation forces, 5) *response* to ballistic missile attacks, 6) *response* to complex contingencies, and 7) *response* to large scale and/or chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) disasters.²⁵¹

If, as it clearly seems the case, an extremely unstable actor like North Korea comes first to mind when reading the lines above, the importance of ROK in Japanese foreign policy would have been invaluable. How did Kan handle Japan-ROK relations then? One can refer first and foremost to his statement on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the Korean annexation, and the following press conference. He expressed feelings of 'deep remorse' and 'heartfelt apologies' for the Japanese colonial rule:

Guided by such understanding, I will build a future-oriented Japan-Republic of Korea relationship by placing the next one hundred years to come in my prospect. I will continue in all sincerity conducting such humanitarian cooperation as the assistance to ethnic Koreans left in Sakhalin and the assistance in returning remains of the people from the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, in response to the expectations of the Korean people, I will transfer precious archives originated from the Korean

²⁵⁰Most likely, what caused the approval of new defense guidelines were possibly North Korea's missile test of May 2009 ("North Korea claims to conduct 2nd Nuclear Test", *The New York Times*, 24 May 2009, <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/25/world/asia/25nuke.html>) and the Senkaku boat collision incident of 2010 ("Japan-China row escalates over fishing boat collision", *The Guardian*, 9 September 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/sep/09/japan-china-fishing-boat-collision>).

²⁵¹Ministry Of Defense (MOD), Annual White Paper, 2011, p. 155 (emphasis added).

Peninsula that were brought to Japan during the period of Japan's rule through the Governor-General of Korea and the Government of Japan possesses, such as the Royal Protocols of the Joseon Dynasty.²⁵²

He then goes on by underlining the similarity of the two countries, both sharing ancient millennial traditions and a sense of belonging to an Asian/global community. In Kan's words, the relationship with South Korea is not only confined to the realm of bilateral relations, but both countries have a leadership role for preserving world peace and prosperity²⁵³. In this respect, is not surprising that, for example, the Prime Minister eschewed direct confrontation with lingering problems such as the Takeshima dispute, especially when asked about why the issuance of the 2010 Defense White Paper had been postponed. When inquired by a journalist on whether the publication had been delayed in deference to ROK because it mentioned sovereignty over Takeshima, Kan stated that the delay was due to the incorporation of recent security issues (such as the Cheonan sinking)²⁵⁴. In the end, the official defense paper actually contained a reference to Takeshima and the Northern Territories as 'integral parts of the Japanese territory'²⁵⁵. As Japan-Korea relations were, in Kan's own words, so close that 'the sense of familiarity our citizens now feel towards each other has become unprecedented in its strength'²⁵⁶, any mishandling of the then state of affairs would have strongly compromised the overall security state of Northeast Asia.

After the catastrophic occurrence of the March 2011 Tohoku earthquake, it was inevitable for political actors to focus their attention on the aftermath of the disaster. Japan received humanitarian aid and supplies from the world over. South Korea sent rescue workers and sniffer dogs, with further relief personnel and helicopters ready to be dispatched in case of need²⁵⁷. In addition to that, Seoul sent 53 tons of boric acid to help controlling the radioactive leakages from the Fukushima power plants, as well as

252https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201008/10danwa_e.html.

253Ibidem.

254https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201007/30kaiken_e.html.

255MOD, Annual White Paper, 2010, p. 3.

256https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201101/20speech_e.html.

257An account of the rescue and relief teams sent to Japan after the earthquake can be found the article "Japanese earthquake: rescue and relief missions swing into action", *The Telegraph*, 12 March 2011, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8377771/Japanese-earthquake-rescue-and-relief-missions-swing-into-action.html>.

necessity goods for Japanese people in shelters. Aside from governmental aid, the Korean population participated en masse in direct donations, collecting the astounding amount of 46 million dollars in total²⁵⁸.

The unfortunate timing in which controversial textbooks and the 2011 issue of the Diplomatic Bluebook were published could have jeopardized mutual trust between Japan and Korea. Both contained infact claims of sovereignty over the Dokdo/Takeshima islets, with the ministerial document especially asserting the following:

Between Japan and Korea persists the issue of territorial rights over Takeshima Island. It is both a clear historical fact as well as recognized by international law that Takeshima is a territory native to Japan. The Japanese government's position over the issue is unwavering, as it is made well known internationally by our pamphlet and by repeatedly suggesting our view to the Korean side. In any case, in order to peacefully solve the issue, the Japanese government will persevere in diplomatic efforts.²⁵⁹

Despite obvious disapproval of the Japanese claims among the Korean population, both countries' leaders seemed to avoid direct comments over the resurgence of the issue, as the ongoing state of emergency implied a more rational approach in the eventuality of diplomatic incidents²⁶⁰.

4.6.3 – Noda Yoshihiko: 'economic diplomacy' and the ROK Crisis

Kan Naoto officially resigned as Prime Minister on the 30th of August 2011. His approval ratings plunged as criticism hit the slow progress in reconstruction and initial

258See "Post-Earthquake Japan-Korea Ties", *The Diplomat*, 18 April 2011, <https://thediplomat.com/2011/04/post-earthquake-japan-korea-ties/>.

