



Identity and Security: Identity Distance Theory and Regional Affairs in Northeast and Southeast Asia

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**Identity and Security:
Identity Distance Theory and Regional Affairs in Northeast and Southeast Asia**

Abstract

The dissertation explores the relationship between identity and international security, and tests the effect of the former on the latter by analyzing a set of puzzling phenomena in East Asia—the emergence of mutual threat perception in Sino-Japanese relations; increasingly conflictual relations between Korea and Japan after Korea’s democratization; the establishment of a regional human rights mechanism by ASEAN; and the settlement of key territorial disputes by Southeast Asian nations. Coupled with the diverging frequency of militarized interstate disputes between both regions, these phenomena suggest that Northeast Asia (NEA) has become a region of conflict with high tensions, while Southeast Asia (SEA) has increasingly developed into a region of peace with decreasing tension.

The dissertation advances a new theoretical framework, namely, identity distance theory, to understand these puzzling phenomena. Identity distance refers to perceived socio-psychological differences between groups, and its widening (narrowing) is hypothesized to increase (decrease) the likelihood of intergroup conflict. Using a variety of methods—content analysis of newspapers; political elite survey; and a controlled case study on territorial disputes—the dissertation shows that it is the contrasting evolution of identity distance in the two regions that is the key to explaining the cross-regional differences.

The root cause of the widening identity distance in NEA is the rise of the so-called history problem (*lishi wenti*) in the 1980s, influencing China’s threat perception of Japan and altering the effect of Korea’s democratization on its relations with Japan. In contrast, the

narrowing identity distance in SEA due to the construction of a regional identity and community since the 1990s enabled thorny issues such as human rights to be discussed more freely by raising the comfort level among regional countries, and resulted in the resolution of two key territorial disputes in SEA through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice.

Identity distance theory proposes a connection between identity and security, and contends that identity-related issues are an important factor affecting different regional dynamics. The findings of the dissertation suggest that the relations of enmity and amity between states are socially constructed through interactions between actors, which engender certain social identities and relations favorable for peace or conflict.

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I dedicate the dissertation to my parents.

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PART I. Introduction and Identity Distance Theory

Chapter 1. Conflictual Northeast Asia, Peaceful Southeast Asia

Introduction

This book is about identity and its effect on interstate security. It aims to show that identity matters for international security both as an independent and an intervening variable. It not only causes cooperation and conflict, but also intervenes between other important variables such as regime type and cooperation and conflict, and alters the effect of the former on the latter. The book also shows that relations of enmity and amity between states neither results from international anarchy or some inherent features of the international distribution of power, as realists argue, nor from the domestic institutional structure of states, as liberals argue. Rather, they are socially constructed through interactions between actors, which engenders certain social identities and relations favorable for peace or conflict.

The empirical focus of the book is on several important and puzzling phenomena in East Asian¹ regional affairs that have not been examined much thus far. They are the emergence of mutual threat perception in Sino-Japanese relations, increasingly conflictual democratic dyad of Korea and Japan, the establishment of human rights institutions in ASEAN, and the contrasting approaches to key regional territorial disputes between Northeastn (NEA) and Southeast Asian (SEA) nations. These regional phenomena suggest that NEA has increasingly become a region of conflict since the 1990s, while SEA has further developed into a region of peace in the same period.

Existing theories that rely on power, economic interdependence, regime type, and

¹ I use the term East Asia to mean both Northeast and Southeast Asia. Northeast Asia denotes Japan, two Koreas, the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan, while Southeast Asia refers to the ten countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

domestic politics all have difficulty explaining this diverse set of important and puzzling regional phenomena. This is because they pay insufficient attention to internal processes within the region and non-material factors that influence the social interactions between states. Their explanations are typically situated either at the international or domestic level, and focus on structural factors such as the distribution of material power, regime type, and economic interdependence, or domestic factors such as democratization, interest groups and political coalitions. While these factors are important, we must also pay greater attention to what goes on at the regional level, to fully understand regional affairs in East Asia.

Therefore in the book I situate the analytic focus at the regional level and emphasize socio-psychological factors.

This is not merely a theoretical nicety. It is also a matter of praxis. A great deal of interstate affairs is increasingly decided at the regional level following the second wave of regionalization throughout the world in the 1980s and 1990s. The developments in communications and transportation technology, coupled with the establishment of various regional organizations, have also provided ample opportunity for policy makers from different regional countries to interact with one another at various levels. As a result, there is a growing sense of regional identification among policy makers with the realization that regional problems should be discussed, managed, and resolved by regional countries.

In the book I advance an identity-based explanation, and develop and utilize a new concept called *identity distance*, in order to explain the regional phenomena in East Asia. Identity distance refers to perceived socio-psychological differences between groups, and measures the degree to which the members of the ingroup perceive themselves to be different from relevant outgroup(s). In the book, it essentially refers to, for example, how Chinese perceive Japanese to be different from themselves, or how Indonesians perceive

Malaysians to be different from themselves, on relevant measures of identity. The central thesis of the book is that the contrasting evolutions of identity distance between regional countries in NEA and SEA accounts for the above-mentioned regional phenomena and, ultimately, why NEA has become a region of conflict, while SEA has developed into a region of peace.

By advancing identity distance theory, I propose a connection between identity and security. In International Relations, scholars have traditionally focused narrowly on the use of force as the most effective way to guarantee the state's external security in an anarchical world. Both liberal institutionalists and constructivists, however, have shown that anarchy does not necessarily produce the outcomes (neo)realists say it would produce. International organizations as well as states act to coordinate and regulate interstate affairs. International norms and rules also set the outer boundaries within which the state is expected to behave, and generate reputational as well as material costs if violated. The world polity perspective in sociology also suggests that the world has become less and less anarchical with a growing number of international organizations and intensifying cultural processes (Meyer et al. 1997; Boli and Thomas 1997). All this suggests that the world is not quite the Hobbesian state of nature, the description of the international system uncritically embraced by realists. Indeed, there is enough reason to view interstate affairs as taking place in a social environment. Actors bring their own goals, purposes, and values to the international arena and develop a new set of goals, purposes and values through interactions with others. Identity occupies a central place in this process.

It is the aim of the book to convince the reader of the analytical utility of identity distance as a variable and its effect on important phenomena in interstate affairs. As such, the present work seeks to contribute to the growing literature on social constructivism in IR

as well as enrich our understanding of regionalization, regionalism, and East Asian international relations.

Research Puzzle: Conflictual Northeast Asia, Peaceful Southeast Asia?

Since Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978 and the ensuing brief military conflict between China and Vietnam, there has not been any major war in East Asia, and the region has enjoyed long peace. At least, according to one measure, the East Asian region has been devoid of interstate warfare since the late 1980s. In this sense, the trend in East Asia follows closely the global trend.²

But beneath the broad layer of absence of war lies a rather different picture of regional interstate relations in East Asia. For instance, the examination of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) in the two regions reveals that NEA has increasingly become a region of conflict since the 1990s, with intensifying sovereignty claims over disputed territories, while SEA has developed into a region of peace in the same period, with the resolution of two key territorial disputes among several SEA nations, and development of a host of regional institutions, including a regional human rights mechanism.

The number of interstate disputes is an important indicator of whether a region is relatively peaceful or conflictual for two reasons. As Gochman (1990) argues, frequent conflictual interactions invite more conflict in the future and increase the probability of war. This is particularly so in East Asia, where a vast majority of MIDs are about territorial disputes. Countries have gone to war more frequently over territory than any other issue in international relations (Holsti 1991). And second, it suggests a sense of tension and intention among regional countries. In other words, an incident of militarized dispute may

² For details, see the website of the Uppsala University Data on Armed Conflict at <http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/>

not immediately lead to an outbreak of war, but does suggest a certain level of tension between the countries engaged in the dispute, and their intention and perception toward each other.

Figure 1 shows the total number of MIDs in NEA and SEA from the 1950s to 2000s.

Figure 1. Total Number of Militarized Interstate Disputes in NEA and SEA, 1950-2000

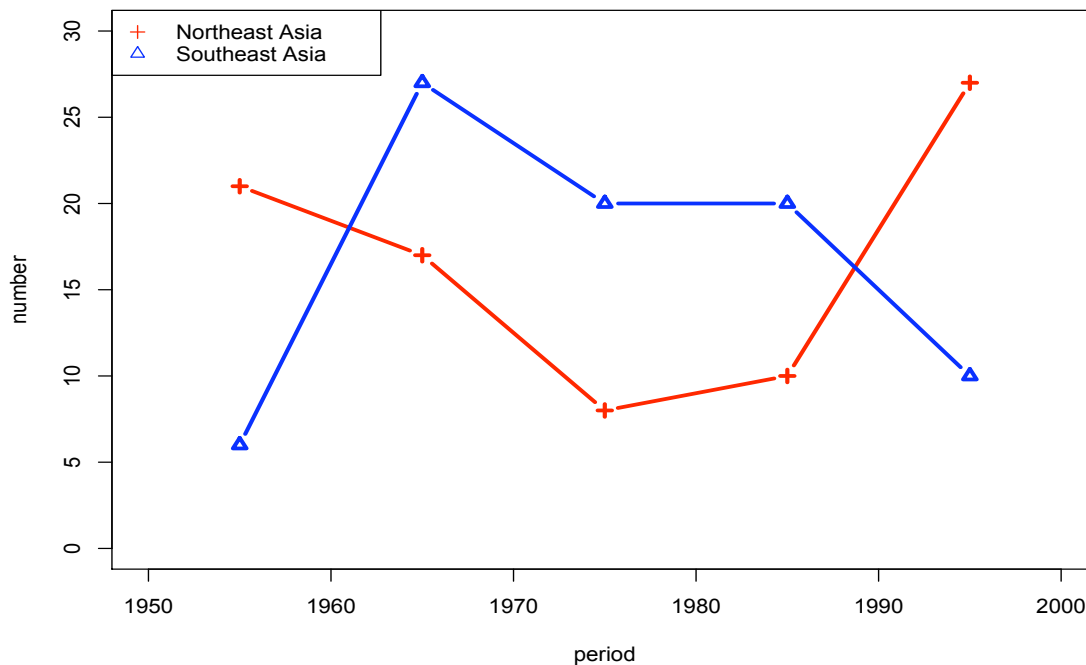


Figure 1. Total Number of Militarized Interstate Disputes in NEA and SEA 1950 – 2000
Source: ZeevMaoz (2005). Dyadic MID Dataset (version 2.0):
<http://psfaculty.ucdavis.edu/zmaoz/dyadmid.html>

NEA starts out with more than 20 MIDs in the 1950s. The number decreases throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and stays pretty much the same throughout the 1980s. However, the frequency sharply increases in the 1990s, and jumps to 27 MIDs. In SEA, on the other hand, the relatively low number of MIDs in the 1950s is followed by an intense period of regional conflict in the 1960s, reflecting the tumultuous and volatile state of the postwar Southeast Asian interstate interactions. The confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia known as *konfrontasi* (1962-66) is the main reason for this upward movement. The

number of MIDs declines in the 1970s, however, and stays unchanged throughout the 1980s. It then sharply declines again in the 1990s.

The observed variation is puzzling at least for two reasons. First, for the preceding two decades i.e. the 1970s and 1980s, both NEA and SEA had shown essentially the same trend in regional interstate conflict—a decrease in regional conflict in the 70s followed by a period of stability in the 80s. The two regions suddenly began to diverge in the 1990s, a trend that continued throughout the 2000s. Second, the variation appears to be confined within the region. While the number of interstate disputes among the NEA countries increased throughout the 1990s, the number of disputes between the NEA countries and non-NEA countries has decreased during the same period, mainly because China has resolved many of her bilateral territorial disputes with neighboring countries. On the other hand, the number of MIDs between the SEA nations and non-SEA nations has increased slightly when the SEA nations have reduced interstate conflict among themselves.

Another suggestive fact indicating that NEA is a region of conflict, while SEA is a region of peace, concerns the vastly different amounts of military expenditures spent by NEA and SEA countries, respectively. Figure 2 shows the trends in the total military expenditures of both regions, with NEA spending far more than SEA. The total military expenditure of NEA has increased from 69 billion dollars in 1988 to 117 billion in 2005. Much of the increase is due to the sharp rise in the military spending of China. However, both Korea and Japan also made their contributions, accounting for approximately one-third of the total increase. Over the same period, the military expenditure for SEA has only increased from 7.7 billion to 15 billion.

Figure 2. Total Military Expenditure in NEA and SEA, 1988-2010

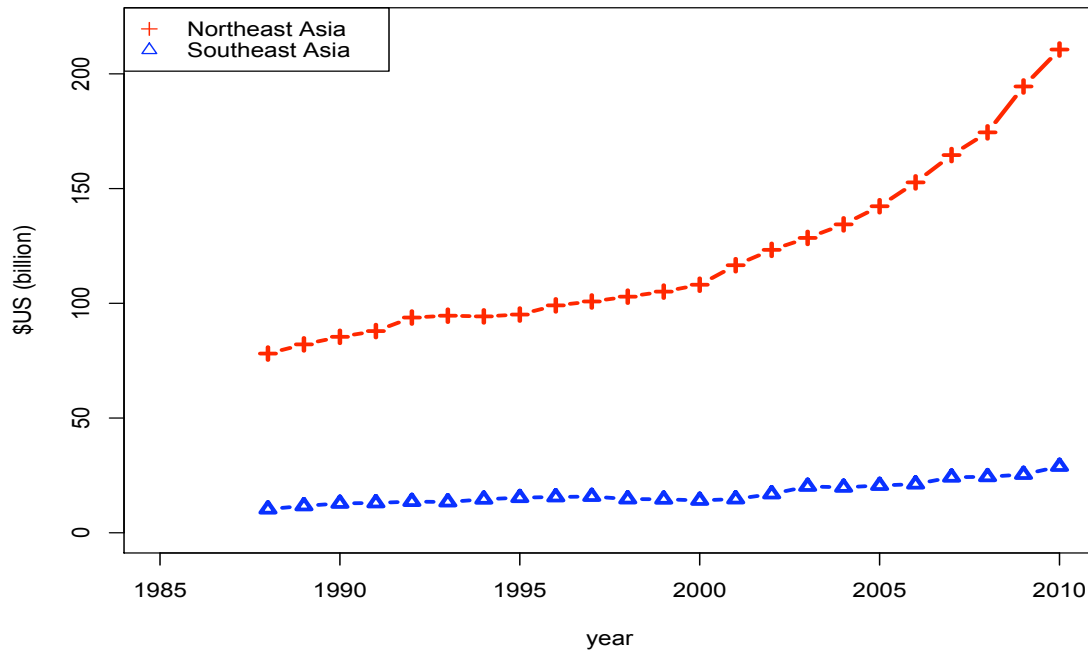


Figure 2. Total Military Expenditure in NEA and SEA 1988 – 2010

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Military Expenditure Database

www.sipri.org/databases/milex

Note: NEA data exclude North Korea's military expenditure for all years.

SEA data exclude Myanmar for all years, Vietnam 1995-2002, and Laos 1988-1991.

While it is true that NEA economies are larger than SEA counterparts, and the rate of increase is only slightly higher in NEA than SEA, SEA countries have as long borders and sealanes to protect as the NEA counterparts, and yet they spend substantially less on military expenditure than NEA. The difference in the absolute amount of military spending between the two regions also support the view that military tension is higher in NEA than in SEA.

Contributing to the diverging trend and differences between NEA and SEA are several important and puzzling regional phenomena, which the book will analyze in depth. In NEA, one key phenomenon relates to the emergence of mutual threat perception in Sino-Japanese relations. China's military and economic power has caught up with that of Japan throughout the 1990s, and surpassed it in the 2000s. If threat perception were a function of geographical proximity and power asymmetries, as realists argue, then we would expect

Japan's threat perception of China to increase, while China's threat perception of Japan to decline. However, what has emerged from this power transition is increased threat perception in both countries of each other. This is because intention matters in determining threat perception, in addition to geographical proximity and power asymmetry. In the case of Sino-Japanese relations, the Chinese assessment of Japan's aggressive intentions has changed due to the rise of the 'history problem', and increased her threat perception of Japan's military power. Furthermore, the analysis of the mutual threat perception in Sino-Japanese relations suggests that while threat perception can be uni-directional when power disparities between two states are so lop-sided to favor one state over the other, the more typical pattern of threat perception is cyclical. In other words, increased threat perception in one country of another leads the latter to perceive greater threat from the former as well, thereby creating a mutually reinforcing pattern. The examination of mutual threat perception in Sino-Japanese relations provides a useful example illustrating my argument. I offer an identity-based explanation for why mutual threat perception emerged between China and Japan.

Another important and puzzling development in NEA has been that conflict between Korea and Japan has intensified after Korea's democratization in the latter half of the 1980s. This is inconsistent with democratic peace theory that states that democracies do not fight with one another. Although democratic peace theory typically focuses on war as the dependent variable (Russett 1993; Huth and Allee 2002), we would expect the number of interstate militarized disputes to decline as well after a pair of countries becomes a democratic dyad. The Korea-Japan case deviates from this expectation, and calls for a different explanation.

In SEA, one of the most surprising developments has been the establishment of human rights institutions. The member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have never been champions of human rights. If anything, they have been reluctant to promote individual and political freedoms, and often actively suppressed the promotion of human rights in the name of social stability and collective good. The so-called ‘Asian values’ stance was a succinct regional position on human rights in the 1990s, resisting a liberal interpretation of human rights. Compare that with what we have in SEA today. ASEAN has established both ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, the first of its kind in Asia, and ASEAN Commission on Women and Children, as well as institutionalized mechanisms to protect the rights of migrant workers. Why have a group of states that have cherished state sovereignty and the principle of non-interference decided to establish a regional human rights mechanism? Existing theories do not provide a satisfactory explanation, and we need a different explanation to account for this phenomenon as well.

In both NEA and SEA, territorial disputes are the main source of interstate conflict and threaten to derail otherwise stable interstate relations. However, the two regions have shown contrasting approaches to their key territorial disputes since the 1990s. In NEA, key territorial disputes have intensified with increasingly fervent claim and counter-claim of sovereignty over the disputed territories throughout the 1990s and 2000s. On the other hand, two key disputes in SEA have been resolved through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice in the same period. This is puzzling because both regions have a high sensitivity to any loss of state sovereignty and care to preserve what they perceive is their territory.

Furthermore, all these territorial disputes share a number of important attributes. They are all sovereignty issues, and hence indivisible issues. The parties to the disputes want

all or nothing, and perceive strategic value from the disputed territory. There are potential and actual economic resources in the surrounding waters of the disputed territories. Despite these similarities, NEA countries have intensely fought for sovereignty over them, while SEA nations have come to an agreement to peacefully resolve the disputes. Although the difference in the resolution rate of disputes between the two regions may not be statistically significant, the resolution of territorial disputes, especially through third-party arbitration, is a rare and important event in international relations, and deserves an analysis.

While no interstate war has taken place in both regions for more than two decades, there is ample evidence that suggests that NEA has increasingly become a region of conflict, while SEA has further developed as a region of peace. Why has this divergence between NEA and SEA occurred? We need to go beyond the existing theoretical frameworks and focus on intra-regional processes in order to fully and satisfactorily understand the cross-regional divergences in East Asia.

Existing Theories and East Asian Affairs

Several important theories such as (neo)functionalism, economic interdependence, liberal intergovernmentalism, and democratic peace theory all have difficulty explaining the cross-regional divergence between NEA and SEA.

First, neofunctionalism analyzes regional cooperation from the emergence of some functional problems due to cross-national economic exchanges, which states cannot resolve individually and call for regional policy coordination (Hass 1958 & 1968; Hass and Schmitter 1964). Initially functional cooperation takes place in narrow, highly technical issues such as scientific problems, transportation, and communications, because of potential conflicts of interest between important domestic actors. Over time, however, cooperation in the “low politics” spills over into the “high politics” through institutional and issue linkages,

advancing regional cooperation in political and military affairs. The two key aspects of neofunctionalism concern the role of transnational technocrats (Hass 1958) and the importance of international organizations (Hass and Schmitter 1964). Drawing heavily from the European experience, neofunctionalism argues that the engine of European regional integration is the supranational organization of the European Union itself and the technocrats who run them.

Although the lack of regional institutions and transnational technocrats pushing for regionalization in NEA is consistent with what neofunctionalism would predict, its emphasis on supranational organizations and technocrats is not met in the case of SEA. Right from the inception, the region's premier organization known as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was a weak organization, as it lacked clear, binding rules as well as decision-making power. Arguably, ASEAN was created not to erode state sovereignty but to enhance it, and not to advance regionalism but to achieve peaceful interstate relations based on the strict implementation of the principle of non-interference. As a result, the main driving force behind regionalization and regionalism in SEA has been the member states of ASEAN, not ASEAN itself. Thus it is inter-governmental agreements among the ASEAN nations, rather than the influence of transnational technocrats, that has been the key for the development of regionalism in SEA. No doubt, ASEAN played a facilitating role by providing regular forums for consultation and interaction, but to say that it was the main force behind SEA regionalization and regionalism is to overstate the role of ASEAN as an actor.

Second, the theory of economic interdependence states that the higher the degree of economic interdependence between countries, the more peaceful their relations will be. Economic interdependence would also lead to more integration on other levels, as economic

exchanges increase, so does the demand for common rules, decision-making process, and adjudication system (Stone, Sweet and Sandholtz 1998). However, there is little difference between the two regions in terms of the percentage of their intra-regional trade out of total trade volume. The percentage of intra-regional trade is similar in both regions, slightly less than 25% (see Table 1), and well below the level found in Europe and North America. Both regions

Table 1. Intra-Regional Trade as Percentage of Total Trade (by region), 1970 - 2000

Region	1970	1980	1990	2000
NEA	n/a	17%	20%	24%
ASEAN-5	21%	18%	19%	22%
EC / EU	50%	56%	61%	62%
NAFTA	36%	34%	41%	56%
Mercosur	9%	12%	14%	18%

Source: UN Comtrade Data. The percentage of intra-regional trade is calculated by total regional exports divided by total exports.

And third, liberal inter-governmentalism does not fare well, either. An influential work in this tradition is Moravcsik's *The Choice for Europe* (1998). Once again drawing from the European experience of regional integration, Moravcsik proposes a three-stage explanation: preference formation, intergovernmental bargaining, and institutional lock-in of bargains. He argues that European integration advanced when the commercial interests of powerful economic producers in major European countries converged. He sees the need to adapt through policy coordination to the trends in technology and in economic policy as the basic driving rationale behind European integration (1998: 3). The final outcome, however, also reflects interstate bargaining, which depends on patterns of asymmetrical interdependence. In addition, to secure the substantive bargains they have struck,

governments pool sovereignty in international institutions for the purpose of committing the members to cooperate.

The theory presumes the existence of a particular type of political system, one that makes the government susceptible to domestic interest groups, namely, liberal democracy. Indeed, all the major European countries—the focus of Moravcsik’s work—are pluralistic democracies. Powerful economic groups in such countries might have much to gain from an expansion of capitalism to the regional level (Choi and Caporaso 2003), and might put political pressure on the government for regionalization.