259外務省、外交青書、2011年、p. 30 (author's translation).

260More informations on Korean help to Japan and the impact of controversial publications, see "Tsunami diplomacy: South Korea and Japan", *PRI*, 3 April 2011, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2011-04-03/tsunami-diplomacy-south-korea-and-japan>.

management of the nuclear crisis²⁶¹. Upon Noda's succession as next head of the Cabinet on the second of September of 2011, the axis Japan-ROK was still regarded as one to be strengthened in light of a future-oriented vision. Yet, the focus on 'facing the past squarely' or 'not averting eyes on negative history', two linchpins in the previous Prime Ministers' Korea discourse, was not much considered in the first official statements of the new premier. Before his election, Noda had served as Minister of Finance, and his new foreign policy was imprinted on what he defined as 'economic diplomacy':

I will make every effort to build relations of goodwill not only between Japan and China, but also with other neighboring countries, including the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Russia. To date I have engaged in my own way in economic diplomacy in matters such as currency and international finance, and in the future it is my intention to also engage actively in multi-faceted economic diplomacy, including even greater levels of economic cooperation and also diplomacy relating to natural resources, among other issues. In particular, I believe that it is essential for Japan to draw on the inherent vitality in the Asia-Pacific region.²⁶²

Indeed, steadfast efforts were addressed towards, e.g., the negotiations of a trilateral Economic Partnership Agreement with ROK and China²⁶³. The 28th of October speech on the 179th session of the Diet, Noda asserted that he had 'earnest talks' with Korean President Lee Myung-bak during the former's recent visit to South Korea, and that agreement was reached on accelerating 'working-level talks' on the EPA²⁶⁴. The economic diplomacy endeavours were also aimed at reaching a currency swap agreement with the ROK²⁶⁵, as the latter would have also concluded one with China in order to be shielded from financial turmoils in the eurozone²⁶⁶.

261A survey by Kyodo News agency released in mid August reported that approval ratings had dropped to 15.8 percent, the lowest level since Kan took office. However, it is notable to point out how 75 percent of respondents were in favor of the nuclear phase-out policy, and expressed desire for the next administrations to continue on that path. For a quick overview of the poll results, see <https://www.ctvnews.ca/japanese-pm-naoto-kan-hits-lowest-approval-rating-1.686330>.

262https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201109/02kaiken_e.html.

263About the importance of the trilateral EPA for Japan, consider the following Joint Study Report available at MOFA link https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/24/3/pdfs/0330_10_01.pdf.

264https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201110/28syosin_e.html.

265https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201111/19asean_naigai_e.html.

266See the Financial Times article "South Korea doubles currency swap deal with China", *Financial Times*, 26 October 2011, <https://www.ft.com/content/35911e14-ffd4-11e0-89ce-00144feabdc0>.

It is important to consider that, on the very day in which Kan resigned as Prime Minister, the Korean Constitutional Court concluded the ROK government acted inconstitutionally by failing to address the Comfort Women issue properly since the nineties, i.e. by prioritizing the development of ROK-Japan relations instead of making efforts to solve the controversy. The Court's decision pushed the then president Lee Myung-bak to urge Noda to act immediately for a solution²⁶⁷. However, the Japanese Prime Minister had a different view of the matter. During a bilateral summit in Kyoto on the 18th of December 2011, Noda replied that Japan's responsibility in repaying the victims had been settled with the provisions of the 1965 normalization treaty, and eventually requested President Lee to make remove the comfort women statue that had been installed in front of Seoul's Japanese embassy²⁶⁸.

Just before 2012, a major event in the Korean peninsula raised uncertainty in Northeast Asia security environment. The death of the Supreme Leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kim Jong-Il in December 2011, and the subsequent ascension to the Chairman seat of his son Kim Jong-Un, urged Japan to be ready for extreme contingencies and to gather as much intelligence data as possible²⁶⁹. In light of such an unstable scenario, it can be argued that a strengthening of collaborative ties with the ROK was much needed.

Although, what came next? In early 2012, Japanese vice Foreign Minister Sasae Kenichiro presented to the Korean government the so-called Sasae Proposal. The plan's main points were three: formal apologies from the Japanese Prime Minister, visits to the victims and apologies from the Japanese ambassador to Korea, and compensations on humanitarian grounds. Nonetheless, Seoul was not satisfied with the plan and considered it insufficient²⁷⁰. In regards to this event, Jonsson's (2015) research found that ,eventually, the ROK would have agreed to the proposal only if Japanese officials would not have had publicly disavowed the deal, but since the officials reject the

267Both the Korean Constitutional Court decision and Lee Myung-bak's request are cited in Jonsson, p. 15.

268See the article on Korea Times "Lee presses Japan on 'comfort women'", *The Korea Times*, 18 December 2011, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/12/116_101053.html.

269As stated by Noda in the following press conference:
https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201201/04kaiken_e.html.

270The Sasae Proposal and ROK's reaction are reported here: "Comforting the comfort women: the tale so far", *Korea JoongAng Daily*, 31 October 2015.
<http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3010963>.

demand the negotiations ultimately died out²⁷¹.