However, it is doubtful whether NEA lacks domestic actors pushing for regionalization, while SEA contains such actors. Businesses typically prefer political stability both in domestic and international arena, and that is true both in NEA and SEA. The major business lobbying organizations in Japan and Korea—*keidanren* and *jeonkyungryun*—put considerable pressure on their respective government to quell any political dispute with neighboring countries, lest it might disrupt economic trade. Furthermore, in SEA, the push for regionalization in SEA has not come from domestic actors, although their influence has grown over the years. The regionalist project in SEA has always been an elitist project promoted by the diplomatic circles of the member states.³ Once agreed, various programs for regionalization were then implemented by national governments. Because of—not

³ Indeed, one of the criticisms of the SEA regionalist project—a criticism readily acknowledged by the regional governments as well as ASEAN—is that the SEA regionalism, especially ASEAN’s various projects, does not resonate with ordinary people. Although there is a genuine sense of a regional diplomatic community, and a growing sense of a regional business community, there is a conspicuous lack of linkage between ASEAN and the peoples in SEA. This is not surprising, since ASEAN was not set up to serve the peoples; the original goal of ASEAN was to provide a peaceful regional environment in which the countries could focus on nation-building through economic development. As the Report of the ASEAN Eminent Persons Group on Vision 2020 suggests, this is an area where the regional countries seek to improve through implementing policies that are a more people-oriented ASEAN. It is noteworthy that the phrases such as “the people’s ASEAN” and “people-oriented approach” began to emerge in the recent years, and ASEAN has instituted more channels of interaction with the civil society. See the “Report of the ASEAN Eminent Persons Group on Vision 2020” available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5304.htm>.

despite—this elitist approach to regionalization, the SEA nations have managed to advance their regionalist project over time, one consequence of which has been the decreasing level of intra-regional conflict.

Democratic peace theory does not apply well to the case of East Asia, either. There are two versions of the theory—monadic and dyadic. The monadic version states that democracies are less likely to initiate, escalate, and engage in war, while the dyadic version argues that it is only true among democracies (Huth and Allee 2002). Democracies face greater domestic audience costs (Fearon 1994; Tomz 2007), have more institutional constraints on the executive (Russett 1993; Rousseau 2005), and have a higher expectation of compromise when negotiating with other democracies (Dixon 1994). Hence the greater the number of democratic states in a region is, the less likely regional conflict will take place.

Graph 4 shows that both regions have become more democratic over the period of 1975-2008, pretty much at the same rate of democratic development. The average democratic score for whole SEA is lower than that of NEA. If one looks at the original five ASEAN nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand—then the score is higher than the NEA average, but the rate of increase remains essentially the same. Despite the similar trend of democratic development in both regions, however, the frequency of MIDs increased in NEA, while it declined substantially in SEA.

As for the relations of specific dyads in the region, South Korea democratized in the latter half of the 1980s, but despite Korea's democratization the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute between Korea and Japan intensified throughout the 1990s. Taiwan never had any MID with Japan before democratization in the mid 1980s. But after the democratization, it came to have a number of MIDs with Japan. Although not a democracy in the conventional sense, China nevertheless experienced a gradual relaxation of social control since the beginning of

Deng's reform policy in the late 1970s. Despite the setbacks caused by the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, China's civil society expanded rapidly in the 90s (Lee 2005), indicating that at least on one key indicator of democracy, China became more democratic. And yet the number of MIDs between China, on the one hand, and Korea and Japan, on the other hand, has increased. It appears that with respect to NEA, democratization correlates with intensifying regional conflict.

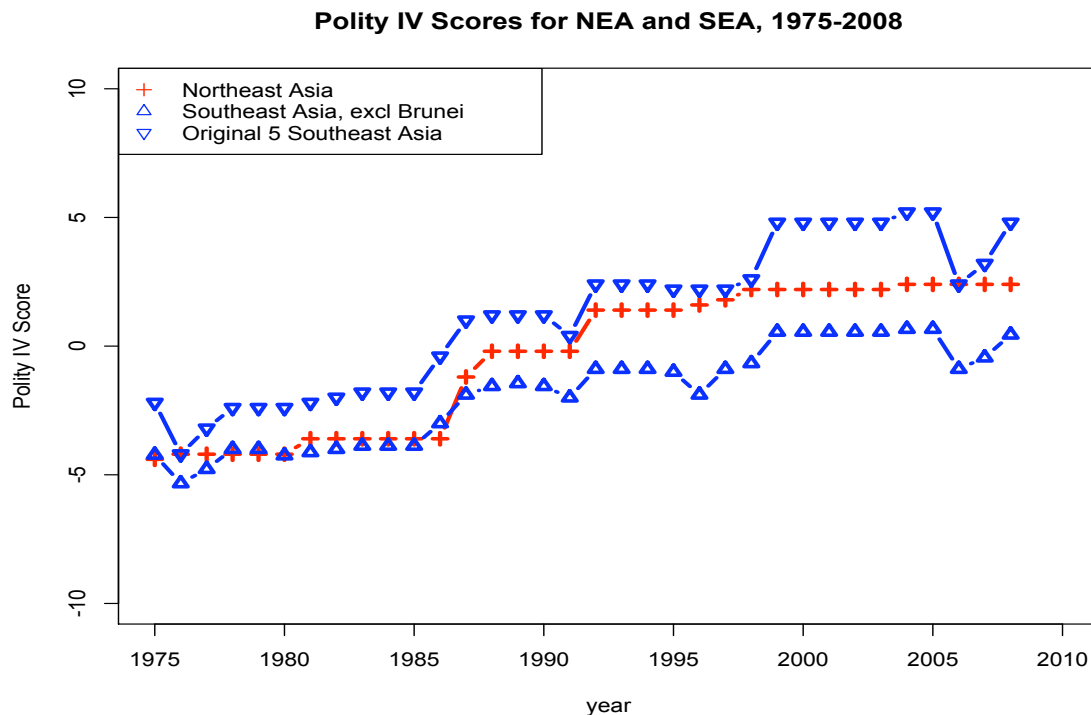


Figure 3. Polity IV Scores for NEA and SEA Countries, 1975-2008
 Note: Polity IV dataset available at <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>
 The dataset does not contain the data for Brunei.
 Cambodia is excluded for the years, 1978-1986 for the unavailability of data.

On the other hand, the SEA nations are not full-fledged democracies. Several incidents of libel cases in Singapore and Malaysia suggest that there is much to be desired in terms of democracy in both countries. Indonesia has certainly become more democratic following the fall of Suharto in 1998. The *reformasi* period resulted in a more open and liberal political and social environment, and despite much social instability mainly caused by

economic disparities, Indonesia is a thriving democracy today. While one could conclude that a decline in the number of MID's among SEA nations is due to democratization in countries like Indonesia, the fact is that the decrease in the frequency of MID's in SEA predates Indonesia's democratization. For instance, the signing of the special agreement to send the territorial dispute with Malaysia to the ICJ took place in 1997, and negotiations for the agreement several years earlier, well before Indonesia's democratization. Hence, although it is undoubtedly true that the region has become more democratic in the recent decade or so, democratization has not been the critical factor for the decrease in the frequency of interstate disputes in SEA.

Power-Based Explanation: All About the Rise of China?

East Asia is a region with a number of flashpoints, and several great powers vie for regional influence (Friedberg 1993). Countries have significant military expenditures, which have risen since the Asian financial crisis of 1997 (Hartfiel and Job 2007). As a result, the dominant theoretical lens through which to analyze regional affairs has been the realist one.

The realist argument explaining the regional differences in East Asia would focus on the rise of China as the key factor. China's rise in power and influence poses a fundamental security challenge to the regional and global systems by altering the current distribution of power, and has accordingly received a great deal of academic attention (Ross 1997; Christensen 1999; Johnston 2003; Goldstein 2005). The argument would invoke two realist theories.⁴

⁴ For critiques of variants of realism, see Keohane, Robert (ed.). 1986. *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York, Columbia University Press) as well as Keohane and Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security*, vol. 20, no. 1 (summer 1995): pp. 39-51 and Kupchan, Charles and Clifford Kupchan, "The Promise of Collective Security," *International Security*, vol. 20, no. 1 (summer 1995): pp. 52-61. For a good discussion of rationalism and constructivism in International Relations, see Ruggie, John, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization*, vol. 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998): pp. 855-885.

The first is the geopolitical explanation centering on the importance of an external enemy or threat for the formation and consolidation of a group of states. External balancing is one response of weak states trapped in the world of the strong, as internal balancing becomes too costly or is simply impossible. States would form a grouping to balance against either power (Waltz 1979) or threat (Walt 1989). Understood in this sense, the realist theory of regionalism is essentially the same as the realist theory of alliance formation. A hypothesis of the theory is that a regional grouping would form and advance, as the danger of an external power or threat arises and increases.⁵

The second is power transition theory (Organski 1958; Gilpin 1981). Power transition theory states that as the power disparity between a hegemon and a rising power narrows, conflict between the two becomes more likely if the rising power is dissatisfied with the status quo (Organski 1968). Indeed, evidence is strong that the power disparities between Japan, regional hegemon, and China, rising power, have significantly narrowed through the 1990s and 2000s. China is now the second largest economy in the world taking over the position previously held by Japan. Based on its fast economic development, China's military modernization has progressed rapidly, leading to a fast increase in its defense budget.

The realist explanation for the cross-regional variation in East Asia would then run as follows. In NEA, as China's economic and military capabilities develop, the power disparity between China and Japan narrows, leading to power transition from Japan to China. This creates tension in the bilateral relations, and leads to greater conflict between

⁵ To explain the formation of a regional grouping, the realist theory, however, needs an additional explanation for why the grouping of weak states tends to be based on regions. It is perfectly feasible that weak states form a grouping with other states outside their regions, in order to balance against an external power or threat. One recourse is to invoke the common experience explanation. Reiter argues that states make alliance policy in accordance with lessons drawn from formative historical experiences (1994). Since regional countries are likely to undergo similar experiences due to their geographical proximity, they are more likely to draw similar historical lessons, which then lead them to form a grouping.

the two. As a result, regional affairs have become more conflict ridden. In SEA, on the other hand, the rise of China compels the regional countries to come together to balance against China's rising power. As a result, they lessen their own disputes in an effort to balance against China.

The structural changes taking place in East Asia due to the rise of China are an important factor affecting the dynamics of regional interstate relations. But they are insufficient in fully accounting for the cross-regional variation between NEA and SEA. It is true that there has not been a common external enemy against which the NEA countries could form a grouping, which appears to be consistent with what we would expect if the realist theory were correct. The cold war conflict divided the region into the communist (USSR, PRC, and DPRK) and capitalist camps (US, Japan, ROK, and Taiwan), and imposed significant constraints on the scope and nature of foreign policies by the regional countries during the cold war period. Perhaps, the closest thing to a common external enemy for the NEA countries during the cold war was the Soviet Union in the late 1960s and the 1970s. China, Japan, and South Korea all saw the Soviet Union as a threat during this period. Due to a series of tension-building events throughout the 1960s, which resulted in the Sino-Soviet border conflict in 1969, China came to see the Soviet Union as a military threat, which forced Mao to re-appraise China's relations with the USA, leading to the PRC-USA talks in 1972. Japan perceived the Soviet Union as a threat mainly because of the bilateral territorial disputes over the Northern Territories⁶ and formulated its defense posture from

⁶ The Northern Territories consists of four islands located off the northeast coast of the Nemuro Peninsula of Hokkaido. They are: Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri and Etorofu. The Japanese side argues that the Soviet Union ignored the Neutrality Pact that was valid between Japan and the Soviet Union, entered the war against Japan, and forcefully took away the islands from Japan. After Japan had accepted the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, Soviet forces occupied all of the Four Northern Islands from 28 August 1945 to 5 September 1945, and subsequently, the Soviet Union unilaterally incorporated the territories under occupation into its own

calculation of the balance of power between the USA and USSR (NDPO 1976⁷; Sebata 1997). South Korea regarded the USSR as the main supporter of the communist regime in North Korea and its invasion into the South during the Korean War, and hence regarded it as an enemy.

But such common perception did not result in any discussion of forming a regional grouping or bilateral alliances to balance against the Soviet power or threat, as the realist explanation would predict. Instead, all three regional countries relied on a third power, namely, the US, for their external security. China sought a rapprochement with the US to counter the growing Soviet threat and influence, while Japan and Korea entered into separate security alliances with the US.

Power transition theory may explain increasing China-Japan conflict, but it cannot explain other crucial aspects of regional affairs in NEA. Regional conflict in NEA extends beyond the China-Japan dyad, and both Korea and Taiwan have engaged in more frequent conflict with Japan, contributing to increasing level of conflict in NEA. Moreover, if the rise of China were the main factor driving the behavior of regional countries, then would we not expect to see Japan, Korea, and Taiwan to cooperate to balance against the rise of China? But it is questionable at best whether balancing behavior is the strategy adopted by Korea, Japan, and Taiwan (Kang 2004). Thus any explanation focusing only on the rise of China cannot satisfactorily explain what is more of a region-wide phenomenon.

The realist explanation encounters even more difficulty explaining SEA. Here the problem is two-fold. First, balancing China is not consistent with the official discourse and

territories. The Japanese position can be found at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/russia/territory/overview.html>.

⁷ See the 1976 National Defense Program Outline available at <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/docs/19761029.O1E.html>.

policy of ASEAN. ASEAN was created to consolidate the divided and fragile region, with a variety of religion, culture, political system, and economic development, rather than to resist against an external power (Narine 2002). Sure, the organization fears external intervention, and would not like to see great power rivalry and intervention in the region. But even there, the regional strategy has been to bring all great powers together and get them immersed in regional affairs as a way of balancing greater power influence, rather than to target a specific country (Goh 2005).

The reason the SEA nations came together to form a grouping in the 1960s is not because of the existence of an external enemy. Rather, it had more to do with the collective realization of common internal weaknesses and the desire to create a peaceful regional environment for domestic nation-building efforts. Although the SEA nations were concerned with potential intervention of external powers in the region, which might pit regional countries against one another and would compromise the hard-fought national independence,⁸ such enemy was never clearly defined. Indeed the SEA nations took great care to prevent others from misconstruing ASEAN as a grouping against an external power.

Some argue that the development of ASEAN was in response to Vietnam's hegemonic ambition in the region (Hurrell 1995: 50). This is a dubious claim. While the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia certainly played a crucial role in solidifying the grouping of SEA nations and their collective identity, the relevance of the event for ASEAN's development lied in the challenge Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia posed to the ASEAN-supported regional norms, the collapse of which could destabilize the region. It in no way

⁸ See the 1967 Bangkok Declaration available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1212.htm>. For example, the leader of the Malaysian delegation stated in his speech, "Unless we are all conscious of our responsibility to shape our common destiny and to prevent external intervention and interference, our region will continue to be fraught with danger and tension." (p. 8).

reflected any sort of desire on the part of the ASEAN states to balance against Vietnam. ASEAN never treated Vietnam as an external other against which to coalesce the organization; instead, it always envisioned Vietnam to be part of the ingroup and hence encouraged Vietnam to join the organization (see Chapter 5).

The second problem with the power-based explanation is that it cannot explain why several regional countries in SEA decided to resolve their disputes. Balancing behavior does not require them to resolve disputes. In fact, it is doubtful whether countries whose primary strategy is balancing an external power, would ever attempt to resolve their common disputes, for they could merely postpone their disputes.

This raises a more fundamental issue concerning the conceptualization of peace. For realists, peace is tantamount to the absence of conflict. Defined in this negative sense, they miss an important difference between the absence of conflict and resolution of conflict. The latter is peace in a more positive sense. The resolution of key territorial disputes between SEA nations suggest that SEA peace is more of the latter kind than the former, and the realist emphasis on balancing or power transition cannot account for the development a positive peace in SEA.

The critical weakness of existing approaches to the study of regionalization concerns with its neglect of internal processes within the region producing regionalization and regionalism. Not only is it doubtful how extensive and deep an externally-induced regional grouping (i.e. a grouping whose existence depends only on an external enemy or threat) can develop, but such regional grouping would also be of a very different kind than one that is based on a sense of shared identity. The latter would not disappear even if an external enemy or threat disappears, as its existence depends on its own self-sustaining mechanism.

Argument of the Dissertation: Identity Distance Theory

Power dynamics are an important factor in affecting regional affairs, but they are not the only important factor, let alone the most important. Our understanding would improve significantly if we expanded our analytical horizon to include other factors. In this book I offer a different explanation based on identity, to explain the cross-regional differences between NEA and SEA. I develop a new concept called *identity distance*, and operationalize it to explain the different patterns of regional affairs between NEA and SEA. Identity distance is the distance between groups on relevant measures of identity. More formally, it refers to perceived socio-psychological differences between groups, and measures the degree to which the members of the ingroup perceive themselves to be different from relevant outgroup(s). The key hypothesis is that if identity distance widens between countries, then conflict is more likely to occur between them. If identity distance narrows between countries, on the other hand, then the likelihood of conflict would decrease.

My argument places the analytic focus on intra-regional processes and interactions, and gives explanatory weight to socio-psychological factors, to explain the cross-regional variation between NEA and SEA. I argue that what I call identity distance is the key to understanding why regional affairs in NEA have become more conflictual since the 1990s, while those in SEA have become more peaceful in the same period. By invoking identity and social interactions, I explicitly take a constructivist approach in my analysis and seek to examine how identity distance affects interstate security.

Although constructivism is not a school of thought similar to realism, liberalism, or institutionalism, there is a set of assumptions that are common to various constructivist approaches to the study of social and political phenomena. First, constructivists believe that the preferences of actors are not fixed or exogenous. Rather preferences can vary over time, as the identities of actors can change over time. Thus identity is the central determinant of

preferences and behavior. Second, constructivists assume that actors and structures are mutually constituted (Giddens 1984; Wendt 1999: 139; Hopf 1998). All individual action is partly constrained or pre-determined by social structures. However, human agency can in turn also alter social structures through interactions. Third, while constructivists take ideas and identities seriously, their focus is on *intersubjective* ideas and identities rather than *subjective* ones. This is because social scientists are primarily concerned with explaining and understanding group behavior rather than individual behavior, as social facts and actions are the product of an intersubjective understanding, never individual, atomic outcome.

Within constructivism, different opinions exist as to what is the primary mechanism by which identity formation takes place. Some scholars emphasize the role of communication. Habermas, for instance, argues in his communicative action theory that discourse among equals can alter expectations and identities. It is through communication that individuals create domestic societies and states create an international community (Habermas 1981). Other scholars like Johnston (2008) and Hopf (2002) focus on socialization as the primary driver. Johnston illustrates how specific micro socialization mechanisms can lead to changing identities and interests of a realpolitik state like China.

Early constructivist writings focused on the philosophical and metatheoretical aspects of constructivist approach, dealing with questions about ontology and epistemology as well as reconceptualizing issues and theories (Wendt 1987 & 1999; Onuf 1989; Kratochwil 1989). First-generation constructivists, however, have not developed many precise theories or models of international politics (Jorgensen 2001: 48). Perhaps, it is this fact that led some prominent scholars to doubt the utility of employing constructivist approaches in IR. Of course, there are exceptions that show the fruitfulness of constructivist theorizing and empirical research such as Ruggie (1986), Finnemore (1996), Hopf (2002), and Johnston

(1995 & 2008). This book is an attempt to continue this tradition by explicitly employing the central factor in constructivism, namely, identity, to explain and understand important issues in international security. I advance identity distance theory (IDT).

Identity distance theory (IDT) is grounded in two theories in social psychology and sociology, namely, social identity theory (SIT) and contact theory (CT). I will develop and discuss IDT in much greater detail in Chapter Two. For now it suffices to say that both SIT and CT capture important aspects of social interaction, and there is ample experimental and observational research in support of their validity, but they essentially predict the different outcomes of social interaction. SIT predicts that social interactions would produce intergroup discrimination and conflict because of the need to positively distinguish one's ingroup from some relevant outgroup(s). On the other hand, CT holds that social interactions can lessen prejudice and increase mutual trust, thereby increasing the likelihood of intergroup cooperation. I argue that one way to reconcile these two theories is to focus on the identity distance among the actors and how it changes during interaction.

In NEA, since the mid 1980s, the rise of the so-called "history problem" (*lishi wenti*) has made regional countries feel farther apart on identity distance. The "history problem" is essentially about the shared understanding of Japan's past aggression during WWII, and involves a number of issues such as the history textbook controversy, Japanese prime minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine, 'comfort women' issue, Nanking massacre, etc. The enhanced salience of these issues has troubled the bilateral relations between NEA nations by consolidating the sense of national ingroup and depicting another regional country (Japan) as the relevant outgroup. This generated fervent nationalism in NEA nations directed against each other and was the key reason why conflict between NEA nations has increased.

In the case of China-Japan dyad, the widening identity distance due to the history problem has had a significant effect on China's assessment of Japan's aggressive intention, and increased China's threat perception of Japan's military power in the region. One could argue that the revision of the US-Japan Security Alliance and the expansion of Japan's role within it is the main cause of China's increasing threat perception of Japan. But it is not so obvious that the expansion of the US-Japan alliance is the main reason for China's increasing threat perception of Japan, because an increasing number of Chinese analysts have taken a more sanguine view of the US-Japan Security Alliance. One of the reasons why they consider the US-Japan alliance more positively now is that they believe that the alliance keeps Japan down, placing limitations on Japan's militarism and military capabilities. Even if it the US-Japan Security Alliance were the main reason, the 'history problem' and Chinese assessment of Japan's aggressive intentions would still matter and contribute to its threat perception of Japan.

As for the Korea-Japan relationship, identity distance is an intervening variable and alters the effect of democratization on conflict. Korea's democratization in the late 1980s has been a mixed blessing for its relations with Japan. While the bilateral relationship has seen a remarkable improvement in economic and socio-cultural areas, the political relationship has come to be marred by the history problem, and became more conflictual and tense, with intensifying sovereignty claims over the disputed territory, Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. This is because the salience of the history problem has widened the identity distance between the two nations, and as a result, societal views about each other have worsened. Coupled with democratization in Korea, increasingly negative views and sentiments have affected foreign policy making in both countries, leading to more conflictual and tense relationship.

In SEA, the deliberate effort to construct a regional identity has gained a momentum throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and led to the development of a regional community with establishment of various institutions. As a result, a key institutional development has been the creation of a regional human rights mechanism called the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). The process of building a regional community based on a common identity has narrowed the identity distance between regional countries, and raised the comfort level among them, thereby allowing thorny issues such as human rights to be discussed and developed more freely. The enlarged political space for discussion and action on human rights issues, coupled with several regional crises and democratization in key regional countries, weakened the norm of non-interference and engendered new regional norms such as good governance, rule of law, and accountability.

Finally, with respect to key territorial disputes in both NEA and SEA, identity distance affected key territorial disputes in both regions. In NEA, the widening identity distance between regional countries has led to intensification of territorial disputes, while in SEA the narrowing identity distance between regional countries have resulted in the resolution of two key disputes through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice. The analysis of an original political elite survey shows that identity distance affects threat perception and the willingness to cooperate on security matters. The analysis also reveals a clear difference between NEA and SEA in terms of how the political elites in both regions perceive neighboring countries.

The contrasting evolution of identity distance in NEA and SEA creates different dynamics of regional interstate interactions. In NEA, a widening identity distance creates a vicious cycle whereby it leads to more conflict, which in turn further widens the identity distance between regional countries, which deteriorates their relations. In SEA, on the other

hand, a narrowing identity distance creates a virtuous cycle in which it leads to decreasing conflict and greater cooperation on security matters, which in turn further narrows the identity distance with an improvement of their relations. Over time, therefore, the former becomes a region of conflict, while the latter develops into a region of peace. Barring the intervention of any other major factors, the contrasting dynamics based on identity distance will keep the future trajectories of two regions apart.

Although the identity distance began to widen in NEA and narrow in SEA beginning in the 1980s, the seeds of the contrasting evolution of identity distance in both regions were planted in much earlier periods. In the case of NEA, the ambiguous resolution of the meaning of WWII between the regional countries in the late 1940s and 1950s created a time bomb that would explode in the 1980s and continue till the present day, leading to troubled and tense relations between the regional countries. In SEA, the initial effort to set up a regional association in the 1960s set the region into a course toward regionalism through a habit of consultation and personalization of relations among regional leaders, which later produced regional cooperation and decreasing conflict between the SEA nations.

Another key factor for the contrasting evolution of identity distance in both regions is the degree of social cohesion, especially ethnic homogeneity. The fact NEA countries are largely homogeneous ethnic groups—where the boundaries of a nation match the boundaries of the state—meant that social cohesion was high, and national building that much easier than otherwise would have been possible. However, because they could solidify so well internally within their borders, external solidification with neighboring countries was not seen as essential. In SEA, on the other hand, weak social cohesion due to ethnic heterogeneity, religious diversity, and communist insurgency within national borders meant that the regional countries were compelled to seek peaceful relations with neighboring

countries, so that they could focus more on their nation-building efforts. The intra-state fortunes in NEA produced interstate misfortunes among them, whereas intra-state misfortunes in SEA countries resulted in interstate blessings.

Methodological Approach

One of the often heard critiques of constructivist approach concerns weak or vague methods to show the effect of ideational variables. This is a legitimate charge, and the onus is on constructivist scholars to show that their case can be made. I adopt multiple methods in the book to examine the effect of identity distance on interstate conflict and security cooperation. They are the content analysis of newspaper editorials, a cross-country survey of the political elite, and case study of territorial disputes.

Content Analysis: A key problem with identity research relates to the lack of quality data. This is more problematic for my purpose, for I seek to establish the evolution of identity distance over time, and its effect on interstate security. Ideally, large cross-national, time-series survey data measuring the perceptions of neighboring countries and the dependent variable would be an ideal dataset, but no such data exist with respect to East Asia.

Instead, I examine and analyze the views of neighboring countries existing in major newspapers in the key regional countries in both NEA and SEA. Content analysis is a systematic method of extracting meaning from text for the purpose of scientifically testing hypotheses. It is useful when data accessibility is a problem and the analyst's data are limited to documentary evidence, and when restrictions of time and space do not permit the analyst to directly access the subjects of research (Holsti 1969). This may well be due to the lack of alternative data (interview, surveys, observations, etc), or because the subjects of research no longer exist today. In this sense, content analysis is a last resort approach to research when more direct research techniques are ruled out by circumstances.

I analyze the following newspapers. For NEA, I look at *Asahi Shimbun* (Japan); *Donga Daily* (South Korea); and *People's Daily* (China). For SEA, I analyze the *Straits Times* (Singapore); *Jakarta Post* (Indonesia); and *The New Straits Times* (Malaysia). The newspapers are chosen to cover a wide spectrum of views (political right and left), so that the views discerned from them can be regarded as comprehensive and representative. For Malaysia and Indonesia, due to my inability to understand the local languages, I choose to analyze local English-language newspapers. I supplant the content analysis of newspapers with an analysis of official documents if necessary such as ASEAN Ministerial Meetings (AMM) statements.

Political Elite Survey: I conduct an original survey of the political elite (i.e. national legislators) in five different countries in NEA and SEA—Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. China is excluded from the survey because of infeasibility of carrying out such a survey. I distribute the questionnaire to almost all politicians at the national level in those five countries, and collect responses. In order to improve the response rate, multiple approaches are taken, including the creation of a website, faxing, emailing, and in-person encouragement. The subjects were given a month to respond.

The surveys are used to discern how the political elite perceive neighboring countries and their foreign policy preferences. It provides a useful test for the argument advanced in the book. The questionnaire is attached in the Appendix. I measure perceived differences between regional states on such indicators as nationalism, trustworthiness as well as the salience of national and regional identity and a host of other factors such as the perception of regional strategic environment, threat perception, and willingness to settle disputes.

Case Study on Territorial Disputes: The final method I adopt is the case study method. I choose and compare four territorial disputes—two from each region—that have important

attributes in common. They are: Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute between Japan and China; Dokdo/Takeshima between Korea and Japan; Sipadan and Ligitan between Malaysia and Indonesia; and Pedra Branca between Singapore and Malaysia. The former two disputes have intensified throughout the 1990s and 2000s, while the latter two have been resolved through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice in the same period. The purpose of the case study is to show how a widening (narrowing) of the identity distance among regional countries led to the different outcomes (intensification vs resolution) of the territorial disputes under examination.

Defining the Terms: Region, Nationalism, and Identity

Although we cannot resolve the definitional issue by fiat, and there are several different definitions used by different authors, it is important to make it clear what I mean by these key terms in this book.

Region: Few authors explicitly define the term. Among those who do, the central difference hinges on whether a region connotes geographic proximity (Russett, 1967; Mansfield and Milner, 1997: 3; Hurrell, 1995: 38). Although geographical proximity or contiguity tells us little about the characteristics and dynamics of a particular region or its regionalism, without some geographical limits, the term becomes too diffuse and unmanageable. As geographer John Agnew reminds us, the region typically conjures up “the idea of a homogeneous block of space and is never simply intellectual” (1999: 95).

Although necessary, geographical proximity is not a sufficient condition for determining a region. Almost all countries in the world are geographically proximate to some other countries, and yet it is not automatic that they would then constitute a region solely based on geographical proximity. The definition of a sub-system offered by McClelland (1966) is useful here. He defines a sub-system as “a structure that is perceived

by its observers to have elements in interaction or relationships and some identifiable boundaries that separate it from its environment” (p. 20).

One can discern from the definition that two further conditions are necessary for a group of geographically proximate states to be classified as a region. One is connectivity and the other is recognition. Connectivity refers to the patterns of actors’ interactions with a sufficient degree of regularity and intensity within a geographically defined area. Recognition refers to the inter-subjective understanding that both internal and external observers agree that the said geographical area amounts to a distinctive area.

To these is added the last requirement about the number of states. Although it is commonly stated that a region should have two or more states (Thompson, 1973), it makes more sense to regard that a region must contain a minimum of three states. A pair of states would only amount to bilateralism, not regionalism. Therefore a region must contain at least three or more states in it. This requirement accords with our common understanding of the existing regions (ex, North America consisting of Canada, USA and Mexico, or Oceania consisting of Australia, New Zealand and other Pacific Island nations).

Thus the four properties of a region are *three or more states*, *geographical proximity*, *connectivity*, and *recognition*. A region, then, refers to a geographical area consisting of three or more states with a sufficient degree of connectivity that is recognized both within and without as a distinctive area.

Applying the criteria to East Asia, both NEA and SEA clearly constitute regions. Both NEA and SEA contain more than three states that are geographically proximate. They recognize themselves, and are recognized by others, that they constitute regions. Not only do intra-regional trade volumes are relatively high in both NEA and SEA compared to trade with other regions, there are extensive intra-regional human exchanges through tourism,

education, and migration. In the book NEA denotes China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and North Korea, while SEA refers to the ten ASEAN nations: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Similarly, I define regionalization and regionalism as the process and a set of political ideas and policies. A number of authors distinguish regionalization and regionalism by their protagonists or issue areas. They define regionalization as integration by societal forces, especially in economic activities, and regionalism as state-led integration, often with the making of formal mechanisms to support institutionalized cooperation and collective action (Hurrell, 1995: 39; Pempel, 2004; Beeson 2004: 7). However, these definitions are problematic for two reasons. First, the definitions are at odd with our daily usage of terms ending with “-zation” or “-ism.” The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines “-ize” and “-ism” as “making or becoming” and “denoting a system, principle, or ideological movement,” respectively. Hence the current definitions of regionalization and regionalism as bottom-up and top-down processes of regional integration do not accord the ordinary meanings of “-zation” and “-ism.”

The second and more serious problem is that the existing definitions confuse the sources of regional integration (the state vs societal forces) and the dimensions of regional integration (economic interdependence, institutionalization, etc) with what actually distinguishes regionalization from regionalism. This confusion often leads to an odd conclusion that a clearly state-led regionalist project such as NAFTA fosters regionalization but not regionalism (Capling and Nossal 2009).

Mindful of these problems, I define regionalization simply as the process of integration within a region. It could come from different sources (the state, domestic interest groups, transnational technocrats, etc). It can manifest in different dimensions

(economic interdependence, military-security issues, political affairs, etc). Regionalism is defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes and ideology that articulate that interstate affairs should be organized on a regional basis and propose that the countries in a region should unite for joint benefits, often at the exclusion of others outside the region (Soberbaum and Shaw 2003: 7; Boas and Hveem 2001: 94). As such, it is essentially about creating a specific identity whose locus is at the regional level, and hence inevitably creates tension with other forms of collective identity, the most important of which is national identity.

The relationship between regionalization and regionalism is that the former is a necessary outcome of the latter, but not the vice versa. In other words, if there is regionalism, then regionalization is its logical consequence. But regionalization does not necessarily engender regionalism, although it is likely to have a positive effect on the creation and promotion of regionalism. Under these definitions, one could have state-promoted regionalization without regionalism. In such case, regional cooperation is likely to be confined to functional cooperation without “deep” cooperation. This is what we observe in NEA where there is growing regionalization promoted by both states and societal actors, but it is devoid of regionalism.

In SEA, on the other hand, there has been a conscious effort to promote regionalism through the creation of a Southeast Asian regional identity, especially at the elite level, for several decades. The effort at promoting regionalism was followed by growing regionalization through various ASEAN projects. It has also resulted in engendering domestic interest groups, which demand greater regionalization.

Nationalism. Various definitions exist. Some scholars like Seers means autarkic economic, cultural, and social policies by nationalism (1983). For Benedict Anderson, nationalism connotes manufactured linguistic identity (1983). Ernest Gellner treats it as a phenomenon

distinctively modern and industrial leading to social evolution and organization (1983).

Anthony Smith considers nationalism to be a particular ideology of solidarity based on preindustrial roots (1979). Ernst Haas defines nationalism as the “convergence of territorial and political loyalty irrespective of competing foci of affiliation” (1986: 709). Thus for him, the only difference between nationalism and regionalism concerns the size of the nation.

I use nationalism to mean two things. First, it is a belief held by a group of people who perceive themselves as a legitimate group that they ought to constitute a nation. Secondly, it is also a political ideology that such a group (i.e. nation) should possess its own state. Identification implies that one’s interests and sense of self is intimately tied to the interests and image of the nation, while political ideology engenders a political movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population deemed or imagined by the members to constitute an actual or potential nation. Thus it generates a set of values, norms, and attitudes in addition to the basic belief. Nationalist ideologies often make assertions or myths about aspects of the solidarity and trace them to ‘primordial’ roots such as historical uniqueness, ethnicity, language, etc.

While ‘primordialists’ view nationalism as rooted in objective unchangeables such as ethnicity and language, ‘constructionists’ argue that nationalism is constructed through political acts. Probably a synthesized view advanced by Anthony Smith is most reasonable. Smith argues that nationalism draws on the pre-existing history of the ‘group’, an attempt to fashion this history into a sense of common identity and shared history (2001). These historical ‘truths’ are, more often than not, flawed interpretations and myths of the past or important historical events. The nation is created and maintained through imagination that members share a sense of shared identity and bond of solidarity (Anderson 1983).

Identity: Notwithstanding Brubaker and Cooper's dismissal of identity as a useful concept (2000), identity has been one of the most widely used explanatory variables in the social sciences. There are two types of identity—personal and social. Personal identity is the major focus in psychology (Erikson 1959 & 1968). Youth violence is often understood in terms of instable identity during early adulthood. Although personal identity is useful and important for studies on individual leaders and their personalities (Adorno et al. 1950; Yahuda 1984; Goldgeier 1994), it has limited usage for scholars, who are interested in group-based conflict and behavior, however. Because the dissertation focuses on identity distance between groups, it will not examine personal identity.

The other type of identity is social or group identity, which refers to the “social categories, attributes, or components of the self-concept, which are shared with others and therefore categorize individuals as being similar to others” (Monroe et al 2000: 421). Social identity consists of two dimensions: content and contestation (Abdelal et al. 2006). Content describes the meaning of a social identity, and has four components: constitutive norms, social purposes, cognitive models, and relational comparisons. Contestation refers to the degree of agreement within a social group over the content of the social identity.

Although four dimensions of social identity are all relevant, existing identity theories emphasize specific aspects of identity. Role theory puts emphasis on constitutive norms (Biddle 1986; Holsti 1970), while social identity theory stresses relational comparisons (Hogg, Terry and White 1995; Stets and Burke 2000). Different social identities will become salient depending upon who the other interacting group is as well as the context of such interaction (Noh 2008). Salient identities then affect actor behavior, and behavioral predictions can be made in accordance with the actor's role conceptions or relational comparison to the outgroup.

Organization of the Dissertation

The rest of the dissertation examines how the variable of identity distance affects the different patterns of regional affairs in NEA and SEA, and is composed of four parts, each organized around a particular theme of the book. Each part consists of separate chapters that deal with a smaller issue under examination. Chapter 2 presents the theory of the book. I develop two major identity theories—role theory and identity distance theory—and discuss how IDT can help us explain the cross-regional divergence between NEA and SEA.

Part II deals with regional affairs in NEA and contains three chapters. Chapter 3 discusses the formation and evolution of identity distance between NEA countries with a specific focus on the so-called ‘history problem’ and its effect on the identity distance. The identity distance between NEA countries has widened significantly since the mid 1980s due to the increased salience of the ‘history problem’ such as Nanjing massacre, ‘comfort women’ issue, Yasukuni Shrine visits, and history textbook controversy. These historical issues are essentially about the shared understanding of Japanese aggression and imperialism in Asia. Chapter 4 looks at how the widening identity distance between China and Japan led to the emergence of mutual threat perception between the two countries. The puzzling aspect of mutual threat perception is the rise in threat perception of Japan in China, despite the latter’s catching up with Japan in military and economic power. Chapter 5 examines increased Korea-Japan conflict after Korea’s democratization in the latter half of the 1980s. This trend flies right in the face of democratic peace theory. My argument is that democratization permitted popular anti-Japanese sentiments, which had previously been contained by the authoritarian regime, to rise and affect Korea’s foreign policy toward Japan. Simultaneously, the rise of the ‘history problem’ in salience widened the identity distance between the two countries, and made the relations worse and more conflictual.

Part III turns the focus of the book to SEA. In Chapter 6, I examine the process of regional identity formation, and how it evolved over time within ASEAN. I analyze official documents published by ASEAN from 1967 to 2010 as well as regional newspapers, in order to uncover the contents of a regional identity and to show a narrowing identity distance. Chapter 7 analyzes one of the most surprising and puzzling developments in ASEAN, namely, the creation of human rights institutions. Very few have ever imagined that ASEAN would establish a regional human rights mechanism, the first of its kind in Asia, given that they opposed vehemently the acceptance and implementation of liberal human rights in the name of “Asian values” in the 1990s, and with their high sensitivity to any loss of state sovereignty. Chapter 8 examines the resolution of two key territorial disputes in SEA and compare them with two disputes in NEA that have been intensified in the same period. The disputes share very similar attributes, and yet the two regions have approached their disputes in rather different ways.

Part IV concludes the book. Chapter 9 discusses why analysts should take identity and socio-psychological factors seriously in international relations, and draws implications of the findings of the book for our understanding of East Asian interstate affairs.

Chapter 2. Theorizing Identity and Conflict: Role Theory and Identity Distance Theory

There is no politics, no common world and no public realm
without aspirations for earthly immortality
-- Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition*

Notwithstanding Brubaker and Cooper's dismissal of identity as a useful concept (2000), identity has been one of the most widely used explanatory variables in the social sciences. Indeed, politics is inherently bound up with identity, as the above quote from Arendt suggests. All social groups have their own identity, though the degree of solidarity may vary, and demarcate the boundaries of the ingroup and relevant outgroups based on that identity. A key purpose of a polity lies in binding individuals together through agreed-upon virtues that they collectively seek to protect and promote.

There are two types of identity—personal and social. Personal identity is the major focus in psychology (Erikson 1959 & 1968). Youth violence is often understood in terms of instable identity during early adulthood. Although important insights can be derived from the research on personal identity, especially regarding leadership styles and personality traits (Adorno et al. 1950; Yahuda 1984; Goldgeier 1994), it has limited usage for political scientists, since they are mainly concerned with explaining and understanding group-based behavior. Because the book focuses on interstate conflict and cooperation, a kind of group behavior, it will not examine personal identity.

The other type of identity is social or group identity, which refers to the individual's internalization of "social categories, attributes, or components of the self-concept, which are shared with others and therefore categorize individuals as being similar to others" (Monroe et al 2000: 421). Abdelal et al (2006) suggest that social identity consists into two parts: content and contestation. Content describes the meaning of a social identity, and has four components: constitutive norms, social purposes, cognitive models, and relational

comparisons. Contestation refers to the degree of agreement within a social group over the content of the social identity.

This chapter sets out the theoretical argument of the book, namely, identity distance theory (IDT). It begins with a discussion of the connection between identity and security, then moves on to present a major theory of identity that has been applied in International Relations, namely, role theory. It then develops identity distance theory drawing insights from social identity theory and contact theory. It ends with an exposition of how IDT can help us explain the cross-regional differences between NEA and SEA.

Identity-Security Nexus in International Relations

One of the most deeply held, and least questioned, beliefs in IR concerns the connection between force and security. Because the world is anarchical, it is said, states must protect themselves through either building up their own military forces or allying with some other state(s), in order to achieve and maintain their external security (Waltz 1979; Walt 1989; Mearsheimer 2003). This egoistic behavior by individual states pursuing their own external security reaches an equilibrium (i.e. absence of war) when there is a balance of force, and any states that deviate from this balancing behavior will be selected out of the system (Waltz 1979). Despite theoretical and empirical challenges,⁹ this fundamental (neo)realist belief that the use or threat of force provides security has held much sway in the policy-making world and academia.

⁹ The literature on both theoretical problems and empirical deviations of (neo)realism is too vast to summarize here, and is well-known by now. Two criticisms are of particular relevant for the purpose of this dissertation. One concerns the neglect of unit-level variation. Keohane and Nye argue that by focusing exclusively on the system level, Waltz makes “the unit level the dumping ground for all unexplained variance is an impediment to the development of theory” (1987: 746). Instead they highlight non-structural incentives for state behavior, including domestic politics (Moravcsik 1997). The other criticism challenges neorealism’s static view of international affairs. John Ruggie argues, “Waltz’s theory of ‘society’ contains only a reproductive logic, but no transformative logic.” (1986: 152). Instead he focuses on “dynamic density,” defined as “the quantity, velocity and diversity of transactions that go on within society (1986: 148).

But is the use of force the only way to achieve security in international politics? To a large extent, the answer depends on the characterization of the anarchical world and the nature of relationship between states. Let's consider both points one by one. First, if the world is indeed the Hobbesian state of nature, where actors harbor the intention to dominate and conquer others, and there is no Leviathan that can provide security and rules, then there is little doubt that the use of force, or threat thereof, is a necessary condition for attaining security.¹⁰ Putting aside the issue of how to define a revisionist state and who defines it,¹¹ suppose that there are revisionist states bent on destructing or revolting against the current international system. Then reliance on international law, institutions, and norms is unlikely to restrain their aggressive behavior. Moreover, since revisionist states tend to be risk acceptant and have a greater tolerance level for externally-imposed costs, there is greater likelihood that they initiate and stay in military conflict. In such case, force is likely to be the most effective and, probably, the only available recourse for containing them and achieving peace and stability.

However, if the world we live in, though anarchical in nature it may be, is one where states are caught in the security dilemma while acting out of their best intention to protect themselves and co-exist with others rather than dominate them (Jervis 1978), then would the use of force still be the only, let alone most effective, means for the state to attain its external

¹⁰ It may not be entirely accurate to use Hobbes to justify the description of the realm of states as one of fear and danger. Hobbes himself was careful to distinguish the state of nature among states from that among men, because states recognized each other as free *personae morales*. Unlike individuals who are autonomous and equal, states exist in different structural relations whereby they are both more unequal and less vulnerable. See for more details chapter 13 of *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes' view is consistent with recent empirical finding that states tend not to disappear (Fazal 2008). For a general critique of the realist's uncritical transference of the state of war from the realm of individuals to the realm of states, see David Campbell, *Writing Security* (1998: University of Minnesota Press).

¹¹ Using Randall Schweller's categories of rising powers (1999), one could argue that a revisionist state is one that has revolutionary aims, is risk acceptant, and has the capacity to effect its aims. This does not resolve the issue of who defines revisionist states and what aims would qualify as revolutionary, because what appear to some to be revolutionary aims may be legitimate concerns to others.

security? Waltz would say yes, and argue that a balance of force is the primary means to achieve peace in international politics and thereby secure the state's external security (1979). There are two kinds of balancing—internal and external—and a state that cannot internally balance against a threatening external power should form an alliance with another state(s) in order to externally balance against that external power.

But there are several problems with this neorealist answer once we grant that the security dilemma is what best describes the anarchical state of the international system. Notwithstanding the argument that the prisoner's dilemma (PD) game, widely used to illustrate the security dilemma, has very limited applicability in reality given its unrealistic assumptions such as complete lack of communication and interaction between actors, as liberal institutionalists have shown, cooperation can still emerge under the same context. Egoistic states would find it in their interests to cooperate through repeated interactions or through institutions or regimes that will elongate the shadow of the future, facilitate information flow, and make monitoring and sanctioning easier (Axelrod and Keohane 1985; Oye 1986; Martin 1993; Bearce, Floros and McKibben 2008). Thus, if the security dilemma describes the essence of international anarchy, then it must be granted that there are ways to achieve peace through security cooperation rather than the use of force.