On the seventh of April, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Genba Koichiro and the South Korean Minister for Foreign Affairs and Finance Kim Sung-Hwan met in Ningbo, China, for a bilateral summit. The main focus of the talks was North Korea. Both Ministers shared the view that if Pyeongyang was to carry out a missile test launch 'the international community, including the UN Security Council, would need to take appropriate measures'²⁷². In the foreign policy update on the MOFA website, it is reported that topics such as the Takeshima dispute and the Comfort Women issues were also discussed, although no further details are provided. Later in June, Tokyo and Seoul were expected to sign bilaterally two important military agreements, i.e. the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and the Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA). The first would have facilitated the sharing of classified defense information on North Korea's nuclear programme, and in turn smoothing defense cooperation with the United States as well. The second agreement was more logistical in nature, dealing with matters of humanitarian assistance and post-disaster relief²⁷³. Nonetheless, the ROK government decided to withdraw from the two agreements on the very day scheduled for the signing. Such a move seemed to have put to waste years of diplomatic efforts, but it did not come as unexpected. Lee Myung-bak's Cabinet hastily approved the agreement provisions without first briefing the Korean National Assembly, the body having legislative authority in the country and whose ratification was needed for important matters concerning national security. Among the different factors leading to the withdrawal, some scholars argue that the burden of historical memory and the different perception that Japan and Korea had of a re-emerging China were of foremost significance²⁷⁴.

271Jonsson, p. 16.

272<https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/jfpu/2012/04/0425-01.html>.

273On both agreements, see the following article: "S. Korea-Japan: Time for Outside Mediation?", *The Diplomat*, 30 July 2012, <https://thediplomat.com/2012/07/s-korea-japan-time-for-outside-mediation/>.

274See for instance Taylor, Brendan. "Japan and South Korea: The Limits of Alliance", *Survival*, 54:5, 2012, pp. 93-100; Seongho, Sheen and Jina, Kim. "What Went Wrong with the ROK-Japan Military Pact?", *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, 176, July 31 2012. For what regards the view of China, South Korea was very sensitive on how Beijing, still closest partner of DPRK in Asia, could perceive Seoul's relations with Japan. Infact, the sharing of military intelligence with Japan, with the United States being the third wheel behind the scenes, was perceived by some ROK quarters as part of a 'containment strategy' against China, which would thus have turned sour against Seoul. For a deeper insight consider Taylor's article cited in this note.

However, past animosity was on its way to be stirred up again during the summer. It does not seem very clear what triggered ROK's President Lee Myung-bak to make the first official visit to the contested island of Dokdo/Takeshima on the 10th of August 2012²⁷⁵. It could be in a way related to the publication of the 2012 Japanese Defense White Paper, which contained claims of sovereignty over the territory. Although, that was not something new as official diplomatic documents of the past years, including the *Gaikō Seisho* (Diplomatic Bluebook), reported Japanese declarations of sovereignty. It could be possible to make two assumptions: the first being that Lee made a symbolic gesture against the 'colonizer' Japan; on the other hand, his low approval rates might have persuaded him to leverage on nationalist sentiments and patriotism²⁷⁶. The official response of Japan could be all but accommodating. On a press conference held on the 24th of August, Prime Minister Noda expressed his deep regret for the incident, invoking adherence to 'law and justice' in the international community:

The ROK side insists that it had established its effective control over Takeshima before Japan, but the wording of the documents the ROK refers to is ambiguous, and the ROK has no unequivocal proof that supports its argument. After World War II, in the process of drafting the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the ROK requested that Japan renounce Takeshima, but the U.S. rejected the request. Notwithstanding these circumstances, after the War, the ROK unilaterally installed illegal "Syngman Rhee Line", and began illegally occupying Takeshima by force. The issue of Takeshima should not be discussed in the context of "understanding of history"; it is the problem of whether ROK's act of unilateral occupation is consistent with "law and justice of the international community."²⁷⁷

Japan's response in terms of 'law and justice of the international community' came in form of official proposal to the ROK government to settle the case through the International Court of Justice. There have been historical antecedents of similar

275"South Korean and Japan face off over disputed islands", *The Guardian*, 10 August 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/10/south-korea-japan-disputed-islands>.

276"Lee Myung Bak's stunt over disputed islands", *East Asia Forum*, 19 August 2012, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2012/08/19/lee-myung-baks-stunt-over-disputed-islands/>.

277https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201208/24kaiken_e.html.

tentatives, all of which met with failure because either one of the parts disagreed. The story repeated itself when on August 30th the official refusal of the South Korean government reached Tokyo. On commenting the event, Japan's Foreign Minister Genba stated the following:

The GOJ (Government of Japan) had expected that as an important member state of the United Nations (UN), advocating "Global Korea," the ROK Government would accept our proposals and make its claims squarely before the Court. It is therefore extremely disappointing to receive the ROK-side's response which contains no concrete counterproposal to resolve the Takeshima dispute. The GOJ intends to continue taking appropriate actions in resolving the Takeshima dispute in a calm and peaceful manner based on international law, including referring the dispute to the ICJ on its own.²⁷⁸

A month later, when initial acrimony had cooled off, Ministers Genba and Sung-Hwan met again in New York after having attended the United Nations General Assembly. Their discussion targeted long-standing issues between Korea and Japan, and the Ministers shared the view that 'although both countries need to make assertion on these issues, it is also important for the two countries to cooperate in various fields such as economic and human exchanges, cultural exchanges, and security issues, from a broader perspective'²⁷⁹. The flare-up of the Dokdo/Takeshima controversy, and all its aftermath, was the last notable incident in Japan-ROK relations under Noda, who would eventually resign as party leader after the December 2012 General Election *débaclé*²⁸⁰.

278https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2012/8/0830_02.html.

279https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/korea/meeting_rok1209_fm.html.

280"Japan election: Shinzo Abe and LDP in Sweeping win – exit poll", *BBC News*, 16 December 2012, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-20745165>.

5 – Conclusion

As we have seen, DPJ's attempts at pursuing thriving relations with the Republic of Korea were not much successful. Japan-ROK ties seem to be a thermometer of the security environment in Northeast Asia. Both countries manage to get close and be amicable whenever are confronted with common threats, especially from the side of the DPRK; but as soon as *past* issues resurge, no foreign policy is 'future-oriented' enough to keep flare-ups at bay. The logic primacy of the threat in defining alliance, or of the *enemy* in a larger sense, resonates with what Roberto Esposito (2018) had to say *à propos* Carl Schmitt:

Schmitt claims that the determination cannot do without the negative, following the traditional principle of *omnis determinatio est negatio*. According to it, it does not count from which pole one moves to determine the diversity of the other. Whether one starts from the enemy to identify the friend or from the friend to distinguish the enemy, things do not change. In every case, one starts with an opposition, an aversion, and thus, in the technical sense of the expression, with 'enmity'. This does not mean – as Schmitt continues – that he assumes enmity as a value superior to amity. The enemy simply precedes the friend – it is what logically comes first, necessary to distinguish what comes after.²⁸¹

The formation of identity, both at the individual and at the collective level, lays its foundation on a liminal zone, i.e. the space where differentiation vis-à-vis a significant other is articulated. Linguistic constructions of identity narratives determine dominant discourses, under which relations of inequality are defined. The lack of fixity in the discursive field, as already argued by Laclau and Mouffe (1985), allows for the rearticulation and reappropriation of 'floating signifiers'. Hence, for Japan the ROK can be either a friend, e.g. when enemies of the 'international community' commit hideous deeds²⁸², or a foe, especially when the South Korean 'other' succumbs to ardent

²⁸¹Esposito, Roberto. *Politica e negazione. Per una filosofia affermativa*. Torino, Einaudi, 2018, p. 3.

²⁸²A model case being the sinking of the ROK Navy Cheonan corvette by North Korea, with Hatoyama expressing his support and saying that "Japan together with the international community strongly condemns North Korea."

nationalist sentiments²⁸³. In contrast with what traditional approaches to International Relations studies would contend, a state identity is not pre-determined and bound to either material or ideational determinants on their own. The aim of this dissertation was to demonstrate that the identity and the interests of a state are subject to change, and that they are relationally defined through significant 'others'. State narratives are ontologically relevant for state actors, since they determine the ones who are inside the sphere of commonality and the ones that are outside of it.

The rise of the DPJ administration did not change much the status quo of Japanese state identity narratives. Even the most sincere auspices of *mirai shikō gaikō* expressed by Hatoyama, possibly the DPJ Prime Minister closest to the ROK, rested on vague idealistic assumptions. In fact, he barely gave any clear hint at how to concretely tackle past issues, limiting himself to hope for the understanding of the tenets of the 'Murayama Statement' by the Japanese public. Kan Naoto regarded South Korea as a pair leader in promoting world peace and prosperity, but under his cabinet documents of official diplomacy and controversial textbooks stirred up ROK's discontent. Noda, unsurprisingly, of all the three leaders was the most pragmatic in his official discourse. He advocated for economic cooperation and for a diplomacy 'relating to natural resources'. Nonetheless, the mishandling of the Comfort Women issue, followed by a rise in South Korean nationalism, likely paved the way for the failure of both the GSOMIA and ACSA agreements.

Whenever the ROK leaned too much on the emotional side of patriotism, Japan resorted to claims of law-abidance and international justice. Since the postwar years, Tokyo has consistently shaped its identity vis-à-vis other Asian actors as the foremost member of the 'international community' in the East. A self-appointed role that juxtaposes with a resilient trait of superiority, which Japan seems to have been constructing throughout the twentieth century. What changed between Meiji Japan and postwar Japan was basically the *way* in which such superiority had to be achieved, either by the use of force or by peaceful economic interdependence and strategic

²⁸³The claims of sovereignty over Dokdo/Takeshima contained in Japan's diplomatic bluebooks are a solar example. In fact, the usual line is that Japanese sovereignty is both 'a clear historical fact' and 'recognized by international law'. It follows that South Korean claims are pretenses of an 'backward-looking' actor, one which is non-compliant with international norms.

diplomacy.