In addition, the necessity and utility of use of force to achieve security varies according to the relationship between states. As mentioned above, if the interacting state is perceived as revisionist or aggressor bent on conquering others, then the nature and dynamics of the relationship would be fundamentally different from a situation where the same state is perceived as competitor or friend. In the former, the use of force is likely to be inevitable, while in the latter one can adopt other means to achieve peaceful relations.

The nature of the relationship between states is also likely to influence the way information from and action done by another state is interpreted. Kuklinski and Hurley (1996) demonstrate that the same information will be regarded as more persuasive if it comes from ‘people like us’ and distrusted if it comes from a devalued other. And Halpern (1996) shows that bargaining over price where participants exchange information about their preferences differs depending on whether or not the parties are friends. In addition, the nature of relationship also affects the salience of relative gains. Based on experimental evidence David Rousseau (2002) shows that the concern with relative gains depends on the view of the other party among several factors.

Despite the condition of international anarchy, interstate relationship can vary, and has varied, over time and across space. Historically, there have been cases where a relationship of enmity changed into one of amity, or the vice versa, in a relatively short period, as demonstrated by the US-Japan relations right after the end of World War II or the USSR-PRC relations after a change of leadership in the former. Thus the nature of the relationship between states is an important determinant of what kind of options are feasible in attaining the state’s external security.

Applying this logic to security, a number of constructivists have challenged the dominant force-security nexus in IR, and suggested an alternative approach to security. They posit a relationship between the growth of a shared identity and pacific relations between states (Wendt 1999; Adler and Barnett 1998; Acharya 2001). Tracing their theoretical inspiration back to Deutsch’s concept of ‘security community’ (1954), these scholars argue that a trusting community based on a shared identity can create mutual expectations for peaceful change and provide security for states. There are at least two

important implications of this identity-security nexus for our understanding of and approach to international security.

First, if a positive identity such as friendship can be the foundation for security, then this makes the use of force, or the threat thereof, not only unnecessary but also counterproductive by undermining the existing relationship based on a shared identity and trust. Second, even if peace is attainable through the realist balance-of-power means, it is peace only in a negative sense. States merely avoid conflict rather than actively resolve it. There may be no war between states, but states may still harbor aggressive intentions and hence live in fear and suspicion. In contrast, if a shared identity becomes the foundation for peaceful interstate relations, then peace is attained in a positive sense. Not only states would seek to resolve their disputes, but they would also exist in a more stable international environment where they can mutually expect changes to occur in a peaceful manner. Hence the provision of security through a shared identity is arguably a superior way to enhance and maintain security than the use of force.

Given the importance of the identity-security nexus for our understanding of interstate relations, it is curious why IR scholars have been so unwilling to examine how identity could affect security. In general, they have been hesitant to employ the concept of identity to understand and analyze international politics. Perhaps, it is because of the infeasibility of development of a common identity among states, although the development of the European Union should make this statement questionable. Or perhaps, it reflects the concern with the lack of rigorous research method, which, to some people, is a reason why identity can be dismissed as a serious factor in international politics (Walt 1991: 223; Keohane 1988: 392). Even so, the lack of rigorous research method should be taken as a

challenge for the identity research rather than dismissal of the concept. The right response should be to encourage more active research on how identity can affect security.

Whatever the reason may be, the neglect of identity as a variable in the field of International Relations is not consistent with the popularity of the concept in other social science disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology and, in other subfields of political science such as comparative politics. In those disciplines, one finds an active research program utilizing identity to understand important topics ranging from ethnic conflict, racial politics, and community development to school programs, management in firms, and immigration policies.

Following the rise of constructivism in IR, however, a few but important works have appeared that seek to utilize identity to understand international politics. One of the main contributions of this research is the notion that state identity shapes state preferences and actions. Both Wendt (1992, 1994) and Katzenstein's edited volume (1996) helped to put identity at the center of much constructivist theorizing. Wendt's systemic constructivism places more emphasis on the impact of the international environment, while authors in Katzenstein's edited volume view identity essentially as a domestic attribute arising from national ideologies of collective distinctiveness and purpose.

The security community literature further advanced the utility of identity in IR by explicitly applying the concept to explain possible security communities in different parts of the world (Deutsch 1954; Adler and Barnett 1998; Acharya 2001). The security community is an empirical verification of the constructivist logic that 'anarchy is what states make of it' (Wendt 1992). If some states can sustain friendships deep and long enough to constitute power and interests as secondary in their security considerations, then it must also be that competitive anarchy is just one possible culture of anarchy (Wendt 1999). Works by

Finnemore (1996), Reus-Smit (1999), Hopf (2002), Cederman and Daase (2003), Johnston (2007), Rousseau (2006) are all examples applying and extending constructivist theoretical orientations in international relations.

Despite these important developments, constructivism still remains as a general approach of investigation rather than as a theory similar to realism, liberalism, or institutionalism. Much of earlier foundational constructivist literature focused heavily on the philosophical and meta-theoretical issues such as ontology, epistemology, properties of theory, etc (Onuf 1986; Kratochwil 1987; Wendt 1999). While their efforts opened up space for new perspectives and arguments to be introduced in IR, more efforts should go toward theorizing and empirical research and testing in the future.

In addition, there is a dearth of work explicitly employing identity as a variable to understand important outcomes in interstate relations. As a result, there is still much doubt about the utility and feasibility of identity. In this book, I seek to fill this gap in the IR literature. I develop a new concept called identity distance, and utilize it to shed light on our understanding of the different regional affairs between NEA and SEA. Before we delve into the empirical analysis, however, it is necessary to set out the theoretical foundation for identity distance theory. Below I discuss two theories from social psychology and sociology that help us understand how intergroup conflict and cooperation come about. I present an attempt to reconcile the two theories, and develop identity distance theory.

Two Theories of Identity: Role Conceptions and Identity Distance

One way to conceptualize a range of existing identity theories is to group them into two aspects: (1) internal or role conceptions and (2) external or relations with others. The internal dimension refers to the actor's own purposes, cognitive models, and internalization of social norms, while the external dimension refers to relations with other actors. This

conceptualization is consistent with prevailing identity theories. For instance, role theory puts emphasis on constitutive norms (Biddle 1986; Holsti 1970), while social identity theory stresses relational comparisons (Hogg, Terry and White 1995; Stets and Burke 2000).

What is the value added of separating role conceptions and relational aspects? Let me illustrate it by way of an example. Consider extreme nationalists of two countries. They are likely to share a number of important personality characteristics (Forbes 1985) and social goals: blind love for the country; greater tolerance of violence; belief in the uniqueness of their country; the precedence of 'national interests' over individual interests, etc. Essentially there is very little to distinguish the two groups of extreme nationalists belonging to two different countries based on their personality traits, role conceptions, social purposes, and values. Role theory would predict extensive cooperation and mutual identification between the two groups, since they share a number of important attributes.

However, if we take into account the relational aspect between the two groups of nationalists, the outcome changes completely. Because their identity distance is apart or wide, the two extreme nationalist groups that share much in common suddenly will likely exhibit extreme hatred to each other and increase the likelihood of intergroup conflict rather than cooperation. They would have been the best buddies but for the fact that they belonged to different groups with a wide identity distance. If the identity distance between the two groups were narrow, however, the similarity of their role conceptions might still result in cooperative relations. Thus it is analytically useful to treat identity distance, or the external dimension of identity, separately from role conceptions, or the internal dimension.

Role Theory

Role theory concerns one very prevalent form of social behavior, that is, that human beings behave in ways that are different and predictable depending on their respective social roles

and the situation. As the term role suggests, the theory began life as a theatrical metaphor. Just as performance in the theater are differentiated and predictable because actors are constrained to perform certain “parts” (roles) for which “scripts” (expectations) have been written, social behaviors are often associated with parts and scripts understood by social actors (Biddle 1986). While instrumental rationality is based on the logic of consequences, role behavior is a form of value rationality based on the logic of appropriateness.

Role identity theory is based on Mead’s general view of the self as both social structure and personality (1934). It combines the view of the self as a structure of roles (Turner 1978) and the expression of identities (Stryker 1980). Role identities are therefore shared, socially recognized, and informed by personality (McCall and Simmons 1978), and produce perceptual and behavioral consequences (Callero 1985). Roles are defined as characteristic or appropriate behaviors expected of the actor based on shared, normative expectations (Parsons 1951; Biddle 1979; Turner 1979), and are distinct from position as well as from actual behavior. As Turner (1951: 316) states:

Role refers to behavior rather than position, so that one may *enact* a role but cannot *occupy* a role [Role] refers to expected or appropriate behavior and is distinct from the manner in which the role is actually enacted in a specific situation, which is *role behavior* or *role performance* [emphasis in original]

Role consensus denotes agreement among the expectations that are held by various persons. As functionalists argue that social roles appear because persons in the social system share norms for the conduct of social-position members (Parsons 1951). Role conflict, which is defined as the concurrent appearance of two or more incompatible expectations for the behavior of a person (Biddle 1986: 82), arises when others do not hold consensual expectations for a person’s behavior, as those others hold distinctive and incompatible role expectations.

Actors in the social system are taught or socialized to conform to norms for their own conduct, to encourage others for conformity to norms, and to punish any deviating behavior. Roles can be generated from social expectations about one's positions, or they can come from internal self-conceptions based on beliefs and purposes. An actor has her own role conceptions that are informed by her sense of purpose, interests, attitudes, values, and personality needs. She occupies a certain social position, which are associated with society's appropriate role prescriptions. The role prescriptions are influenced by the culture, social institutions, laws, and history of that society. Role behavior is then influenced not only by one's own purposes, interests, values, and psychological needs, but also by the expectations of peer groups or society with cultural values, social mores, laws, institutions, and history.

A common theme that runs through different strands of role theory is the presence and importance of other actors in society in influencing role expectations attached to positions and role-based behavior. Role behavior reflects contextual demands, negotiation, and the evolving definition of the situation as understood by the actors (Mead 1934; Stryker & Statham 1985). For example, the concept of "position" connotes a behavioral "setting" with sufficiently well-defined functions, duties, rights, and privileges, and indicates a regularized set of activities associated with formal organizations. Within an integrated society or organization, society's role prescriptions directed toward a particular position are critical in establishing and maintaining conformity by the position's holder. Behavior associated with such positions as teacher, legislator, or military chief is usually clearly defined by reference groups or formal enactments.

But the extension of role theory to interstate relations encounters some challenges. Unlike domestic society, where positions are well-defined, most foreign policy behavior does not occur in an analogous context. Holsti's seminal work (1970), the first attempt of

applying role theory in IR, also recognizes this problem. As he states, “Since nation-states are multi-functional collectivities, operating within innumerable sets of bilateral and multilateral relationships in a comparatively unorganized milieu, it is difficult to apply the concept of position (systems of role expectations) as it has been developed in social inquiry” (1970: 242). Another challenge of applying role theory in IR concerns the lack of consensus on role expectations from other members of society. Unlike in domestic society, where role behavior is influenced by the more or less widely known role expectations of peers or society, role expectations in the international arena are much less clear. Furthermore, different actors would have differing impact on defining role expectations, with different sizes, capabilities, and influence (Holsti 1970: 243).

Essentially, the fundamental problem has to do with the low degree of society found in the international arena. Society is imagined (Anderson 1983) and defined by two characteristics. First, members of a community have shared identities, values, and purposes. And secondly, they have close interactions and many-sided relations (Taylor 1982; Adler and Barnett 1998: 31). While globalization has made cross-boundary interactions increase exponentially, leading one analyst to declare the end of nation states (Ohmae 1996), close interactions are fewer in the international arena than in domestic society. Furthermore, a sense of shared identity is certainly lower between nation-states than within nation-states.

Two basic organizing principles of world politics—internal sovereignty and external equality of nation states—entail that there is active social disciplining taking place in domestic polity, thereby resulting in a greater sense of identity and more interactions within national borders, while such disciplining is harder to achieve across the borders (Kratochwil, Rohrllich, and Mahajan 1985; Kratochwil 1989).

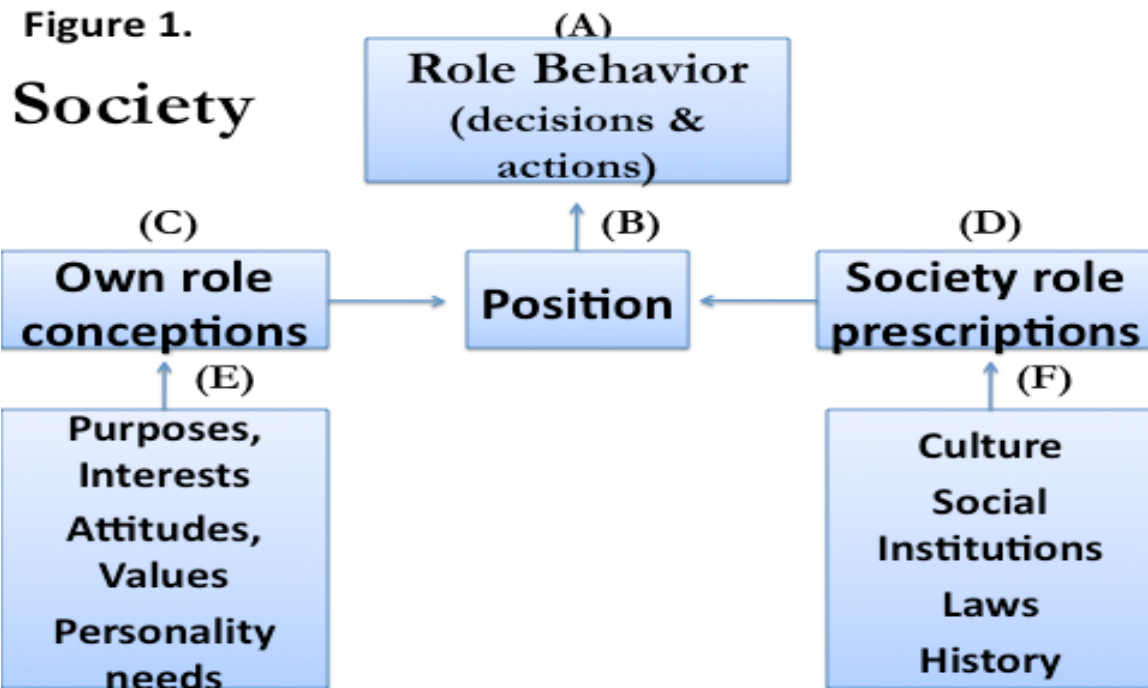


Figure 4. The Determinants of Role Behavior

As a result, IR scholars who attempt to apply role theory in understanding international relations, mainly focus on the connection between (e) and (c), and (c) and (a) in Figure 4, what I call the internal dimension of social identity. Most examples of applying role identity theory in IR heavily rely on national role conceptions as the main form of national identity. Holsti himself mainly looks at policy makers' national role conceptions, although he permits the possibility of the effect from society's role prescriptions (1970). Shih (1988) identifies various psychological motivations from traditional Chinese culture as China's national role conceptions and suggest their correlation with China's diplomatic practices (1988). Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot (1996) show the role conceptions of Ukraine mainly as a regional leader pushes it toward nuclear proliferation, while Belaruss' role conception as mediator and regional subsystem collaborator leads her to adopt a tendency away from nuclear proliferation. Walker examines the effect of national role conceptions on foreign policy (1979). The contributors of Katzenstein's edited volume *The*

Culture of National Security also view identity as a function of domestic attributes such as ideology (1996).

This is not to say, however, that role theory has no application in international relations, nor does it mean that social behavior does not take place. The difference between the domestic polity and the international arena is significant, but it is not a matter of kind but one of degree. Indeed, within some international organizations such as the United Nations, NATO, or WTO, states do appear to occupy positions, and the role theory is more applicable, and we can expect more social behaviors to take place. Treating international institutions as social environments (2001), Johnston demonstrates that a range of social behaviors can take place in an institutional setting and can socialize governmental officials into a new set of views and beliefs (2007). Furthermore, international law, ‘world opinion’, expectations from like-minded states or allies do generate role expectations and exert social pressure on states, even though such influence is limited due to the principle and practice of state sovereignty.

It is more realistic and theoretically productive to view the domestic-international arenas on a continuum of degree of society rather than think of them as two wholly separate realms. Treating the international arena as a form of society has a long lineage in IR, beginning with Deutsch (1955) and Hedley Bull (1977) and continuing in the present with the security community literature (Adler and Bennet 2001).

Two caveats have to be noted here. For role theory to have new insights for our understanding of international relations, roles must not be defined by power distributions or geography—variables realists would emphasize—or mere change of government in domestic politics—what liberals would focus on. Hence role conceptions such as balancer, ally, or buffer, whose role sources derive from power distribution in the system, capabilities, or

geographical location, are unlikely to generate new insights that are different from realist predictions. Several of the role conceptions Holsti generates in his original study are problematic for this reason. Roles as regional leader, regional protector, ally, and isolate all stem from sources that have to do with power capabilities, perception of threat, and location (Holsti 1970: 296).

Similarly, if one argues that national role conceptions are just a function of domestic government change, the analytic focus will still be on the winning domestic political coalition and its foreign policy preferences, and the analysis of roles might not generate insights. Where role theory would be most interesting and useful is situations where role conceptions last over more than one term of government and have independent sources other than power capabilities and geography.

Identity Distance Theory (IDT)

While role theory focuses on the internal dimension of social identity, identity distance is about the external dimension i.e. relations with other actors. In IDT, what matters is not role conceptions of an actor, but the actor's perception of relevant outgroups in relation to her own ingroup. Ted Hopf states that the logics of habit and affect, which involves no reflection, is fundamentally different from the logics of consequences and appropriateness, which are based on active reflection, and argues that these logics are better at explaining lasting structures such as enduring rivalry and relationships of enmity and amity in world politics (2010).

The distinction between role theory and IDT can relate to Hopf's distinction between reflection and non-reflection in that while role theory is based on the logic of appropriateness, IDT can encompass the logics of affect, emotion, and habit. IDT utilizes

insights from two theories in social psychology and sociology, namely, social identity theory and contact theory.

Social Identity Theory and Intergroup Conflict

One discipline where identity has been widely used to understand conflict and cooperation is social psychology. The main theory using identity to explain intergroup conflict in that discipline is social identity theory (SIT). SIT states that intergroup conflict stems from relativistic social comparisons that bolster or maintain one's self-esteem (Tajfel and Turner 1979; Turner 1982). One's identity is invested in groups to which one belongs, and people are therefore motivated to sustain their own positive identity and sense of self-worth by ensuring that their ingroup is positively distinct from relevant outgroups. Positive distinctiveness can be achieved by favoring the ingroup over relevant outgroups in intergroup attitudes and beliefs as well as by explicitly derogating the outgroups.

Such identification can also lead to attribution errors. The members of the ingroup attribute their success to inherent qualities of ingroup and its failure to environmental factors, while the success of outgroups is attributed to random chance, and its failure to their inherent bad qualities. Another attribution error concerns with motive. The members of the ingroup may attribute a motive to an action done by the outgroup, especially actions that threaten or harm the ingroup, while they are more careful in doing so for an action done by the ingroup. Further support for SIT is the fact that group members seem to feel better about themselves after engaging in such discrimination (Oakes and Turner 1980; Lemyre and Smith 1985).

When a specific social identity becomes salient in a particular context, self-perception and conduct become ingroup stereotypical and normative, perceptions of relevant outgroup become outgroup stereotypical, and intergroup behavior acquires competitive and

discriminatory properties to varying degrees, depending on the nature of relations between the groups. In general, high identifiers with their own groups tend to perceive both ingroups and outgroups as more homogeneous than low identifiers (Ellemers, Spears and Doosje 1997; Kelly 1989). The theory invokes the operation of two underlying socio-cognitive processes, to explain intergroup relations.

First, *categorization* sharpens intergroup boundaries by producing distinctive stereotypical and normative perceptions and actions of ingroup and outgroups, and assigns people, including self, to the contextually relevant category (Turner 1985; Turner et. al. 1987). The process of categorization accentuates both perceived similarities between members of the ingroup and perceived differences with the relevant outgroup. In essence, “depersonalization” occurs through categorization: people are perceived as, are reacted to, and act as embodiments of the relevant ingroup prototype rather than unique individuals. A prototype is a subjective representation of the defining attributes (such as beliefs, attitudes, and behavior) of a social category, which is actively constructed from relevant social information in the immediate or more enduring interactive context (Fiske and Taylor 1991).

Second, *self-enhancement* guides the social categorization process such that ingroup norms and stereotypes favor the ingroup (Hogg, Terry, and White 1995). It is assumed that people have a basic need to see themselves in a positive light in relation to relevant others i.e. to have an evaluatively positive self-concept. Self-enhancement can be achieved in groups by making comparisons between the ingroup and relevant outgroup(s) in ways that favor the ingroup. The theory can be adapted to any kind of intergroup relations. Hence, for example, when people’s identities are invested in national groups, people are motivated to sustain a positive national identity by ensuring that their nation is positively distinct from other nations.

The key empirical foundation for SIT is the minimal group paradigm. In the original experiment the experimenter divided students into two anonymous, non-interacting, and ostensibly meaningless groups, thereby eliminating all potential causes for intergroup conflict, except for social categorization. The result showed a significant tendency to favor the ingroup and discriminate against the outgroup in a subsequent distribution task (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel, Flament, Billig and Bundy 1971). The minimal group paradigm provided the basis for SIT, but it has also been misunderstood in two respects.

First, the ‘sound bite’ interpretation of the minimal group findings has been that mere categorization could provoke discrimination (Stephan 1985), and some scholars used the finding as evidence that “ethnocentrism and intergroup discrimination arise as a direct product of categorization” (Huddy 2001: 133). However, this is an inaccurate interpretation of the original findings. Both Tajfel and Turner interpreted the minimal group findings in a different way. Although the experiments had been designed to manipulate categorization per se, this was not the effective independent variable determining participants’ responses. Turner (1975) showed that when participants were given the opportunity to distribute rewards on an individual basis before they were asked to divide them between the two groups, they did not then favor the ingroup in their allocations. Turner’s conclusion was:

Social categorization per se . . . is not sufficient for ingroup favoritism. . . . The distinction between E’s classification of Ss into two groups and the identification with these categories by Ss needs to be firmly made. The latter seems to be a necessary condition for the influence of the former (Turner 1978: 138-9)

So the finding upon which SIT was based was not that the simple categorization could produce group behavior, but that such designation had no effect unless and until it had been internalized by the individuals involved. Tajfel believed that this internalization of the meaningless experimenter-imposed categories is the main puzzle about the minimal group

paradigm, and suggested that identification with the categories resolved the meaning-less experiment-induced situation by providing a social meaning to the participants.