Although, one cannot underestimate the impact of several domestic factors which hampered the consolidation of a new progressive leadership. When thinking about the Hatoyama administration, an issue that costed him much in terms of popularity was the failed relocation of the Futenma air base. The presence of the American military in Okinawa has been an unsurmountable obstacle for Hatoyama. Kan's government had to face the catastrophic impact of the Great Tohoku Earthquake of March 2011. In addition, his nuclear phaseout policy had been consistently slowed down by institutional barriers and veto players²⁸⁴, inducing public opinion's discontent and mistrust. Noda's toughest challenge was the one of keeping the Japanese parliament united. His government suffered a major party split during the summer of 2012, and the subsequent December elections saw the return to power of the LDP²⁸⁵.

The subsequent LDP domination has definitely not proven any significant change in Japanese identity narratives, instead it possibly exacerbated a sense of pride for the nation. Moreover, current Prime Minister Abe Shinzo claimed in 2015 that the next Japanese generations should not bear the responsibilities of their forefathers and do not need to apologise for war crimes. Past issues seem to be the deadlock over which Japanese politics cannot step ahead. Then, if leaderships are not able to lead the way towards 'future-oriented policies', maybe is time for the population at large to sincerely address the painful past, and in turn shape a new collective conscience that would allow for change in international politics.

284On Japanese nuclear veto players, see Hymans, Jacques. "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb", *International Security*, 36:2, 2011, pp. 154-189.

285On DPJ's fall, see Masuyama, Mikitaka and Nyblade, Benjamin. "Japan", *European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook*, 52, 2013, pp. 121-133.

6 – Bibliography

Primary sources

Government of Japan

Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet – <https://japan.kantei.go.jp/index.html>.

The Constitution of Japan, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

ABE, Shinzo:

“Prime Minister Visits South Korea (Japan-South Korea Summit Meeting)”, 9 October 2006, japan.kantei.go.jp/abepphoto/2006/10/09korea_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe”, 14 August 2015, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201508/0814statement.html (last access February 13, 2019).

HATOYAMA, Yukio:

“Basic Policies of the Hatoyama Government”, 16 September 2009, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200909/16policies_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Joint Press Conference by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan and President Lee Myung-bak of the Republic of Korea”, 9 October 2009, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200910/09kyoudou_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Joint Press Conference by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan, Premier Wen Jiabao of the People's Republic of China and President Lee Myung-bak of the Republic of Korea following the Second Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting”, 10 October 2009, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200910/10JCKkyoudou_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Address by His Eminence Dr. Yukio Hatoyama Prime Minister of Japan: Japan's New Commitment to Asia – Toward the Realization of an East Asian Community” 15 November 2009, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/200911/15singapore_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

February 13, 2019).

“Policy Speech by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama at the 174th Session of the Diet”, 29 January 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201001/29siseihousin_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama”, 26 March 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201003/26kaiken_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Comment by the Japanese Prime Minister on the announcement by the Republic of Korea of the results of the investigation into the sinking of a military patrol vessel”, 20 May 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201005/20comment_souri_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Joint Press Conference by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan, Premier Wen Jiabao of the People's Republic of China and President Lee Myung-bak of the Republic of Korea following the Third Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting”, 30 May 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/hatoyama/statement/201005/30JCKkyoudou_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

KAN, Naoto:

“Policy Speech by Prime Minister Naoto Kan”, 11 June 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201006/11syosin_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by Prime Minister Naoto Kan Following His Attendance at the Muskoka G8 Summit and the Toronto G20 Summit”, 27 June 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201006/27G8G20naigai_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference by Prime Minister Naoto Kan”, 30 July 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201007/30kaiken_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by Prime Minister Naoto Kan”, 10 August 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201008/10danwa_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference by Prime Minister Naoto Kan Following His Visit to the United States”, 24 September 2010, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201009/24un_naigai_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“ “Japan's Diplomacy at a Historic Watershed” Lecture Presentation on Foreign Policy by Prime Minister Naoto Kan”, 20 January 2011, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/kan/statement/201101/20speech_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

NODA, Yoshihiko:

“Press Conference by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda”, 2 September 2011, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201109/02kaiken_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Policy Speech by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda to the 179th Session of the Diet”, 28 October 2011, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201110/28syosin_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference of Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda on the Occasion of the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings”, 19 November 2011, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201111/19asean_naigai_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda”, 4 January 2012, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201201/04kaiken_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda”, 24 August 2012, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/noda/statement/201208/24kaiken_e.html (last access February 13, 2019).

Ministry of Defense (MOD) – <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/>.

Annual White Paper, 2010. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/2010.html (last access February 13, 2019).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/index.html>.

Diplomatic Bluebook, 1987. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/1987/s62-30101.htm> (last access February 13, 2019).

Diplomatic Bluebook, 1990. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1990/1990-contents.htm> (last access February 13, 2019).

Diplomatic Bluebook, 2011.