The second misunderstanding about the minimal group paradigm—and SIT by extension—concerns outgroup derogation and associated aggressive behavior. Although scholars readily apply SIT to explain aggressive behavior toward the relevant outgroup, SIT is essentially a theory of ingroup love rather than outgroup hate, to borrow Brewer's phrase (1999), with indicators of ingroup bias as its principal dependent measures. In practical terms, what this may mean is that the participant may evaluate both the ingroup and outgroup favorably, only the former more so than the latter (Brewer 1979). Indeed, it is not unknown for ingroup and outgroup evaluations to be positively correlated with each other, and ingroup biases in such judgments may not be correlated with feelings of dislike for the outgroup (Turner 1978; Brown 1984; Kosterman and Feshbach 1989).

This misunderstanding poses an obvious challenge for IR scholars, who would like to use SIT to explain intergroup conflict, not just ingroup favoritism. But because favorable ingroup differentiation can be achieved not only by a favorable assessment of the ingroup but also by derogating the outgroup, SIT should have some implications for how the ingroup members might derogate outgroup members. What this suggests is not that SIT cannot explain outgroup derogation and aggressive behavior, but that in the case of outgroup derogation and aggressive behavior, we need an additional explanation to account for the translation of ingroup narcissism into outgroup derogation or worse behavior.¹²

¹² There are several useful studies that attempt to establish the link between ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation. Leyens, Paladino, Rodriguez-Torres, Vaes, Demoulin, Rodriguez-Perez and Gaunt (2000) look at different kinds of emotions and examine how they are associated with the ingroup and outgroup. They argue that emotional traits regarded as human are associated with the ingroup, while other emotions of non-human type are associated with the outgroup, thereby justifying inhuman treatment of the outgroup. Brewer (1999) suggests that the development of ideologies of moral superiority may lead to the perceived legitimacy of outgroup maltreatment. Fiske, Xu, Cuddy and Glick (1999) suggest that the contents of the intergroup

Contact Theory and Intergroup Cooperation

Intergroup conflict and discrimination is one possible outcome of social interaction.

Contact with outgroup members may confirm the existing prejudices, thereby strengthening the ingroup-outgroup distinction, solidifying outgroup stereotypes, and encouraging category-based responding. However, it is not the only possible outcome of social interaction. Intergroup cooperation can emerge through social interactions, too.

The recent research in psychology and organizational behavior confirms the possibility of cooperative outcomes from social interaction. Kosfel et. al. (2005) conduct an experiment where they administer a dose of oxytocin to humans, a neuropeptide that is proven to play a positive role in social attachment and affiliation in non-human mammals, and ask them to play the trust game afterwards. The findings show that oxytocin increases the trust level among people. It is known that body touch such as handshakes and hugging is one common means that generates oxytocin, forms of human contact that are prevalent during social interaction.

Wiltermuth and Heath (2009) examine the effect of physical synchrony i.e. doing things together. They argue that physically synchronous activities lead to more cooperative behavior. Across three experiments, where the treatment group was asked to move an object together while singing together and the control group did not synchronize their action and sing individually, the subjects of the treatment group showed more cooperative behavior amongst them in subsequent economic activities. These researches show how positive

relations may also affect intergroup treatment. Noting that social structural variables such as status and interdependence are related to (dis)respect and (dis)like. Hence high-status groups are more likely to be perceived as competent, and hence respected. Groups with whom the ingroup is positively interdependent are seen as warm, and consequently liked.

outcomes can come out of social interaction through either biological process of increased oxytocin or a habit of social cooperation.

In sociology, contact theory (CT) also posits the same relationship between social interaction and intergroup cooperation. CT states that under the 'right' conditions, contact between people can lead to greater trust, dissolution of prejudices, and intergroup cooperation (Allport 1954). The 'right' conditions include the equal status of the groups involved, common goals, authority support, and cooperation during contact (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998). The contact literature shows positive contact effects ranging from foreign students in the USA (Chang 1973; Wagner et al 1989; Riordan 1987; McKay and Pitman 1993) and interracial workers (Bornman and Mynhardt 1991; Brooks 1975; Kephart 1957) to housing situation (Works 1961; Smith 1994; Deutsch and Collins 1951), racial attitudes (Ellison and Powers 1994 and 1995) and attitudes towards social groups or minorities (Caspi 1984; Eskilson 1995; Anderson 1995; Werth and Lord 1992; Desforges et al. 1991).

There are two ways contact with outgroup members can have a positive impact on intergroup relations. First, social contact may lead to the differentiated perceptions of outgroup members, resulting in increased perception of subgroups and subtypes within the outgroup (Richards and Hewstone 2001), and hence lessen the perception of outgroup homogeneity. This is a process known as *decategorization*. The acquisition of new information about the outgroup(s) can lead ingroup members to review and revise their existing perceptions and biases. The experience of cooperation may create new and positive perceptions of outgroup members.

The development of personal relationships with outgroup members is also likely to help both decategorization and recategorization by altering the nature of one's response to outgroup members from category-based responding to one based on their relationship to

self (Miller 2002). In other words, one attends to information about the outgroup that is self-relevant and not merely that which is correlated with category membership. Not only does personalization increase perceived similarity and familiarity with outgroup members (Derlega, Harris and Chaiken 1973; Lazowski and Anderson 1990), it directs attention to individuating features of outgroup members (Fiske and Neuberg 1990) and may provide disconfirming information for negative stereotypes of the outgroup (Wilder 1978).

Second, positive contact with outgroup members may lead to *recategorization* (Gaertner et al. 1993; Gaertner and Dovidio 2000). After positive contact, with more information about the outgroup, people can begin to think of themselves in a larger group perspective. Recategorization adopts an inclusive category that highlights similarities among the participants and obscures the ingroup-outgroup boundary (Perdue et al 1990). Note that decategorization is a necessary step toward recategorization. Although this is often the ideal goal of intergroup contact, it is the stage many interacting groups never reach. The progression to recategorization from decategorization is not automatic, and recategorization into a single group often will not be attained.

The key issue in CT concerns whether or not the experience of positive contact with an outgroup member will extend to future contacts with other members of the outgroup and a reappraisal of the previous outgroup stereotypes. Although some studies show that intergroup contact will normally elicit more positive attitudes toward the outgroup as a whole (Desforges et al. 1997; Hewston and Brown 1986), studies that measure attitudes toward the outgroup as an abstract social category more often fail to obtain any generalization effect (Wilder and Thompson 1980; Bond, DiCandia and MacKinnon 1988). For example, students who studied cooperatively with students of other races increased the number of their cross-racial friendships by becoming friends with those specific interaction

partners but did not change their racial attitudes in general (Weigel, Wiser and Cook 1975). Similarly, students who cooperated with students from a rival college changed their opinions about those with whom they interacted but did not change their attitude about the rival college (Wilder and Thompson 1980).

Several scholars argue that the generalization of positive intergroup contact can occur when the contacted outgroup members are perceived as representative of the outgroup (Miller 2002) and group membership is salient during contact (Hewstone and Brown 1986). This may include contact with a large number of outgroup members, or a single or few people who are perceived as typical members or leaders of the outgroup, and group membership is reminded during interaction. In such case, decategorization and recategorization will have a higher probability of occurring.

In addition, social norms are also crucial. In an interesting study on desegregated projects, whites feared social ostracism from other whites for friendly interracial behavior with black neighbors, and hence were not only less willing to initiate contact, but also less likely to change their attitudes and beliefs even after positive contact (Wilner et al. 1995). Social norms and contact tend to reinforce each other when their influence operates in the same direction, and to cancel each other out when their influence works in the opposite direction.

Identity Distance Theory

Both SIT and CT, then, capture plausible but contrasting outcomes of social interactions. SIT predicts the increased likelihood of intergroup conflict through social interactions, while CT predicts the increased likelihood of intergroup cooperation through social interactions. One way to reconcile these two theories, I argue, is to focus on what I term identity distance and how it changes during social interaction. Identity distance refers to the degree to which

members of the ingroup perceive the ingroup to be different from relevant outgroup(s), and measure perceived psychological differences between groups.

Using the notion of identity distance, what appear to be anomalies for SIT and CT can readily be comprehended. For example, as discussed in the previous section, one of the troublesome findings for SIT is the fact that ingroup favoritism is often not associated with outgroup derogation and hence it is hard to explain how relativistic social comparisons lead to intergroup conflict. But we can hypothesize that if the identity distance between the ingroup and outgroup has narrowed during the experiment or stayed unchanged, resulting in a more positive assessment of the outgroup, then we would observe that ingroup narcissism would not translate into outgroup derogation. In contrast, if the identity distance widened during the experiment then we would expect to see the emergence of outgroup derogation in addition to ingroup narcissism after social interaction.

Similarly, the troublesome finding for CT is that positive experience of contact at time t frequently does not generalize to future contacts at $t+1$ with members of the outgroup, and hence positive contact effect is short-term, not long-term. According to the identity distance theory, this anomaly can also be explained in the following manner. Because the identity distance did not narrow during the interaction, and thus the experience of positive contact would not apply to future contacts. On the other hand, if the identity distance narrowed during social interaction, then we would expect the newly acquired views of the outgroup to apply to future contacts with the members of the outgroup, and intergroup relations to improve as a consequence. IDT looks at more fundamental changes at the socio-psychological level that would have lasting effects on attitudes and behavior.

Since the dissertation focuses on interstate interactions, the two kinds of identity that are relevant are national identity and regional identity. The type of inter-group conflict

under examination is regional interstate disputes. Hence, the following hypotheses can be drawn from the identity distance theory. If the identity distance among the regional countries widens, then regional disputes are more likely to increase in number and intensity. In contrast, if the identity distance among the regional countries improves, then regional disputes are less likely to decrease in number and intensity.

The Contrasting Evolution of Identity Distance in NEA and SEA

The central argument of the book is that it is the contrasting evolution of identity distance in the two regions that explains why NEA has become a region of conflict, while SEA has developed into a region of peace. Despite similar socio-economic and regional strategic environment in the 1950s and 1960s, the two regions have come to exhibit rather different patterns of interstate relations over time. The regional differences also include the mode of interstate cooperation. In NEA, bilateralism is the prevalent form of cooperation, while in SEA multilateralism is the normal practice. The central argument of the book is that the contrasting evolution of identity distance between regional countries is the critical factor for the cross-regional divergences between NEA and SEA.

The end of WWII did not mean the end of conflict in East Asia. Most of the countries in NEA and SEA had the unaccomplished task of national independence and unification. Korea and China went through or continued their own civil war, with a varying degree of involvement of external powers. Japan was occupied by the US but was later given independence in 1952 when the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into effect. Some others such as Indonesia and Vietnam had to shed blood to gain their independence from European powers. Other SEA countries achieved their independence through more peaceful means as their European masters relinquished their control. All East Asian countries were politically backward and were in wretched socio-economic conditions. No

East Asian country made into the top 30 of the gross domestic product per capita in 1950. Except for Japan, all East Asian countries had the GDP per capita below \$1,000 in the same year.

Despite these similarities, the two regions have come to exhibit rather different patterns of interstate relations since the 1990s. In NEA, due to the rise of the “history problem”—a non-material issue relating to the understanding of Japanese imperialism and aggression, the regional countries began to perceive each other farther apart. Small but influential right-wing groups in Japan, who were discontent with what they believed was a ‘masochistic’ interpretation of modern Japanese history prevailing in history textbooks, have sought to inculcate a greater sense of nationalism among the public by revising the official discourse of Japanese modern history. For them, East Asia is the relevant ‘Other’ that represents an uncomfortable truth and a past that they would like to forget. One unfortunate consequence of the nationalistic movement in Japan has been to pull Japan far from East Asian neighbors on identity distance.

As right-wing groups in Japan became vociferous, on the other hand, ‘Japan’ came to be seen as immoral and untrustworthy Other in China and Korea, with whom relations are hard to develop. And when Japanese leaders and high-level officials engaged in what represented revisionist acts to the Chinese and Koreans such as Yasukuni shrine visits, justifying Japanese imperialism in Asia, etc, the right-wing movement in Japan came to be seen as representative of the whole of Japan or characteristic of the Japanese. The memories of Japanese militarism became salient, and threat perception of Japan increased. This cyclical pattern of Other-ing pushes them farther apart on identity distance. In other words, in NEA the identity distance among regional countries began to widen in the 1980s, a process which continued into the 1990s and led to the rise of fervent nationalism directed

against each other in the 1990s and 2000s. As a result, regional interstate conflict increased and intensified.

The rise of the history problem altered the perception of historical relationship between regional nations from positive to negative, and brought out deep-rooted biases about the outgroup i.e. the Japanese, which led to a negative assessment of outgroup intentions and actions. Through reification of selective historical facts and circumstances, perceived historical relationship can be used to create a particular identity (Breen 2004) and bias policy preferences (Schafter 1997). This is why often a debate over the meaning of a particular historical event proves to be so controversial and takes on almost zero-sum game-like characteristics.

In short, the history problem widened the identity distance between regional countries, solidified the deep-rooted cognitive biases, some of which relate to beliefs about hidden intentions, immorality and untrustworthiness of the outgroup, and moral superiority of the ingroup. The rise of the history problem made the pre-existing cognitive biases about the outgroup “real” and more salient, leading the regional countries to draw sharp ingroup-outgroup boundaries along national lines. As a result, the regional countries increasingly defined its national identity against one another, and issues of nationalistic symbols such as territorial disputes intensified.

In contrast, SEA shows how regular and close contact among national leaders leads to a narrowing of the intergroup identity distance and enhanced mutual trust and comfort level as well as creates a new social reality and shared purposes among the actors. Simply stated, a redefinition of the ingroup (i.e. recategorization) occurred. In SEA the establishment of a regional association, namely, ASEAN, institutionalized regular meetings among regional leaders, and led to a habit of consultation and personalization of relations among them.

Over time, they came to see each other closer on identity distance, developed a shared social reality and purposes as well as increased the comfort level, which allowed sensitive issues such as human rights, which had previously been considered as taboo, to be discussed more freely. Another consequence has been the reduction of their disputes, the most important of which is the resolution of two key territorial disputes through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice. Currently the regional countries are focused on deepening regional integration and developing the ASEAN Community based on three pillars: socio-political, economic, and socio-cultural.

Two factors have been significant in affecting the contrasting evolutions of identity distance in the two regions. The first is the degree of ingroup social cohesion. Socio-cultural conditions such as ethnicity, language, and religion affected the degree of national cohesion, and accentuated the “realness” of ingroup. Rothbard and Korostelina (2006) suggests that socialization process through what they call a collective axiology, a collection of myths based on socio-cultural values and certain primordial factors, defines the boundaries and relations among groups and establishes criteria for ingroup membership.

In SEA, where national cohesion was low, interstate peace was seen as a crucial requirement for nation-building, whereas in NEA where national cohesion was high, stable regional interstate relations were given less priority. Both NEA and SEA nations faced the urgent task of nation-building. SEA faced greater challenges than NEA counterparts in terms of nation-building. In SEA there were several competing loyalties-- ethnicity, religion, and ideology. In contrast, NEA countries had a longer sense of internal solidarity based on a myth of unique language, people, and a shared sense of historical experiences. This was an unfortunate fact for domestic nation-building, but it was a blessing in disguise for region-building in SEA. Because of their common domestic problems, they had to achieve peace

(in a negative sense) between them at the international level. Over time, a sense of comfort developed, personalization of relations among the leaders, and emergence of a shared sense of social reality surrounding their countries, etc.

Table 2. The Ethnic Compositions of Countries in East Asia

Region	Country	Ethnic Composition
Northeast Asia	China, PRC	Han Chinese 92%; other minorities 8%
	Japan	Japanese 98.5%; Koreans 0.5%; Chinese 0.4%; others 0.6%
	South Korea	Koreans 99%; others 1%
	North Korea	Koreans 99%; others 1%
Southeast Asia	Brunei	Malay 66.3%; Chinese 11.2%; Indigenous 3.4%; others 19.1%
	Cambodia	Khmer 90%; Vietnamese 5%; Chinese 1%; others 4%
	Indonesia	Javanese 40.6%; Sudanese 15%; Madurese 3.3%; unspecified 29.9%
	Laos	Laos 55%; Khmou 11%; Hmong 8%; Others 26%
	Malaysia	Malay 50.4%; Chinese 23.7%; Indian 7.1% Indigenous 11%; others 7.8%
	Myanmar	Burman 68%; Shan 9%; Karen 7%; Chinese 3%; Indian 2%; others 5%
	The Philippines	Tagalog 28.1%; Cebuano 13%; Ilocano 9% Bisaya 7.6%; others 25.3%
	Singapore	Chinese 76.8%; Malay 14%; Indian 7.9% Others 1.5%
	Thailand	Thai 75%; Chinese 14%; others 11%
	Vietnam	Viet 86.2%; Tay 1.9%; Thai 1.7%; Others 4.1%

Source: The World Factbook. CIA
 Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

Ethnicity, in particular, played a crucial role here. The difference of degree of ethnic homogeneity between NEA countries and SEA countries is remarkable. As Table 2 above

shows, the NEA countries are by and large ethnically homogeneous. While some other ethnic groups do exist, they are few in number and are dominated by the one single ethnic group, whether it be Han Chinese, Koreans, or Japanese. In SEA, on the other hand, ethnic composition is far more diverse than NEA, and often times there are overlapping ethnic groups between regional countries (i.e. significant Malay group in Chinese-dominated Singapore, or significant Chinese group in Malay-dominated Malaysia).

The high degree of ethnic homogeneity in all three NEA countries not only makes it easier to stereotype the Other, but also helps to create strong social norms to adhere to behavior and attitudes that favor the ingroup (i.e. their nations) through peer pressure. In this sense, bashing “Japan”, “Korea”, or “China”, so to speak, has the effect of not only denigrating the Other but consolidating the ingroup solidarity. The NEA countries can be regarded as true nation-states where a single ethnic and cultural population inhabits in the boundaries of a state and the boundaries of that state are coextensive with the boundaries of the ethnic and cultural population (Smith 1995: 86).

However, in SEA, most nations contain more than one ethnic group, or what Smith calls ethnies. Ethnies are defined as “units of population with common ancestry myths and historical memories, elements of shared culture . . . and some measure of solidarity.” (Smith 1995: 57). Of the five countries, only Thailand has any reasonable claim to nationhood, described in its ideal form by Rupert Emerson as “a single people, traditionally fixed on a well-defined territory, speaking the same language and preferably a language all its own, possessing a distinctive culture, and shaped to a common mold by many generations of shared historical experience.” (p.103). Even there, however, Malay minority in Southern Thailand has been a source of internal conflict. In all other SEA nations, multiple ethnies

exist in the boundaries of the state. Within ASEAN states, the search for nationhood has been and continues to be a major concern of every regime.

Furthermore, ethnic boundaries cross over the boundaries of states. Malays are the largest ethnic group in the region and are the dominant group in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Chinese people also populate in most SEA nations, although they are only a significant minority in them, except for in Singapore where it is the dominant group. Added are Indians and other minorities in the Philippines and Indonesia, thereby complicating ethnic composition of regional countries. The ethnic categories are never simply superimposed on the state categories. The overlapping ethnic boundaries have made it harder to stereotype neighboring countries and see them as a homogeneous outgroup. Furthermore, ingroup pressure to conform with ingroup norms, values, and attitudes has been much weaker and less effective in SEA.

There were other problems. Communist insurgencies, which were present in most SEA nations, and militant Islamic organizations challenged the newly established state and its legitimacy. The weak sense of internal or national cohesion has been a key reason for the founding fathers of ASEAN to create the regional association. Peaceful relations with neighboring countries was regarded as necessary for the purpose of constructing and consolidating internal solidarity (Farling 2007).

And the second factor concerns the nature of interactions. By the nature of social interaction, I mean the salience of issue at the time of interaction. In a similar vein as neofunctionalism (Hass 1958), I hypothesize that if issues that divide the actors become salient, then interaction would consolidate the ingroup identity and increase the identity distance between the groups, and cause more inter-group conflict. If issues that exploit joint benefit become salient, however, actors would find it easier to cooperate, and the experience

of cooperation would narrow the identity-distance by increasing mutual trust. If the extent and intensity of such cooperation is great, then it could lead to a redefinition or enlargement of the ingroup identity.

Studies of racial bias and immigration are illustrative. The research in this area shows that encounter between racial groups often produces improved relations, while at other times it leads to greater conflict (Durrheim and Dixon 2005). The degree of racial mixture in neighborhood is identified as a key factor in promoting racial harmony (Durrheim and Dixon 2005: 43). Whether or not different races mix is likely to depend on whether they share a common language, ethnicity and customs. Similarly, contact between established citizens and immigrants often exacerbate prejudice and generate conflict, as immigrants fear assimilation and erosion of their own culture (Dixon 2001). Here the divisive issue is cultural assimilation versus cultural protection, which would divide the two groups and cause intergroup conflict.

These factors help us explain the evolution of the identity distance in NEA and SEA since 1980, which resulted in the contrasting patterns of regional interstate conflict. In NEA, since the mid 1980s, the rise of the “history problem” (*lishi wenti*) came to the fore of regional interstate relations. The “history problem” essentially refers to what is the ‘correct’ interpretation of Japan’s past aggression during WWII and how to resolve the issues that have originated from the war. The “history problem” became salient in the 1980s with the rise of the history textbook controversy and the Yasukuni shrine visit by former Japanese prime minister Nakasone, leading to an exchange of emotionally-charged, nationalistic accusations against each other. The history problem has continued until today, with the same issues troubling bilateral relations between Japan on one hand and China and Korea on the other.

The “history problem” in NEA has even been characterized as “history war” (Yoon 2004) due to its intensity and the fervent reactions it generates. The rise of the history problem widened the identity distance between regional countries, solidified the deep-rooted cognitive biases, and worsened the relations between the regional countries. As the content analysis of newspapers reveals, some of these biases are beliefs about hidden intentions, untrustworthiness, and immorality of the outgroup, and moral superiority of the ingroup. These views had existed but remained dormant until the rise of the history problem. The rise of the history problem made the pre-existing cognitive biases about the outgroup “real” and more salient, leading the regional countries to draw sharp ingroup-outgroup boundaries along national lines. As a result, the regional countries increasingly defined their national identity against one another, and intra-regional conflict became more frequent and intense.

In contrast, SEA shows how regular and close contact among national leaders leads to a narrowing of the intergroup identity distance and enhanced mutual trust and comfort level. It also creates a new social reality shared among the actors. Three points are noteworthy here. First, the issues that might divide the regional countries were put aside, and those of common regional interest were given primary attention during interaction. The examination of the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings Official Records reveals that the discussions that took place among ASEAN leaders seldom included issues that would result in potential disagreement. Although this can be interpreted as a sign of lack of real trust, at least it resulted in cooperative experiences in the early period of ASEAN, which improved comfort and trust level among the regional countries to consult with one another on issues of mutual importance and coordinate policies on those issues. Over time, we see the expansion of issue scope to areas that the original founders of ASEAN could not even envision. The most notable example is the issue of human rights. Because of strong

adherence to the norm of non-interference as well as the potential destabilizing effect of human rights discussion, ASEAN nations vehemently resisted any discussion on the issue. However, the SEA nations have come to establish the first regional human rights mechanism in Asia, namely, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights in 2009.