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/2011/html/index.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

East Asia's Economic Development and Japan's ODA, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/cooperation/anniv50/pamphlet/accomplishment2.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

Japan-US Security Treaty, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

Takeshima. Seeking a Solution based on Law and Dialogue, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/pdfs/takeshima_pamphlet.pdf (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the result of the study on the issue of “Comfort Women””, 4 August 1993, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama “On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end””, 15 August 1995, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Visit to North Korea”, 17 September 2002, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/index.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration”, 17 September 2002, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/pyongyang.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Joint Press Statement – The Inaugural Meeting of the Three-Party Committee of the People's Republic of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea”, 21 June 2004, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/asean/acd/joint0406.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by Mr. Nobutaka Machimura, Minister for Foreign Affairs for Japan, on the Statement of the Standing Committee of the National Security Council of the Republic of Korea”, 18 March 2005, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2005/3/0318-7.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

「韓国国会による竹島の「接続可能な利用」に関する法律について」、平成 17 年 4 月 27 日 . *Kankoku kokkai ni yoru takeshima no “setsuzoku kanōna riyō” ni kansuru hōritsu ni suite*, 27 April 2005,

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/danwa/17/dga_0427.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Press Conference”, 4 July 2006, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/2006/7/0704.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by the Press Secretary/Director-General for Press and Public Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the Marine Scientific Research by the Government of the Republic of Korea in the Waters where Claim of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) Overlap between Japan and the ROK and the Territorial Sea around Takeshima Islands”, 5 July 2006, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2006/7/0705-4.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Joint Press Statement of the Seventh Summit Meeting among the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea”, 14 January 2007, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0701/joint070114.pdf> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Start of the “Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) Programme” (Japan-China 21st Century Exchange Program: Visit to Japan by Groups of Chinese Senior High School Students)” 29 May 2007, https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2007/5/1173651_826.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Joint Study Report for an FTA among China, Japan and Korea”, 16 December 2011, https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/24/3/pdfs/0330_10_01.pdf (last access February 13, 2019).

“Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Overview)”, 25 April 2012, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/jfpu/2012/04/0425-01.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

“Statement by the Minister for Foreign affairs of Japan on the Refusal by the Government of the Republic of Korea of the Government of Japan's Proposal on the Institution of Proceedings before the International Court of Justice by a Special Agreement” 30 August 2012, https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2012/8/0830_02.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Overview)”, 27 September 2012, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/korea/meeting_rok1209_fm.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Establishment of “Synghman Rhee Line” and Illegal Occupation of Takeshima by the Republic of Korea”, 30 July 2015,

https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/takeshima/page1we_000064.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Japan-North Korea Relations (Overview)”, 20 November 2015, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/relation.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“Senkaku Islands Q&A”, 13 April 2016, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/qa_1010.html (last access February 13, 2019).

“History Issues Q&A”, 6 April 2018, https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/q_a/faq16.html (last access February 13, 2019).

Newspapers

Asahi Shimbun – <https://www.asahi.com/>.

BBC News – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>.

CNN – <https://edition.cnn.com/>.

CTV News – <https://www.ctvnews.ca/>.

East Asia Forum – <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/>.

Financial Times – <https://www.ft.com/>.

Korea Joongang Daily – <http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/>.

Limesonline – <http://www.limesonline.com/>.

NBC News – <https://www.nbcnews.com/>.

Net IB News – <https://www.data-max.co.jp/>

Public Radio International – <https://www.pri.org/>.

Reuters – <https://www.reuters.com/>.

The Diplomat – <https://magazine.thediplomat.com/>.

The Guardian – <https://www.theguardian.com/international>.

The Japan Times – <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/>.

The Korea Herald – <http://www.koreaherald.com/>.

The Korea Times – <http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www2/index.asp>.

The New York Times – <https://www.nytimes.com/>.

The Telegraph – <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/>.

The Washington Post – <https://www.washingtonpost.com/>.

United Press International – <https://www.upi.com/>.

Organizations, Associations and Agencies

Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) – <http://www.acd-dialogue.org/>.

Asian Women Fund – <http://awf.or.jp/index.html>.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – <https://asean.org/>.

Genron NPO – <http://www.genron-npo.net/>.

The 6th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll , 2018, http://www.genron-npo.net/en/opinion_polls/archives/5436.html (last access February 13, 2019).

International Atomic Energy Agency – <https://www.iaea.org/>.

World Trade Organization – <https://www.wto.org/>.

Treaties and declarations

Cairo Communiqué – http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryō/01/002_46/002_46tx.html (last access February 13, 2019).

Japan and Republic of Korea. Treaty of Basic Relations – <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20583/volume-583-I-8471-English.pdf> (last access February 13, 2019).

Okinawa Reversion Treaty – <http://ryukyu-okinawa.net/pages/archive/rev71.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

San Francisco Peace Treaty – <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20136/volume-136-i-1832-english.pdf> (last access February 13, 2019).

Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and the People's Republic of China –

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/treaty78.html> (last access February 13, 2019).

Treaty of Shimonoseki – <https://china.usc.edu/treaty-shimonoseki-1895> (last access February 13, 2019).

Various

Encyclopedia Britannica – <https://www.britannica.com/>.

Historical Facts about Korea's Dokdo Island – <https://www.dokdo-takeshima.com/>
(The author wishes to specify that the use of this website is only limited to the official documents available therein, such as the Rusk Papers and the SCAPIN 677. No specific political view expressed in the website is endorsed by the author).

Imperial Rescript on Education, 30 October 1890 – <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/glossary/imperial-rescript-education> (last access February 13, 2019).