Second, another key aspect of SEA's success in building a regional identity was the personalization of the relations among the regional leaders, which led to the development of a sense of diplomatic community among the regional countries. The formation of such identity in the aftermath of the bitter *konfrontasi* as well as in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and mistrust in the 1960s, was not an easy task and occurred at a slow pace. In fact, in the first decade since the inception of ASEAN, the organization was rather dormant, and the leaders of regional countries only managed to meet once during this period. It only came after decades of regular and close interactions, which often included playing a round of golf or singing a song together. This is not a trivial point from identity construction perspective. Synchronized action as well as physical contact is shown by various experiments to increase trust and consolidate ingroup identity (Wiltermuth and Heath 2009; Kosfel et. al. 2005). In this sense, the fact that initially the ASEAN meetings were confined to a few representatives from each nation made identity construction easier by facilitating close and intense interactions among them.

Third, the existence and expansion of various ASEAN mechanisms facilitated regional interactions among decision makers. The number of ASEAN meetings has grown from single digits in the late 1960s to more than 900 per annum in 2010. Despite the lack of binding rules, it was commonly expected that regional countries consult with one another prior to adopting any policy that might affect other regional countries negatively. Now with

the passage of the ASEAN Charter in 2007, the ASEAN member states are formally required to give priority to ASEAN and its members in external political, economic, social and cultural relations (see 2(m) of Article 2 of the ASEAN Charter).

Over time, through a habit of consultation and experience of cooperation, the SEA countries have increasingly come to promote a Southeast Asian identity, and deepen regional identification. This process led to the narrowing of identity distance among the regional countries and the enlargement of the ingroup identity. As a result, the regional countries strived to reduce and resolve their interstate disputes through pacific means.

Parts II and III will investigate in depth how IDT helps us explain and understand the regional identity construction in both NEA and SEA, and the diverging cross-regional patterns of interstate interactions.

PART II. Falling Apart: The “History Problem” and Regional Affairs in Northeast Asia

“Where common memory is lacking, where people do not share in the same past,
there can be no real community”

-- Richard Niebuhr in *The Meaning of Revelation*--

Part Three examines how widening identity distance between the Northeast Asian countries has contributed to worsening bilateral relations between them. The empirical focus is on two puzzling phenomena in NEA. The first is the emergence of *mutual* threat perception between China and Japan. This raises a question about what causes threat perception to arise. Realists argue that threat perception is a function mainly of power disparities. But if power difference were the only key determinant of threat perception, it is curious why China’s threat perception of Japan would increase during the period when her economic and military capabilities caught up with those of Japan.

The other phenomenon concerns increasingly conflictual Korea-Japan relations after Korea’s democratization in the late 1980s. Democratic peace theory posits that democratic dyads should be peaceful than other kinds of dyads. Yet, after Korea’s democratization in 1986, we have seen an increasing level of conflict between Korea and Japan, especially on the disputed territory known as Dokdo in Korean or Takeshima in Japanese. This trend is even more puzzling because both bilateral economic trade and human exchanges have increased dramatically after Korea’s democratization.

My explanation focuses on the ‘history problem’ as the fundamental cause for the rise in the Chinese threat perception of Japan as well as increasing conflict between Korea and Japan. The history problem placed these regional countries farther on identity distance than before. In the case of China-Japan relations, the widening identity distance between China and Japan made the former reassess latter’s aggressive intentions, thereby increasing

the threat perception of the latter. As for the Korea-Japan relations, the widening identity distance between Korea and Japan interacted with Korea's democratization, and affected Korea's policy toward Japan in a negative way. In other words, democratization in Korea permitted anti-Japanese sentiments, which had previously been dormant and suppressed by Korea's authoritarian regimes, to surge forward and affect Korea's foreign policy toward Japan.

Part Three contains three chapters. Chapter Three will present a detailed discussion of the "history problem" and how it resulted in widening identity distance between Korea and China, on the one hand, and Japan, on the other. Chapter Four will examine the case of mutual threat perception between China and Japan in detail. Chapter Five will focus on the case of increasingly conflictual Korea-Japan relations after Korea's democratization in 1986.

Chapter 3. The “History Problem”, War Memories, and Widening Identity Distance

In September 1984, the leaders of France and Germany, President Francois Mitterrand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, chose the site of the 1916 battle of Verdun for a symbolic day of reconciliation. On 12 November 2009, German chancellor Angela Merkel traveled to Paris to commemorate with the French president Nicholas Sarkozy the moment the guns fell silent on the Western Front after a war that killed millions. It was the first time a German leader attended the annual ceremony in Paris. At the ceremony, Merkel said, “I know that what has gone before cannot be erased. But there is a power, a power which helps us and which can help us bear what has passed: reconciliation.” Sarkozy responded that the remembrance of the past “is also to consolidate the present and prepare the future.” “Your presence among us on this Nov 11 is a gesture of exceptional friendship—every French person knows how significant it is.” Both leaders laid a floral wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier together (The Boston Globe 12 November 2009).

Decades after World War II (WWII) was over, and despite the fact both countries engage in extensive cooperation on trade, finance, and foreign policy through the European Union, the two leaders felt it important to put on a symbolic act of reconciliation in 2009. It was a public act of showing how Germany understands the past today, France’s willingness to let go of Germany’s past and build relations with her, and the bilateral political agenda to take the bilateral relations forward in the future.

In contrast, political reconciliation between East Asian nations over Japan’s imperialism and aggression against East Asian neighbors, especially China and Korea, has not yet been achieved, though official diplomatic relations have long been established. In fact, it became a key factor in aggravating bilateral relations between China and Korea on the one hand and Japan on the other hand. Between 2001 and 2006, the so-called ‘history

problem' was the official reason why China and Korea suspended summit meetings with Japan.

This chapter discusses the origin, nature, and 'causes' of the 'history problem'. The history problem encompasses a wide range of issues: revisionist history textbook in Japan, Yasukuni shrine visits, 'comfort women', and Nanjing massacre, and war reparations among others. Here I will focus only on the first two issues, since they are the most salient and are present in both bilateral relationships of China and Korea with Japan.

These historical issues have their origins in Japan's imperialism and aggression in East Asia, or to be more exact, the ambiguous political settlement of war guilt and responsibility at the end of WWII. But they became international controversies in the region only in the 1980s. Both international and contextual factors contributed to the rise of the 'history problem'. The decline of the cold war in the 1980s made it more permissible to discuss issues relating to war atrocities, guilt, and responsibility more freely than before. In addition, the death of Emperor Hirohito in 1989 contributed to the debate on war guilt and responsibility in Japan. But the key cause for the rise of the history problem is changes in domestic politics in Japan as well as China and Korea.

The history problem is produced by small but influential right-wing groups in Japan, who seek to revise what they perceive is a 'masochistic' (*jigyaku*) view of Japanese modern history. The purpose is not only to alter what has been the official interpretation of Japanese history, to portray its imperial period in a more positive light, but also to inculcate a sense of patriotism among the Japanese public, especially the youth, and to justify the 'normalization' of Japan's military activities. Once produced, the history problem is then consumed by nationalists and ordinary people in China and Korea, who respond almost unreflectively to what they perceive is an immoral and unjust act. Such action in China and Korea is

interpreted by Japanese nationalists as evidence that Japan needs to be stronger militarily and politically, and provides further justification for the viewpoint advanced by right-wing groups in Japan that Japan needs to be strong to resist foreign pressure (*gaiatsu*).

What emerges in this mutual dependence of hatred is a tragic cycle of fervent nationalism directed against each other, and the notion of ‘Self’ (Korea and China) as a moral and victimized and ‘Other’ (i.e. Japan) as immoral and victimizer. A complicating factor is that the official historical narrative in Japan has also portrayed Japan largely as a victim, and hence there is a gulf of perceptual difference that the regional countries have been unable to bridge thus far. The discussion of this chapter suggests that history is not about the past, but about the present and how political actors make of the past

The End of History?

Traumatic events often leave lasting memories on those who experience them, and those who experience them pass their memories to the next generations through social education and public symbols and displays. After generations, therefore, it is still important that the same exercise and gesture be conducted in order to keep a common understanding of the past afloat. For NEA countries, Japan’s imperialism and aggression at the turn of the 20th century was such event.

Between 1895 and 1945, Japan fought five major wars: the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5; Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05; WWI on the side of the Western allies; Second Sino-Japanese War beginning in 1937; and the Pacific War with the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. At its height, the Japanese empire encompassed Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria, most of coastal China, virtually all of Southeast Asia, and the entire Western Pacific Ocean. The empire came to an end with Japan’s defeat in WWII in 1945.

The exact number of human casualties during this period is hard to estimate due to

the lack of detailed official records, but a reasonable estimate puts the number at around 20 million (Rummel 1991). About 3 million Japanese had died during the war, including approximately one million civilians who perished as a result of fire bombings of major cities in Japan and atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Often times, there are vastly different estimates of human casualties. For instance, of the Nanjing massacre, a conservative Japanese scholar Hata Ikuhiko estimates that the number of people who were killed was around 40,000, while the Chinese government insists that it was over 300,000 (Chang 1997). The Allies estimated it was over 200,000. Though getting the details is important, the debate somewhat misses the central point, because the essence of the ‘history problem’ is not about the number of human casualties during the war, but about its meaning and shared understanding.

After the war, war crimes trials were held in order to establish the extent of responsibility for the atrocities. There were three categories of war crime—Class A war crimes (crimes against peace), Class B (crimes against the laws of war), and Class C (crimes against humanity). Of these, 28 indicted Class A war criminals were by far the greatest symbolic importance, and 25 senior Japanese political and military leaders were convicted of this type of crime. Additional 1,334 Japanese were charged with Class B and C crimes (Piccigallo 1979: xiv).

One would expect that the conclusion of the Tokyo Tribunals had brought an end to the ‘history problem’, but history unfolded in a different manner. Two factors were significant in keeping the ‘history’ alive. One is the partial justice achieved at the war crimes tribunals at the conclusion of WWII. And the other is the incomplete or halted socio-political transformation of Japanese society after WWII.

As right-wing groups in Japan often point out, the justice achieved at the trials was

the victor's justice. The trials were political in nature. The crimes against which the Japanese wartime leaders were charged were not clearly defined in law, nor did they have established legal basis in international law. But what the right-wing groups in Japan do not realize is that if the process had been fairer with participation from Asian countries, the primary victims of Japan's aggression, the nature and extent of punishment would have been far greater and harsher than what was actually given to Japan.

The primary victims of Japanese imperialism—China and Korea—were not represented on the bench and, as a result, crimes against Westerners took the center stage, and much wider and more serious abuses in other Asian countries were neglected. It is a reasonable speculation that had both China and Korea been represented in the trials, the emperor might not have been exonerated from legal or moral punishment. But the US Occupation Authorities decided on pragmatic grounds to exempt the emperor from any kind of responsibility, to avoid the risk of sparking a domestic resistance and social instability in Japan (Brackman 1987; Dower 1999). In the end, the person in whose name and honor the war was fought with catastrophic consequences remained innocent.

When the US Occupation Authorities took over Japan, there were two goals, namely, demilitarization and democratization. Demilitarization was achieved through political purge and prosecution of right-wing militaristic conservatives (Ward 1997). Democratization was achieved through the creation of a unique constitution, the so-called 'Peace Constitution' (*heiwa kenpo*), and education. It not only meant the dismantling of the old order under the military rule but also changing Japanese values and attitudes. The most famous outcome of this process is Article 9 of the constitution, which states that Japan unilaterally renounces the use of force as a means to resolve international disputes and does not maintain air, sea, or ground forces. Over the years, however, Japan came to possess a *de*

facto army, navy, and air force only for self-defense purposes.

But this US objective was soon to be reversed due to the expansion of communism in East Asia and the intensifying cold war. The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 compelled the US policy makers to quickly allow the rightists to return to power in the interest of maintaining social stability and national security-oriented approach in Japan. Among those who returned were Kishi Nobusuke, who had been a former senior official in the colonial administration of Manchuria and then the munitions minister in the Tojo cabinet. He became the prime minister from 1957 and 1960. Shigemitsu Mamoru, another leading conservative politician, who had been the foreign minister signing the instrument of surrender at the end of the war, returned to serve once again as foreign minister from 1954 and 1956, despite his initial conviction to 7 years of imprisonment as a Class A war criminal. Kaya Okinori, founder of the quasi-fascist Imperial Rule Assistance Association, was initially sentenced to life imprisonment but was later allowed to return to take up the minister of justice position in the 1960s. With their personal involvement in the old order, these politicians were naturally uninterested in promoting a historical narrative or justice that would have undermined their own legitimacy (Finn 1992: 296).

The geopolitical and strategic interests put limitations on political purges and reform in Japan in the immediate aftermath of the end of the war, as Japan became a bulwark against expanding communism in the region. This ambiguous political settlement in the aftermath of the end of WWII would have unpredictable and serious consequences two decades later, as the right-wing groups in Japan began to promote historical revisionism. By the end of the Occupation period in 1952, while Japan would formally acknowledge its war guilt, its official narrative remained resolutely impenitent, and there was no clear societal agreement on the meaning of the war and the extent war responsibility.

Official War Narrative: The Prevalence of Victimhood Mentality

What was the official narrative of Japan's imperialism and pains it had caused to others, especially to Asian neighbors? The official narrative is simple: the war was the miscalculated and misguided decision of a small clique of military leaders and their followers; they had led the Japanese people to the wrong path and inflicted pain not only on foreign peoples but also on Japanese citizens; as such, war guilt was to be assigned to those small group of military leaders, who were rightly punished at the trials, while Asian neighbors and Japanese citizens would be treated as victims; Japan would take on postwar responsibility as a peace nation, renouncing the use of force as a means of resolving international disputes as stated in Article 9 of the constitution. Neither China nor Korea officially challenged this interpretation of the war.

But within Japan, the interpretation of the war was a contentious political issue right from the beginning. It became even more contentious as it was linked with the US-Japan Security Alliance. Challenge came from both political left and right. Those on the left wished to focus on Japanese civilian suffering in order to promote the idea of Japan as a peace nation renouncing war. They envisioned Japan as a neutral disarmed nation, unallied with any superpower and uninvolved in any international conflict. They wanted to keep right-wing views at bay by firmly instituting pacifism through official education.

Those on the right thought differently. They felt that Japan had little or nothing to be penitent about, as the war was either inevitable or had a positive impact on liberating Asia. Their main aim was to enhance patriotism among the Japanese public, so that they would support an alliance with the US (Orr 2001). Consequently, the politics of history in Japan in the 1960s largely revolved around the issue of how to remember Japanese civilian suffering informed by another debate of national security policy. What is largely forgotten in

this debate between the political left and right in Japan is the suffering that Japan had caused to non-Japanese under Japan's imperial rule. Despite the fact that in East Asia the aggressor was Japan and the aggressed were China and Korea, the dominant war memory in all three countries resulted in a victimhood consciousness.

The initial attitudes of the Japanese public did not help the situation, either. According to the first opinion poll conducted by the Occupation authorities in December 1945, 45% of the respondents believed that Japan had to annex Manchuria in 1931 for its survival; 59% believed that China was not a nation and did not constitute a political entity; 69% thought that if Chinese agitators had not created confusion, the Sino-Japanese War would not have taken place; and 86% believed that the Japanese people were superior to the other peoples of Asia (Yoshida 1995: 53). Even by 1984, public attitudes were somewhat mixed. While 82.5% of those surveyed believed that the Japanese people should reflect deeply and critically on the oppression and atrocities that were suffered by the peoples of China and Korea, about 45% felt that Japan's military expansion was inevitable and believed that the war had hastened the liberation of Asian people from Western colonial dominance (Yoshida 1995)

Among the elite, contrition was even more difficult to find. For decades, the Japanese government assiduously avoided apologizing or assuming any formal responsibility for the horrors of the war in Asia. Condemnation of Japan's lack of apology was not limited to China and Korea. Other countries also criticized Japan for its stubbornness on this issue. Former Australian prime ministers Bob Hawke and Paul Keating urged Japan to apologize for the horrors of the past (Lind 2008:169). Former prime minister of Singapore Lee Kwan Yew warned in a public symposium that Japan was not entirely trustworthy because of elements of the old militarist order had managed to creep back into the mainstream

(Wakamiya 1998:49). The British representative to the UN High Commission on refugees criticized Japan for distorting history (Yoshida 1995: 89-91).

In the 1990s and 2000s, there were important statements made by Japanese leaders offering apology for Japan's past aggression. Both prime minister Kaifu and prime minister Hosokawa offered some form of apology, though there were criticisms of the former's limited apology. The most important official statement to date is the one made by prime minister Murayama Tomiichi in 1995, on the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. He said:¹³

We should bear in mind that we must look into the past to learn from the lessons of history, and ensure that we do not stray from the path to the peace and prosperity of human society in the future.

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

Even prime minister Junichiro Koizumi, who caused so much controversy due to his annual visits to Yasukuni Shrine, offered his word of apology at the 2005 Asian-African summit.¹⁴

¹³ The speech can be found at the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. "On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End" available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>

¹⁴ His words were: "In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility. And with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan has consistently since the end of World War Two resolutely maintained its principle of resolving all matters by peaceful means, without recourse to use of force, never turning into a military power but remaining an economic power." His statement is entitled "Speech by H. E. Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan" and is available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/meet0504/speech.html>

While such statements are encouraging, efforts to promote a more contrite official historical narrative are undermined by a constant, unapologetic voices from the right-wing groups and some conservative politicians and bureaucrats. When the Murayama cabinet attempted to pass a Diet resolution marking the 50th anniversary with a statement of renunciation of war and a general recognition of the historical injustices perpetrated by Japan, it was blocked by a powerful coalition of LDP lawmakers and the Parliamentarian League on the 50th Anniversary of the End of WWII headed by ultraconservative Okubo Seisuke.

Of course, this is not to deny the existence of people or groups in Japan, who genuinely are remorseful about the atrocities, emphasize Japanese wrongdoings, and seek redress for them. For instance, it was a Japanese historian Professor Ienaga Saburo at Chuo University, who took the education ministry to the supreme court in 1993, and achieved the decision that the ministry's efforts to censor references to sexual assaults by Japanese forces in Nanjing and activities of Unit 731 constituted undue government interference in the textbook writing. It was also a Japanese academic, who discovered documentary evidence in the archives of the National Defense Agency, proving that the Japanese imperial government had in fact been involved in the forcible recruiting of the so-called comfort women (*yianfu*) during the war.

There are also important networks of peace museums that exhibit stories of Japanese wrongdoings in other Asian countries. As Seraphim shows, war memory is deeply ingrained into the social fabric of post-1945 Japanese politics through groups such as the teachers' union (Seraphim 2006). But these meaningful efforts are overshadowed by right-wing

statements and actions that seek to de-emphasize the atrocities committed by the imperial army of Japan. As years went on, tensions over Japan's historical narrative were to intensify and become a key source that troubles Japan's relations with neighboring countries.

In Japan, the wartime victimhood narrative can be traced to the belief shared by the US Occupation authorities and Japanese intellectuals that this kind of historical narrating would provide the basis for creating a postwar peace-loving society. According to James Orr, the neglect of Japanese responsibility for the victimization of other Asian peoples emerges from juxtaposing the Japanese people ("the victims") with the military ("the victimizers") in early history textbooks (2001: 73). Although this emphasis is ameliorated in some textbooks which place greater focus on the complicity of the Japanese people in the victimization of other Asians, but the predominant war memory of WWII for the Japanese people is the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the primary emphasis in these narratives has been on Japan's victimhood as a nation (Dierkes 2005: 259). Victim tropes became entrenched in popular consciousness through postwar popular culture as well as through the Japanese peace movement (Orr 2001: 6). Such historical narrative depicting the Japanese "nation" as a victim creates a critical perspective of the "state", the initiator of the war, something that conservative nationalists are keen to change.

This narrative found in these textbooks can only be understood in the context of the conception of "the nation" as an entity separate from "the state." This notion emerged as a part of the postwar "healthy nationalism" that came to be widely shared by a generation of postwar progressive historians. According to this conception, the nation came to be perceived in generally positive terms as a source of opposition against the state's interests, whereas the state came to represent the negative past of imperialism, authoritarianism, and barbarism (Gayle 2001). This characteristic of the narrative was widely criticized for

absolving the Japanese people of their responsibility in the Asia Pacific War.

Based on comparison of textbooks used in the early 1980s to those introduced after 2002, Bukh (2007) also finds that depictions of Japan's national victimhood continue to play a central role in the currently dominant narrative, particularly in relation to the Pacific War, and that a number of important instances of Japan's "atrocities" against other Asians are either absent from the narrative—such as the Unit 731 experiments—or referred to very briefly—such as the Nanjing Massacre. Furthermore, the narrative does not provide any material related to individual responsibility for these atrocities committed by Japan; hints about collective responsibility are vague and few (Bukh 2007: 691-701).

Conservative Nationalism in Japan and the “History Problem”

A defeat in war may produce a strong culture of anti-militarism as in Germany and Japan (Berger 1998; Katzenstein 1998), putting normative constraints on foreign and security policy. But, to paraphrase what Deng Xiaoping said of the legacy of Mao Zedong, this view is only '70% right and 30% wrong'. While undoubtedly the pro-peace social forces are strong from the teachers union to coalition of peace museums and place a significant constraint on conservative politics in Japan, IR scholars have neglected the effect of right-wing views in Japan that stem from the unsettled political and historical meaning of WWII for the Japanese. A defeat in war, coupled with an ambiguous political resolution of history, in the case of Japan, produced dissatisfied right-wing groups, who challenge to the official historical narrative of the war. The conservative, right-wing views can't be underestimated. Though small in number, right-wing groups and conservative politicians and bureaucrats exercise a disproportionately large influence on the historical narrative, war memory discourse, and national security policy, with far-reaching implications for regional interstate relations.

The advent and development of the Cold War conflict essentially eliminated an opportunity for Japanese society and leaders to reflect on the war and come to an agreement on the meaning of the event. Instead, the focus became the strategic role of Japan in the Cold War context, especially on the Korean peninsula after the Korean War broke out. Japan's geo-strategic importance for the US in the wake of the Cold War meant the US occupation policy in Japan changed its focus from socio-political reform and demilitarization to social and political stability and economic industrial power that could quickly supply arms. Conservative politics were given another life in Japan. By the end of the 1950s, all surviving war criminals had been paroled and were allowed to reenter and exercise their influence in politics.

This lack of domestic consensus in Japan on how to depict WWII resulted in an ambiguous understanding of WWII. There was no societal agreement on the 'correct meaning' of the history. The official understanding is the same in Japan as well as China and Korea. The wartime military leaders took Japan in a wrong and disastrous path, and they should be blamed, while Japanese citizens should be exonerated. But socially, there is no agreement in Japan. On the one hand, conservatives argue that the war was fought in a righteous cause, namely the liberation of Asian people from European imperialism, and that stories of atrocities were fabricated or, at most, exaggerated (Bix 2008). On the other hand, the views of progressives and liberals do not deviate from the Chinese and Korean views and focus on the protection of what they believe is the major lesson from the war, namely, peace.