National Diet Library – <http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/>.

Oe, Kenzaburo. “Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself”, Nobel Lecture, 7 December 1994 – <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1994/oe/lecture/> (last access February 13, 2019).

Secondary sources

ASHIZAWA, Kuniko. "When Identity Matters: State Identity, Regional Institution-Building, and Japanese Foreign Policy", *International Studies Review*, 10:3, 2008, pp. 571-598.

BROWNING, Christopher and Joenniemi, Pertti. "Ontological security, self-articulation and the securitisation of identity", *Cooperation and Conflict*, 52:1, 2017, pp. 31-47.

BERGER, Thomas. "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism", *International Security*, 17:4, 1993, pp. 119-150.

BUKH, Alexander. "Shimane Prefecture, Tokyo and the territorial dispute over Dokdo/Takeshima: regional and national identities in Japan", *The Pacific Review*, 28:1, pp. 47-70.

CHAN, Michael. "The discursive reproduction of ideologies and national identities in the Chinese and Japanese English-language press", *Discourse & Communication*, 6:4, 2012, pp. 361-378.

CH'OE, Yong-ho. "Japan's 1905 Incorporation of Dokdo/Takeshima: A Historical Perspective", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 13:9:3, 2015, pp. 1-27.

CHUNG, Young-lob. *Korea under Siege, 1876-1945: Capital Formation and Economic Transformation*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006.

COLLOTTI Pischel, Enrica. *Storia dell'Asia Orientale: 1850-1949*, Roma, Carocci Editore, 2013.

- ELDRIDGE, Robert. *The Origin of U.S. Policy in the East China Sea Island Dispute*. Oxon, Routledge, 2014.
- EMMERS, Ralf. "Japan-Korea Relations and the Tokdo/Takeshima Dispute: the Interplay of Nationalism and Natural Resources", *RSIS Working Paper Series*, 212, 2012, pp. 1-27.
- EPSTEIN, Charlotte. "Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics", *European Journal of International Relations*, 17:2, 2010, pp. 327-350.
- EROUKHMANOFF, Clara. "Securitisation Theory", in *International Relations Theory*, edited by McGlinchey, Stephen, Walters, Rosie and Scheinplflug, Christian, Bristol: E-International Relations Publishing, 2017.
- ESPOSITO, Roberto. *Politica e negazione. Per una filosofia affermativa*. Torino, Einaudi, 2018.
- FEYERABEND, Paul. *Against Method*. London, Verso, 1993.
- FINNEMORE, Martha. *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2003.
- FIORI, Antonio. *L'Asia Orientale. Dal 1945 ai giorni nostri*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 2010.
- FUNABASHI, Yoichi. "Japan and the New World Order", *Foreign Affairs*, 70:5, 1991, pp. 58-74.
- GUSTAFSSON, Karl. "Memory Politics and Ontological Security in Sino-Japanese Relations", *Asian Studies Review*, 38:1, 2014, pp. 71-86.

- HAGSTRÖM, Linus and Soderberg, Marie. "Taking Japan-North Korea Relations Seriously: Rationale and Background", *Pacific Affairs*, 79:3, 2006, pp. 373-385.
- HAGSTRÖM, Linus. "The 'abnormal' state: Identity, norm/exception and Japan", *European Journal of International Relations*, 21:1, 2015, pp. 122-145.
- HAGSTRÖM, Linus and Gustafsson, Karl. "Japan and identity change: why it matters in International Relations", *The Pacific Review*, 28:1, 2015, pp. 1-22.
- HAGSTRÖM, Linus and Hanssen, Ulv. "War is peace: the rearticulation of 'peace' in Japan's China discourse", *Review of International Studies*, 42, 2016, pp. 266-286.
- HANSEN, Lene. *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*. London and New York, Routledge, 2006.
- HARA, Kimie. "The San Francisco Peace Treaty and Frontier Problems in the Regional Order of East Asia: A Sixty Year Perspective", *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 10:17:1, 2012, pp. 1-17.
- HEIN, Patrick. *How the Japanese Became Foreigners to Themselves: The Impact of Globalization on the Private and Public Spheres in Japan*. Berlin, LIT Verlag, 2009.
- HOBBS, Thomas. *Leviatano*, Milano, BUR Rizzoli, 2011.
- HOWELL, David. "Visions of the Future in Meiji Japan." In *Historical Perspectives on Contemporary East Asia*, edited by Goldman, Merle and Gordon, Andrew. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- HYER, Eric. *The Pragmatic Dragon: China's Grand Strategy and Boundary Settlements*. Vancouver, UBC Press, 2015.