The existence of conservative views of history and their dissatisfaction with what they think is a masochistic view of Japanese modern history in the prevailing textbooks, is easy to see from numerous statements made by both high-level officials and public

intellectuals. For example, in 1986, conservative minister of education Fujio Masayuki published an article in which he argued that Japan's annexation of Korea was a mutually agreed-upon arrangement, angering the Koreans who believe that the agreement was written and signed under duress, and hence void and illegal. In May 1994, Nagano Shigeto, former chief of staff of the ground SDF and justice minister in the Hosokawa cabinet, told newspaper reporters that Japan had been forced into the war for its own survival and that the Nanjing massacre had been a fabrication (Mainichi shimbun 5 May 1994). The director general of the environmental protection agency in the Murayama cabinet, Sakurai Shin remarked Japan had had no aggressive intent when it invaded Asia, and emphasized that the Japanese had in fact had a positive impact on the region (Asahi shimbun 13 August 1994).

The revisionist view of history promoted by conservative nationalists is that Japan's imperial expansion was not a war of aggression but one of survival and liberation (*jiei jizōn kaiho*) aimed at freeing the rest of Asia from their own corrupt governments as well as the Western imperialists (Ishihara 2005; Kobayashi 2003). They further argue that the justice achieved at the end of WWII was the victor's justice, and hence by implication illegitimate. Other conservatives like former prime minister Nakasone are more concerned with promoting Japan's 'normalization' by rallying domestic support for a significant strengthening of the US-Japan alliance and a large-scale expansion of Japan's military activities. His slogan "settlement of postwar politics" (*senjo seiji no sokeisan*) aimed at reversing what he saw as Japan's weak sense of nationalism.

This uneasy situation lasted until the 1980s when it burst into the international political scene when the conservative party in Japan Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which had just gained majority in both Lower and Upper Houses of the Diet, attempted to revise what they perceived was the prevailing view of Japan's modern history and rectify what they

considered was a despicably low level of patriotism or nationalism among the Japanese public, especially the youth. The ‘history problem’ hence arose.

Another way the history issues play a role in inciting Japanese nationalism is more indirect and reactive. It is in response to Korean and Chinese criticisms that Japanese nationalism becomes strengthened. The Yasukuni issue illustrates this point well. The former Prime Minister Koizumi often said that he would not bend to foreign pressure, and his stance was also supported by the public. According to one opinion poll, over 30% of those who in favor of PM’s visit to Yasukuni shrine supported such visit because Japan should not bend against foreign criticism.¹⁵

Right-wing views have become more salient since the 1990s, and unfortunately the war memory discourse has increasingly been hijacked by right-wing intellectuals in Japan (Ishihara 2005; Nakanishi 2005). Their views can be found in both popular literature such as cartoons and in public statements by prominent opinion leaders or politicians including Yoshinori Kobayashi, Tojo Yuko (Tojo Hideki’s granddaughter), Mayor of Tokyo Ishihara Shintaro, and a professor of education at Tokyo University Fujioka Nobukatsu. By reducing genuine and understandable resentment toward Japanese historical amnesia to foreign manipulation, they downplay Japan’s responsibilities for any deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations and implicitly absolve Japan from its responsibilities to face up to its unsavory past.

They share the same purpose of reassessing Japan’s past and its role in WWII as a source of national pride and identity. Their common concern is three-fold. First, Japan’s modern history has been presented in a ‘distorted’ and ‘masochistic’ manner, and has to be revised. Second, there is a lack of nationalism among the Japanese public, especially the

¹⁵ Asahi Shimbun, August 10, 2004.

youth, and this situation has to be rectified. And finally, Japan should be more assertive internationally and become a “normal country”.

For instance, in 1994 the minister of law Nagano said in an interview with *Mainichi* newspaper that the Nanjing Massacre was a historical fabrication (*detchi ageta*), and that calling Japan’s advancement into Korea and China an invasion was wrong.¹⁶ More recently, a popular *manga* artist Yoshinori Kobayashi claims in *Sensoron* (On War) and *Gomanism Sengen* (Declaration of Arrogance) that the sole purpose of Japanese aggression in WWII was to free Asian nations from Western imperialism, that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrates a deep-rooted racism against Japan by the US, that the Nanjing massacre was propaganda invented by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and the Korean comfort women were volunteers from rural villages or professional prostitutes and not coerced into sexual servitude by the Japanese military (1992, 1998, 2001 & 2003). Tojo’s grand daughter, Tojo Yuko also insists that WWII was fought to liberate ‘non-white’ colonies from ‘whites’, and that Japan needs to gain prewar pride. A professor of education at Tokyo University, Fujioka Nobukatsu, who is a key member of the Japan Society for History Textbook Reform (*Atarashii Rekishi Kyokasho o Tsukuru Kai*), argues that many Japanese submitted to the victors’ view of history¹⁷, and rather than think too much about it,

¹⁶ His exact words in Japanese are as follows: 「私は南京事件というのは、あれ、でっち上げだと思う」と太平洋戦争について、「侵略戦争という定義付けは、今でも間違っていると思う」という部分だ。彼は「日本がつぶされそうだったから生きるために立ち上がった……植民地を解放する……ことを、まじめに考えた。そこまで持ってきた諸外国が問題だった。戦争目的そのものは当時としては基本的に許される正当なものだった」と語った。 *Yomiuri Shimbun* May 7, 1994.

¹⁷ It is rather common to hear that the final verdict of the Tokyo Trials was a victors’ justice, and is present not just among right-wing groups but also some moderates in academia. This stance is closely connected with post-structuralist view of history and moral relativism that ‘historical truth’ exists simply as an act of interpretation in the present, invariably compromised by specific contemporary interests and power dynamics, and the truth of a proposition depends on who interprets it because no moral or cultural consensus can or will be reached hence absolute moral judgment is impossible (Boas ; Skinner 1988; Carey 2006). While there is an element of truth in this claim, it denies the obvious possibility that the human race can reach agreement on some kind of moral code. Empirically, developments of human rights, especially concerning genocide, war crimes, etc, illustrate that this relativist stance is not always held empirically. In practice, the relativist position

concentrated instead on the path to prosperity in postwar Japan. It is only now that Japanese are beginning to look at history with their own eyes, a prerequisite to abandoning the ‘masochistic view of history’ (Fujioka 1999). They all reject the official interpretation of Japanese imperialism and aggression during WWII as a masochistic historical view (*jigyaku deki rekishikan*), and thus should be revised. While the number of people favoring such historical revisionism is not great, but their impact on regional relations is enormous.

While these conservative views have become stronger and more visible since the 1990s, there had been another form of deep-rooted conservative social views in Japan. In the 1970s and 1980s when Japan was fast industrializing, the *nihonjinron* (*On the Japanese*) became very popular. The thesis attributes Japan’s high economic performance to unique Japanese culture and ethics. In contrast, the social conservatism since the 1990s seeks to establish national pride not on cultural claims but by reinterpreting Japan’s modern history (Sakamoto 2007). As such, it was more political and ideological than the social conservatism of the 1970s, and the rise of the history problem should be understood in the context of the rise of conservative politics in Japan.

The history problem is a lens through which foreign countries, especially China and Korea, view Japan’s self-understanding of its history of aggression. Thus it becomes a political barometer by which to judge Japan’s ‘morality’ and intentions, and a shared understanding of the past is the fundamental basis upon which to build future political relations with Japan. Consequently, China and Korea view the resolution of the ‘history problem’ as a *necessary* condition for the continuation and development of relations with

in Japan is no more than an attempt to avoid facing war responsibility. One also wonders the verdict given to Japan at the conclusion of WWII was severe or not. If the voices of the victims of Japanese aggression were more reflected in the Trials, then it is almost certain that the verdict would have been far harsher than what was in fact given.

Japan. People's Republic of China (PRC) Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi stated in 2001 that the history problem is "by no means just an internal matter of Japan, but [is] a touchstone of the government attitude of Japan toward its history of aggression" (MOFA May 18, 2001). South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun also noted the problem as a "touchstone of the extent to which Japan recognizes its past history as well as its commitment to the future of Korea-Japan relations and peace in East Asia" (April 26, 2006).

This is an important point not well understood by Japanese politicians. Hence, they often view the Korean and Chinese criticisms as no more than extension of their respective domestic politics. Ryu provides evidence that many Japanese politicians view the Korean and Chinese criticisms as a means used for promoting the latter's own domestic nationalism in their own countries (2007: 718-723). Certainly, there is an element of domestic politics at play, but it is also a matter of principle and justice for Korea and China and hence less amenable to negotiation.

The 'history problem' also points to different aspects of the so-called "normalization" debate. In an era, when Japan is seeking to become a "normal" country, its statesmen consider it crucial to normalize three things. Most attention has been paid to the revision of Article 9, thereby permitting Japan to play a greater role in international affairs, in particular military activities. As Samuels (2007: 129) writes, for nationalists seeking 'normalcy', the 'statute of limitations for Japan's mid-twentieth century aggression expired long ago' and it is time for Japan 'to take its place on the international stage as an equal of the US'. But the normalization debate goes beyond the international aspect, and also includes the postwar state's relations with its war dead (i.e. the right to mourn the war dead), even if this should strain bilateral relations with neighboring countries, and addressing what conservative nationalists perceive is a low level of patriotism among the Japanese public,

especially among youth. Nationalist groups in Japan seek to tackle all three aspects together and are determined to recast Japan's WWII history in a more positive light with a view to inspire patriotic pride among the public, and eventually affecting a change in Japan's identity as an international actor.

The fight between the political right and left within Japan intensified throughout the 1990s and 2000s, as civil society grew and became more active. On the left, groups such as Peace Osaka, with support local governments, opened up museums and promoted exhibitions that went beyond the traditional focus on the Japanese people as victims of the war and placed new emphasis on Japan as the perpetrator of atrocities. The so-called peace museums opened in the early 1990s in Osaka, Kawasaki, Saitama, and Kanagawa, and joined forces with more established museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to provide an extensive coverage of Japanese atrocities and colonial oppression (Yamabe 1996). Another was the Violence against Women in War (VAWW), which took up the cause for comfort women and slave laborers (Underwood 2007). They sought to promote their views and causes through the media, and helped comfort women file lawsuits in Japanese courts demanding compensation and apologies from the Japanese government.

On the right, groups such as the Association of War Bereaved Families (*Izokukai*) and the Society for Textbook Reform (*Tsukurukai*) sought to revise the existing interpretation of modern Japanese history. The *Tsukurukai* in particular produced a new history textbook with a starkly unapologetic view of history (Saaler 2005). In 1996, as a counter to growing peace movement among museums in Japan, Upper House LDP members set up a special investigatory committee that criticized Peace Osaka for disseminating what it labeled politically motivated propaganda (Hein and Sheldon 2000: 70).

Other groups such as the National Conference to Defend Japan (*nihon o mamoru kaigi*), a network of conservative groups, formed to sponsor major legislative support for SDF in local assemblies through its connections with conservative politicians and government officials. In the popular domain, cartoon artists such as Kobayashi Yoshinori worked to propagate a revisionist history by depicting Japanese troops valiantly fighting against treacherous Chinese guerillas and brutal American invaders, demurring comfort women bravely doing their best to assist in the war effort, and portraying those who fought to convince Japan that it had done something wrong as agents of foreign powers who were trying to brain wash the Japanese people for their own nefarious purposes (Kobayashi 1999).

Once the history problem is produced by Japanese right-wing nationalists, it is then consumed by nationalists in both China and Korea. In China, the weakening power of the communist ideology compelled the CCP to look for new ways to boost up its legitimacy. It is commonly understood that economic performance and nationalism came to constitute the core base of the CCP's legitimacy (Gries 2004; Gries and Rosen 2004: 180-194; Whiting 1995: 315; Shambaugh 1996; Downs and Saunders 1998/9).

China's leaders have argued that political stability is a necessary precondition for economic development, and that the CCP is the only force capable of holding China together and guiding coordinated economic development (Chen et. al. 1997: 558; Yang 1996: 212-219). At the same time, the CCP launched the Patriotic Education Campaign (*aiguo jiaoyu yundong*) in 1991 in an effort to socialize the Chinese public, especially the youth, into more nationalistic attitudes. Described as a "total institution" by Lee (1981: 93), the state-run media makes it possible for the CCP to propagandize its nationalist message and re-educate the Chinese populace the sufferings the Chinese had to go through due to foreign

imperialism. The campaign involves studying China's humiliating modern history and how much the country has been "saved" by the Communist Revolution (Wang 2008).

Japan has proven extremely useful in this legitimation process by generating greater nationalism in China. Japan is the most important variable in this demand equation. A number of scholars have analyzed how the history issue is related to Chinese nationalism and Sino-Japanese relations. He Yinan (2007) argues that the historical memory increases Chinese nationalism, which in turn worsens Sino-Japanese relations. Qiu (2006) similarly argues that the history issue is the number one source for public antagonism against Japan in China. Shih (1995) states that Japan has been both an important factor in the development of Chinese nationalism and a target of Chinese xenophobia. The varying perception of history has its origin in school education, as Hamada's analysis of middle school history textbooks in China and Japan illustrates (Hamada 2003).

Japan's production of the history problem feeds into the national psychology of China characterized by the "one hundred years of humiliation" (*bainian guochi*). This victimization mentality magnifies the effect of Chinese nationalism against Japan, when the historical memory is turned on by actions or attempts that challenge their official interpretation of WWII.

The tragedy of the production and consumption of the history problem is that it creates a vicious cycle of strengthening the extreme groups in both countries and reinforcing each other's prejudices. Hence, the Japanese nationalists' effort to revise the history reinforces the Chinese popular perception that Japan still harbors militaristic ambitions, is a danger to China, and strengthens the Chinese nationalism. This in turn produces a more fervent nationalism directed against Japan, which reinforces the Japanese nationalists' view

that China is bent on bridling Japan with the past, and hence Japan needs to free herself of the masochistic view in order to become a “normal country” with national pride.

Lawson and Tanaka (2011) point to certain ironies in this vicious cycle. Those keenest on Japan’s normalization are precisely those most prone to denying or at least downplaying Japan’s war crimes. Yet the most important condition for normality, as the German case suggests, is the full and frank acknowledgement of the country’s war past. Okakura Tenshin’s observation more than a hundred years ago that ‘when Japan was engaging in the peaceful arts’ it was regarded by Western powers as uncivilized. But when it massacred thousands on the battlefields of Manchuria, it was embraced as a ‘civilized’—and therefore ‘normal—country (quoted in Suzuki 2005: 137).

History Textbook and Yasukuni Shrine Controversies

The two main issues of the ‘history problem’ are history textbook revision and Yasukuni shrine visits. Although there are other issues concerning the ‘comfort women’, Nanjing massacre, and war reparations, etc, the textbook and Yasukuni controversies have been the most serious and involve all three countries, so I examine them in detail here.

History textbook revision

The most common means through which to pass the collective memories of society on to future generations is the official school education of history. By selectively representing the important events and their meanings, official history education shapes how future generations regard the nation’s past as well as its values and principles. History textbook narratives also define a state’s relations with others, instructing one on how to view historical relations with others and in turn shaping perceptions of proper conduct in the present (Hein and Selden 2000: 4). Of course, the selection of topics and their interpretation is invariably attuned to different needs, interests, and identities of powerful actors in the present.

Although the textbook controversy became an international issue only in 1982 when the Chinese press picked up domestic media reports critical of the MOE's interference in drafting history textbooks, it has been a political battleground in Japan between conservatives and progressives. The postwar academia in Japan came to be dominated by "progressive" and left-leaning historians, while on the other hand, the conservative establishment—including the Ministry of Education (MOE)—was left intact after the war. The coexistence of these two conflicting sources of influence and authority with differing ideologies contributed to the revived struggle over historical education in the mid-1950s.¹⁸

The position espoused by progressives in academia can best be summarized in the words of academic Ienaga Sabur. Ienaga, the figurehead for the progressive textbooks cause, has argued that the main problem of the textbooks is that they do not contain enough "remorse for the past" (Ienaga 1993). By this, he refers largely to the "aggression [and] infliction of damage" by Japan in Asia, the role and responsibilities of the Showa emperor, Hirohito, and the "war responsibility" of the Japanese people in general (Ienaga 1993: 116).

Postwar textbooks portrayed the Japanese people as victims of the militarists, who they blamed for manipulating the nation into embarking on a destructive and misguided quest to dominate Asia (Orr 2001: 75-78). New emphasis was placed on democratic ideals and values and individual freedoms.

But soon the Japanese conservatives began a battle to retain control the education ministry. By 1951, the conservative-controlled education ministry began to reimpose some measures of ideological control through the introduction of a system of screening textbooks

¹⁸ For an excellent analysis of the textbook debate, see Fuwa Tetsu, *Koko Ni "Rekishi Ky kasbo" Mondai No Kakushin Ga Aru* [Here is the core of the "history textbooks" problem] (Tokyo: Shinnihon Shuppansha, 2001) and Mirai Niki, "Rekishi Kykasho Mondai" [The history textbooks problem], in *Rikkyo daigaku ky ikugakka kenky nenpo* [Yearbook of the education faculty, Rikkyo University] 48 (2005).

for ‘factual errors’ (Dower 1999: 351). The screening process gave a certain degree of control to the education ministry, which used the power to discourage references to Japanese imperial atrocities (Duke 1972).

The most recent phase of the regionalized and internationalized textbook controversy started in 2001 when a textbook produced by a conservative group called Japan’s Society for Textbook Reform (*Atarashii Kyokasho o Tsukuru Kai* or *Tsukuru Kai* in short) was granted official approval for school usage by the MOE.

A consistent theme of LDP education policy, along with an objection to ‘left-leaning’ textbook narratives, was the importance of a ‘patriotic education’, a view that had gained ground in 1980 after the LDP won a stable majority in both houses of the Diet. The first instance of the textbook controversy occurred in 1982 when the controversial descriptions appeared in one of publishers’ proposed history textbook. It described Japan’s aggression (*shinryaku* 侵略) in North China as “advance” (*shinshutsu* 進出), and the Korean independence movement as Korean “riots” (*boudou* 暴動) (Asahi Shimbun 26 June 1982). The Chinese and Korean governments strongly condemned the descriptions, and the Japanese government backed down. The government of prime minister Suzuki Zenko with its priority on regional diplomacy and strengthening relations with China and Korea announced that textbook narratives would be revised in the interests of Japan’s good relationship with China and Korea. The procedures then instigated for revision in accord with the sensitivities of Japan’s neighbors became a new standard in textbook screening called the ‘neighboring countries’ clause (Schoppa 1991: 62).

The procedure of textbook approval in Japan is known as *kantei*. Initially, the Ministry of Education (MOE) sets broad guidelines for publishers to follow without any specific directions as to what to write and how to write it. Then various publishers write

their textbooks, and submit the drafts to MOE, which reviews them in detail and requests revisions if necessary. The publishers will then revise their drafts accordingly and resubmit the final versions. If approved by the MOE, they become textbooks and can be used at school (Pyle 1983). Which version of history textbook to use is up to individual schools to decide, and the government has little role in it, although the Tokyo metropolitan government has actively encouraged the usage of more right-wing versions of textbook. Although less than 5% of middle schools use the revisionist textbooks due to strong resistance from teachers and parents, the percentage has grown rapidly. Figure 5 shows the number of revisionist textbooks used in Japanese middle schools in 2010 and 2011. In 2010, less than 0.01% of middle schools used the versions of ‘history’ and ‘social studies’ textbook published by the Ikuhoshia publisher, one of the main conservative publishers producing revisionist textbooks. By 2011, the percentage has grown to 3.7% and 4%.¹⁹

The news that the usage of revisionist textbooks has gone up in percentage has not gone unnoticed in China and Korea. Both online Huanqiu newspaper in China and Donga Daily in Korea reported the trend in Japan, with a similar headline “right-wing textbooks gain a greater market share.”²⁰

Although the textbook controversy began in 1982, the conservatives’ attempt to revise the history textbook goes back to the 1950s, and must be seen as part of the immediate postwar legacy of denial of wrongdoings by the conservatives and, to an extent, by the US, which saw ‘patriotic education’ as important in the struggle against communism (Lawson and Tanaka 2011: 415). In 1955, the Democratic Party (which later merged with

¹⁹ The data come from the Ministry of Education and Technology of Japan. For details, see the following newspaper article available at <http://mainichi.jp/life/edu/news/20111102k0000m040057000c.html>. Accessed on 2 November 2011.

²⁰ Both articles are available on line. See Huanqiu Online at <http://world.huanqiu.com/roll/2011-11/2135271.html> and Donga Daily at <http://news.donga.com/Inter/3/02/20111103/41597078/1>. Accessed on 2 November 2011.

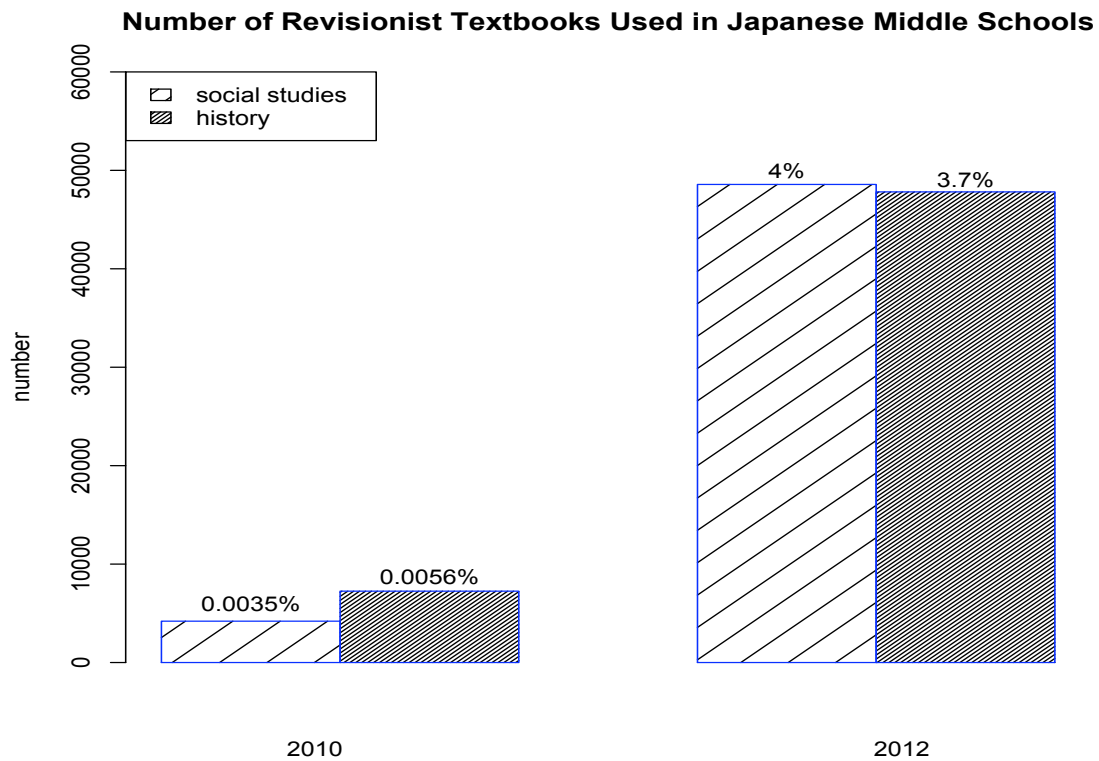


Figure 5. Number of Revisionist Textbooks Used in Japanese Middle Schools

the Liberal Party to become Liberal Democratic Party) had issued a pamphlet, the *Problem of Deplorable History Textbook (Ureubeki Rekishi Kyokasho no Mondai)* in which existing textbooks written by Japan Teachers' Union members were condemned for promoting communism and criticizing Japan. While the Democratic Party did not take up issue with the depiction of WWII in these textbooks, their concern was with what they thought was a positive depiction of the PRC and USSR and unwarranted depiction of the life of the working class in Japan as extremely horrible. They condemned these textbooks as biased “red textbooks” (*akai kyokashou* 赤い教科書).