- HYMANS, Jacques. *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation. Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- HYMANS, Jacques. "Veto Players, Nuclear Energy, and Nonproliferation: Domestic Institutional Barriers to a Japanese Bomb", *International Security*, 36:2, 2011, pp. 154-189.
- ISHIKIDA, Miki. *Toward Peace: War Responsibility, Postwar Compensation, and Peace Movements and Education in Japan*. Bloomington, iUniverse, 2005.
- JONES, Adam. *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*. London, Routledge, 2006.
- JONSSON, Gabriel. "Can the Japan-Korea Dispute on "Comfort Women" be Resolved?", *Korea Observer*, 46:3, 2015, pp. 1-27.
- KATZENSTEIN, Peter and Okawara, Nobuo. "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms and Policies", *International Security*, 17:4, 1993, pp. 84-118.
- KATZENSTEIN, Peter. *Rethinking Japanese Security*. London, Routledge, 2008.
- KEOHANE, Robert and Nye, Joseph Jr. *Power and Interdependence*. New York, Little Brown, 1977.
- KIM, Samuel. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- KITAGAWA, Joseph. "The Japanese "Kokutai" (National Community) History and Myth", *History of Religions*, 13:3, 1974, pp. 209-226.
- KOGA, Kei. "The Yasukuni Question: histories, logics and Japan-South Korea relations", *The Pacific Review*, 29:3, pp. 331-359.

- KUISONG, Yang. "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969: From Zhenbao Island to Sino-American *Rapprochement*", *Cold War History*, 1:1, 2000, pp. 21-52.
- KUMAGAI, Naoko. "Ontological Security and Japan's Ideological Debate over Compensating Wartime 'Comfort Women'", *Social Science Japan Journal*, 18:2, 2015, pp. 145-161.
- LACLAU, Ernesto and Mouffe, Chantal. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London, Verso, 2014.
- LAKE, David. "Theory is dead, long live theory: The end of the Great Debates and the rise of eclecticism in International Relations", *European Journal of International Relations*, 19:3, 2013, pp. 567-587.
- LAYNE, Christopher. "The Unipolar Illusion. Why New Great Powers Will Rise", *International Security*, 17:4, 1993, pp. 5-51.
- LIAO, Tim et al. *The China-Japan Border Dispute: Islands of Contention in Multidisciplinary Perspective*. Farnham, Ashgate Publishing, 2015.
- LINDGREN, Yenn and Lindgren, Petter. "Identity Politics and the East China Sea: China as Japan's Other", *Asian Politics and Policy*, 9:3, 2017, pp. 378-401.
- LUPOVICI, Amir. *The Power of Deterrence. Emotions, Identity, and American and Israeli Wars of Resolve*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- MASUYAMA, Mikitaka and Nyblade, Benjamin. "Japan", *European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook*, 52, 2013, pp. 121-133.
- MITZEN, Jennifer. "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the

- Security Dilemma", *European Journal of International Relations*, 12:6, 2006, pp. 341-370.
- MUELLER, John. *Atomic Obsession. Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al-Qaeda*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.
- NOTEHELPER, Fred. "The Meiji Restoration." In *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, edited by Wm. Theodore de Bary. Second Edition. New York, Columbia University Press, 2005.
- ROSE, Caroline. *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the Past, Looking to the Future?*. London, Routledge, 2004.
- ROSENBLUTH, Frances and Thies, Michael. *Japan Transformed. Political Change and Economic Restructuring*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2010.
- ROSSDALE, Chris. "Enclosing Critique: The Limits of Ontological Security", *International Political Sociology*, 9, 2015, pp. 369-386.
- RUMELILI, Bahar. *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties*. New York, Routledge, 2014.
- SNYDER, Jack. "One World, Rival Theories", *Foreign Policy*, November-December 2004, pp. 52-62.
- STEAD, Alfred. *The Meiji Japan Through Contemporary Sources*, Vol. 1, Tokyo, The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1969.
- STEELE, Brent. *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-Identity and the IR State*. New York, Routledge, 2008.

- TAMAKI, Taku. *Deconstructing Japan's Image of South Korea. Identity in Foreign Policy*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- TAYLOR, Brendan. "Japan and South Korea: The Limits of Alliance", *Survival*, 54:5, 2012, pp. 93-100.
- WALTZ, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1979.
- WALTZ, Kenneth. "The Emerging Structure of International Politics", *International Security*, 18:2, 1992, pp. 44-79.
- WEINER, Michael. "The Invention of Identity in Pre-war Japan", in *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan*, edited by Dikotter, Frank, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1997.
- WENDT, Alexander. "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory", *International Organization*, 41:3, 1987, pp. 335-370.
- WENDT, Alexander. "Anarchy is what States Make of it", *International Organization*, 46:2, (1992), pp. 391-425.
- ZARAKOL, Ayşe. "Ontological (In)security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan", *International Relations*, 24:1, 2010, pp. 3-23.

7 – Table of figures

Figure 1.1 : The codetermination of institutions and process.	p. 17
Figure 1.2 : US-Japan GDP growth compared 1961-1995.	p. 23
Figure 1.3 : Process of linking.	p. 29
Figure 1.4 : Process of differentiation.	p. 29
Figure 1.5 : Research design model.	p. 33
Figure 2.1 : The 6 th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll –your impression of the other country.	p. 35
Figure 2.2 : Meeting in front of the Shrine (right side of the diptych).	p. 41
Figure 2.3 : A Glance at the Distinguished Figures of the Meiji Period.	p. 42
Figure 2.4 : The 6 th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll – Reason for having a bad impression (Japan).	p. 59
Figure 2.5 : The 6 th Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll – Reason for having a bad impression (South Korea).	p. 59