Thus from 1950s to 1960s, the conservative ruling party sought to tightened MOE textbook authorization procedures (Ouchi 2002: 51). In 1955, the MOE banned one-third of the history textbooks in use at that time, and “demanded that textbooks avoid tough

criticism of Japan's role in the Pacific War, and the government regarded as inappropriate any description of Japan as invading China” (Fogel 2000: 76).

The government’s stance on the textbook issue also reflects how much importance it attaches to its relations with Asian neighbors. The post-1982 textbooks provided a more comprehensive treatment of Japan’s wartime behavior, thus setting in train a more self-reflective approach. However, victimhood narratives in many texts also received greater emphasis and this was heavily criticized for the way in which it could be interpreted as offsetting Japan’s responsibility for atrocities.

Fujioka Nobukatsu-led Japan Society for History Textbook Reform in 1997 mounted a populist campaign for the elimination of narratives about ‘comfort women’ from textbooks and also for a downward revision of the estimated casualties of the Nanjing Massacre. Fujioka complained that history textbooks had become a ‘tool of international politics, a card sometimes played in the domestic politics of other countries, or for foreign governments to secure money from Japan’, and that former PM Miyazawa had ‘set the example of apologizing whenever someone made a fuss’

New narratives subsequently appeared in a *New History Textbook* produced in 2001 by Reform Group stated:

“Japan’s postwar history education has led the Japanese people to forget Japan’s culture and traditions and to lose their national pride. In particular, the Japanese have been portrayed as criminals who must continue to apologize through the generations. . . . Since the end of the Cold War, this ‘masochistic’ tendency has strengthened and the propaganda of former enemies has been narrated as historical fact in the textbooks now in use” (Reform Group Prospectus)

It also offered a modified war narrative by referring Nanjing ‘incident’ rather than ‘massacre’, and depicting the war as a matter of ‘self-defense’ combined with a desire to liberate Asia from Western control. It further questioned the legitimacy of the Tokyo War

Crime Trials. The following passage shows how Japan's role in the 'Greater East Asian War' is depicted:

"The Japanese government called this war 'the Greater East Asian War' (the term 'the Pacific War' became common because the US forbade the use of the term 'Greater East Asian War'). The government proclaimed that the purpose of this war was self-defense, the liberation of Asia from Western imperialism and the establishment of a 'Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere'.

Anti-Japanese insurgents. . . [were] dealt with severely. Many people, civilians included, were killed . . . After the war . . . Japan paid reparations to those nations. Then Japan was accused of promoting the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere philosophy to justify the war and occupation of Asia. . . Later, after Japan was defeated. . . all these former colonies achieved independence through their own efforts . . . Some Japanese soldiers remained in Asia and participated in the various struggles for independence. The initial goal of Japan's southward advance was to obtain resources, but it also served to spur on nascent independence movements in Asia (Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, 2001: 277, 281)."

The textbook was approved by MOE as suitable for use in school in 2001 and again in 2005, although less than 2% of schools in fact use them. On November 16, 2006, the Cabinet under the leadership of prime minister Abe Shinzo approved a bill to revise the Fundamental Law of Education to include a more nationalistic spirit—"an attitude of loving one's nation and homeland" (Asahi Shimbun November 29, 2006). The Fundamental Law had been viewed as a constitution for education in Japan, and had never been revised until then. It had stood as the symbol of Japan's postwar education with emphasis on individualism and peace. The critics fear that the revision would force the students to sing "kimigayo," Japan's national anthem, and stand for the rising sun flag during school ceremonies, both of which are symbols closely associated with Japan's militaristic past (Parmenter 1999).

The coverage and emphasis on several major events in widely used and right-wing textbooks are rather different. Table 3 on the next page provides the different descriptions of major events in junior high school history textbooks.

Table 3. A Comparison of Descriptions of Major Events in History Textbooks in Japan

Textbook Events	Widely used textbooks Kaitei Atarashii Shakai Rekishi (改訂新しい社会歴史)	Right-wing textbooks New History Textbook 2005 (新しい歴史教科書)
The Second Sino-Japanese War	<p>"The Japanese army occupied the Northern China, then invaded Nanjing, and killed and destroyed the lives of many Chinese people across.</p> <p>Footnote: The Japanese army that occupied Nanjing killed many Chinese people inside and outside the urban district within several weeks. The number of deaths was around 7-80,000 counting only civilians such as women and children. Including the deserted soldiers the number is estimated to be over 200,000. China estimates the number of the victims to be well over 300,000 including war deaths. Japan was condemned by other nations for this incident known as Nanjing Massacre; however, the Japanese people then were not notified of the fact." (p. 277)</p>	<p>"In August 1937, two Japanese soldiers, one an officer, were shot to death in Shanghai (the hub of foreign interests). After this incident, the hostilities between Japan and China escalated. Japanese military officials thought Chiang Kai-shek would surrender if they captured Nanking, the Nationalist capital; they occupied that city in December. *But Chiang Kai-shek had moved his capital to the remote city of Chongqing. The conflict continued. Note *At this time, many Chinese soldiers and civilians were killed or wounded by Japanese troops (the Nanking Incident). Documentary evidence has raised doubts about the actual number of victims claimed by the incident. The debate continues even today" (p. 49).</p>
Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere	<p>"In 1940, observing the defeat of France to Germany, Japan proclaimed the establishment of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Japan made an entry into French Indochina and occupied the northern part. Footnote: It was to submit an idea that Asian nations should cooperate with one another and prosper together removing the American and European forces. However, in reality, it was only a pretext for Japan to dominate the rest of Asia." (p. 282)</p>	<p>"The war inflicted a huge amount of devastation and suffering on the peoples of Asia, where it was fought. The casualties (both military and civilian) attributable to Japanese invasions were particularly high in China. After the war was over, Japan paid reparations to those nations. Then Japan was accused of promoting the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere philosophy to justify the war and occupation of Asia. Later, after Japan was defeated and Japanese troops had withdrawn from Asia, all these former colonies achieved independence through their own efforts during the next dozen years. Some Japanese soldiers remained in Asia and participated in the various struggles for independence. The initial goal of Japan's southward advance was to obtain resources, but it also served to spur on nascent independence movements in Asia" (p. 54)</p>

Table 3. A Comparison of Descriptions of Major Events in History Textbooks (Continued)

<p>Predicament of Asian nations</p>	<p>"Many Korean and Chinese people were forced to move to Japan and worked a hard labor job in coal mines under horrible conditions. Footnote: In wartime years the government strengthened the policy to assimilate the Koreans to the Japanese, by forcing them to use Japanese language, worship Shinto shrine, and adopt Japanese names." (p. 284)</p> <p>"In Southeast Asia that the Japanese military occupied, independent governments were established in Burma and the Philippines; however, the real power was held by the Japanese military. In the occupied territories, the life of the people were impoverished because the Japanese military forcibly collected from them rice and resources necessary to wage the war. In addition, the Japanese military killed more than 6,000 Chinese residents who were deemed rebellious in the occupied Singapore and Malaya, and oppressively ruled the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia by severely punishing the people who opposed the policy of the military. As the result of such an occupation policy, resistance movements against the Japanese rule spread throughout." (pp. 283–284)</p>	<p>"Japanese soldiers drove out the forces of Western Europe, which had colonized the nations of Asia for many years. They surprised us, because we didn't think we could possibly beat the white man, and they inspired us with confidence. They awakened us from our long slumber, and convinced us to make the nation of our ancestors our own nation once again.</p> <p>We cheered the Japanese soldiers as they marched through the Malay Peninsula. When we saw the defeated British troops fleeing, we felt an excitement we had never experienced before. (Excerpt from the writings of Raja Dato Nong Chik, leader of the Malaysian independence movement and former member of the Malaysian House of Representatives)" (p. 54)</p>
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Yasukuni Shrine visits

The Yasukuni Shrine²¹ dates back to 1869 when it was created to commemorate the war dead on the side of the central government in the Boshin War²², the civil war that brought

²¹ For a good discussion of the origin and lineage of the Yasukuni Shrine, see Klaus Antoni, "Yasukuni-Jinja

about the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Meiji originally named it Tokyo Shokonsha (shrine for inviting the spirits) and later renamed the site Yasukuni (peaceful country) in 1879. It now commemorates approximately 2.5 million war dead, including Taiwanese and Koreans drafted to fight on the Japanese side during World War Two.

The shrine became the central place in State Shinto (the political-religious ideology of the Meiji period, 1868–1912) and also in Japan’s imperial plans, because it became closely linked with *tennōsei* (天皇制), Japan’s imperial system. To create a strong state, the Meiji leaders saw the need for nationalism—a higher locus of unity and loyalty for a people whose previous identification had been limited to family and village (Powles 1976: 12). This goal was to be achieved and sustained by the twin pillars of the Emperor as the symbol of national unity and State Shinto as the national religion and ideology justifying expansionist nationalism. The Confucian ethical maxims of loyalty (*chu* 忠) and filial piety (*ko* 孝) were blended into an ideal of Japan as national body (*kokutai* 国体), with the emperor at the top.²³ Under the concept of *kokutai*, the civil and military bureaucracy was to be responsible directly to the emperor. A system of universal conscription and compulsory education, coupled with State Shinto, was to cement the entire structure together ideologically (Webb 1965).

These two factors were then combined and used to underpin imperial aggression into the Asian continent under the slogan “rich nation, strong army” (*fuokoku kyōhei* 富国強兵).

and Folk Religion: The Problem of Vengeful Spirits,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 47:1 (1998), pp. 124–28.

²² The Boshin War was fought from 1868 to 1869 between the ruling Tokugawa Shogunate and those seeking to return political power to the imperial court. Dissatisfied with the Shogunate’s handling of foreigners following the opening of Japan to the outside world, southern samurai joined court officials to restore the young Emperor Meiji to political power. The imperial faction was victorious and brought about the Meiji Restoration. For more details, see Marius Jansen. (1999). *The Cambridge History of Japan Volume 5: The Nineteenth Century*, Chapter 5, "The Meiji Restoration" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

²³ The system of *kokutai* was developed mostly by the Mito school of philosophy in late Tokugawa era. See Kawada Haruo, *Jinja Shinto no Joshiki* [Basic facts of Shrine Shinto] (Kyoto: Aomeisho, 1982).

State Shinto was thus born and became exploited for the political purposes of Meiji Japan with its authoritarian vision of domestic social order and expansionist ambitions abroad (Kitagawa 1966). Yasukuni was at the center of it. Therefore, despite its religious outward appearance, the Yasukuni Shrine is essentially a political institution representing the state and its interests.²⁴

The Yasukuni Shrine was used to achieve three interrelated, self-reinforcing functions under this system. The overarching aim was to provide ideological support for Japan's imperialist plans through the administration of the life and death of citizens (Takahashi 1005: 29-32). First, Yasukuni's presence created and maintained an imagined connection among emperor, soldiers, and those left behind (i.e., wives, children, parents, etc.). This was crucial in maintaining the myth of *kokutai* and ensuring continued support for war. The imagined connection of *kokutai* strengthened the links between the shrine and the people through religious rituals of worshipping the war dead (Powles 1976: 498). An effect of this practice is to encourage sacrifice for the nation and to erase the negative aspect of war, as ordinary Japanese shifted their locus of identity from the personal to the national. Second, the ritual of turning the war dead into deities (*kami*) was performed at Yasukuni. In Shinto, the veneration of individual human beings as *kami* had always been reserved for imperial ancestors or at least notable heroes, never for ordinary people. However, being memorialized at the Yasukuni Shrine turned every soldier, no matter how obscure, into a deity merely by the fact that he had fallen in service to the divine emperor (Kishimoto 1956)

The spirits of the fallen in Japan's subsequent successful wars were duly enshrined at Yasukuni. Today, the shrine continues this function and deifies those fallen in the service of

²⁴ The best analysis of the Yasukuni controversy is Takahashi Tetsuya, *Yasukuni Mondai* [The Yasukuni Problem] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shinsho, 2005).

the Self-Defense Forces, Japan's de facto military. Once turned into deities, they can then be worshipped and commemorated. Hence, Yasukuni is also a place of commemorating the war dead. This is how most Japanese regard the Yasukuni Shrine; it is a place for commemorating those who have fallen in the service of the country (Ryu 2007: 721). Lastly, the rituals carried out at Yasukuni had the psychological effect of transforming emotions for the bereaved. Given the history of the shrine, it is not hard to see why Yasukuni means so much to conservative nationalists, why it is so hated by the political left, and why the Koreans and Chinese have difficulty tolerating visits to the shrine by Japanese political leaders.

In addition, Yasukuni's subsidiary war museum called Yushukan unhesitatingly advances the controversial view that World War Two was a war of liberation rather than a war of aggression, and hence justified. As Breen notes, the Yushukan is no ordinary war museum: "It is a museum without mention of any enemies" (2004: 84). Its purpose is to glorify Japan's past and the war dead. The invasion into the East Asian continent is ignored, while depictions of brave acts by kamikaze and emotional letters written by soldiers fill the hallway.

The root of the Yasukuni controversy lie in the enshrinement of Tojo Hideki and thirteen other Class A war criminals, which took place in 1978. Although in Japan prime ministerial visits to the shrine caused a domestic political stir from the very beginning, the Yasukuni Shrine first became an international controversy in 1985 when then-Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro visited in his official capacity on the fortieth anniversary of Japan's defeat in World War Two. Before Nakasone, practically all Japanese prime ministers visited the shrine in an unofficial capacity to pay respect to the war dead. The controversy reached its peak during the government of Koizumi Junichiro (2001–06), who insisted on visiting the

shrine once a year despite heated protests from China and Korea. Table 4 lists all the prime ministerial visits to the shrine since the end of World War Two.²⁵

The Yasukuni shrine visits were the official reason why the Chinese government refused to take part in regular bilateral summit meetings between October 2001 and September 2006. It is not hard to understand why the Chinese and Koreans would be upset about prime ministerial visits to the shrine. Given the history and functions of Yasukuni Shrine, with the enshrinement of 14 Class A war criminals and a controversial museum that justifies WWII, prime ministerial visits are tantamount to justifying past wrongdoings.

For the Koreans and Chinese, Yasukuni symbolizes Japan's past militarism and imperialism. The shrine's intricate connection with Japan's past imperial conquest evokes the painful memories of Japanese colonialism in the minds of many Koreans and Chinese. Hence, Japan is re-remembered as the enemy and aggressor against "our nation." But for many Japanese, Yasukuni is the rightful national site for mourning the war dead. To Koreans and Chinese, the prime minister's visit to the shrine validates their view that postwar Japan is the same as prewar Japan, and militarism is a constant feature of Japanese thinking and society. But for the Japanese, this view by Koreans and Chinese misunderstands the nature of postwar Japanese society. This gulf of perspectives is hard, if not impossible, to bridge.

Table 4. Japanese Prime Ministerial Visits to Yasukuni Shrine Since 1945

²⁵ The shrine had always maintained close ties with the imperial family through the emperor's visits or dispatch of imperial emissaries up until 1978, when the emperor stopped visiting because of the enshrinement of Class A war criminals. The close imperial ties provided the religious rituals at the shrine with imperial backing. Thus, the pain and sadness of losing one's son in war was transformed into the pride and joy of his being turned into a deity at the shrine with the blessing of the emperor. Through this metamorphosis of emotions, not only did sadness and pain change into joy and pride, but a new emotion emerged, namely, a feeling of unquestioned loyalty to the Emperor and the State, a stronger sense of national unity through the collective experience of pain and joy, and a hardened desire to accomplish the imperial mission (Ryu 2007). The above description suggests that Yasukuni is not merely a religious site but, more importantly, an ideologically loaded institution where the war dead are mourned and appropriated for political ends. The shrine stands as the symbol of expansionist nationalism and an authoritarian vision of domestic social order.

Table 4 Japanese PM Visits to Yasukuni Shrine since 1945

<i>Name of Prime Minister</i>	<i>(No. of Visits)</i>	<i>Dates of Visit</i>
Higashikuni Naruhiko	(1)	8/18/1945
Shidehara Kijuro	(2)	10/23/1945; 11/20/1945
Yoshida Shigeru	(5)	10/18/1951; 10/17/1952; 4/23/1953; 10/24/1953; 4/24/1954
Kishi Nobusuke	(2)	4/24/1957; 10/21/1958
Ikeda Hayato	(5)	10/10/1960; 6/18/1961; 11/15/1961; 11/4/1962; 9/22/1963
Sato Eisaku	(11)	4/21/1965; 4/21/1966; 4/22/1967; 4/23/1968; 4/22/1969; 10/18/1969; 4/22/1970; 10/17/1970; 4/22/1971; 10/19/1971; 4/22/1972
Tanaka Kakuei	(5)	7/8/1972; 4/23/1973; 10/18/1973; 4/23/1974; 10/19/1974
Miki Takeo	(3)	4/22/1975; 8/15/1975; 10/18/1976
Fukuda Takeo	(4)	4/21/1977; 4/21/1978; 8/15/1978; 10/18/1978
Ohira Masayoshi	(3)	4/21/1979; 10/18/1979; 4/21/1980
Suzuki Zenko	(9)	8/15/1980; 10/18/1980; 11/21/1980; 4/21/1981; 8/15/1981; 10/17/1981; 4/21/1982; 8/15/1982; 10/18/1982
Nakasone Yasuhiro	(10)	4/21/1983; 8/15/1983; 10/18/1983; 1/5/1984; 4/21/1984; 8/15/1984; 10/18/1984; 1/21/1985; 4/22/1985; 8/15/1985
Miyazawa Kiichi	(1)	Unknown date
Hashimoto Ryutaro	(1)	7/29/1966
Koizumi Junichiro	(6)	8/13/2001; 4/21/2002; 1/14/2003; 1/1/2004; 10/17/2005; 8/15/2006

SOURCE: Mitsuchi Shuhei, *Yasukuni mondai no genten* [The origin of the Yasukuni problem] (Tokyo: Nihon Hyoronsha, 2005); Yongwook Ryu, "Yasukuni Controversy" *Asian Survey* 47(5) 2007.

In addition, the Yasukuni controversy cannot be thought in separation to the issue of nationalism (Masaru 2001; Matthews 2003). Japanese conservatives believe that there is a dismal lack of nationalism among the Japanese public, notably the youth. They lament the loss of Japan's spirit of pride and independence. For instance, in the December 2001 Yasukuni newsletter, emeritus professor of Tokyo University Kobori Keiichiro states:

It is imperative that a solution be found to [the failure of the government to patronize Yasukuni]. When it is resolved, I am convinced that the attitudes of the young to their country will be transformed. I am convinced that they will be led to believe that our nation is a nation to be proud of, that we Japanese have something of which we can truly boast. To solve the Yasukuni problem will of itself be an immense plus for the ethical life of the nation. (Quoted in Breen 2004: 82)

It is obvious that Kobori's concern is not to mourn the war dead but to bring about a moral transformation of Japan's youth, i.e., to use the war dead to effect transformation of postwar society, which is deemed to be lacking in patriotism. In the June 2003 Yasukuni newsletter, the editors insist that "the image [of the prime minister paying tribute] will inspire today's youth, the bearers of the next generation, to feelings of patriotism and gratitude to the war dead." (Quoted in Breen 2004: 89). To them, the political "abnormality" of Japan refers to more than just the constitutional constraint of Article 9. It is also about the right and duty of the state to treat its war dead as it sees fit, as well as being proud of and patriotic about the nation and its past history.

The end result of all this is the strengthening of nationalism in individual countries, the worsening of bilateral relations between regional countries, and the weakening of regionalism and regional cooperation.

History Problem and Identity Distance Between Regional Countries

Momentous historical events leave lasting impressions on those who experience them. And those who experience them represent them with a set of meanings and lessons, and attempt to pass those meanings and lessons to future generations. In time, those meanings and lessons become the collective memory of society, or shared cultural and social knowledge, and form the collective identity of that society (Confino 1997; Olick and Robbins 1998). Historical events of the past become present phenomena through the construction and maintenance of collective memory. Collective memory denotes an 'active past' that lives on in the present, while 'history' consists in a past that is no longer especially important (Halbwachs 1992: 12). Hence a common understanding of the past is a necessary condition for the formation and maintenance of collectivity and a common future. When there is no

consensus on the meaning of historical events that actors consider essential, negative sentiments begin to be incubated.

World War II (WWII) was such event in East Asia. Different states experience it in different ways, and even the nomenclature of the event is different. For Korea, WWII is the continuation of Japanese colonialism that officially began in 1910 with the annexation treaty, and thus is subsumed under the Japanese colonial rule known as the “Japanese Imperial Period” (*ilje sidae*) or “Japanese forced occupation” (*ilje gangjeomgi*). For China, it is called as the “Second Sino-Japanese War”²⁶ (*diervi zhangri zhanzheng*) or the “anti-Japanese War” (*kangri zhanzheng*), lasting for eight years from 1937 to 1945, and is remembered in conjunction with the “First Sino-Japanese War” between Japan and Qing dynasty in 1894, which resulted in a defeat of Qing and forced ceding of Taiwan to Japan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki. This experience is part of a greater experience in which a weak China (Qing, more accurately) became subject to foreign intervention and occupation, a period often known as “the century of humiliation” (*bainian guochi*) beginning with the First Opium War in 1839. For the USA, the event is known as the “Pacific War” and essentially started in 1941 when Japan launched a surprising attack on the Pearl Harbor. For the protagonist of the war, Japan, the invasion of China was a ‘holy war’ (*seisen*), the first step of the *hakkō ichiu* (eight corners of the world under one roof). When Japan invaded China, the name was replaced by “Greater East Asia War” (*daitoa senso*).

Disputes over war memories within Japan have fed into the broader framework of debates over Japan’s identity as an international actor, especially in security matters (Lawson and Tanaka 2011). Moreover, contradictions in Japan are further exacerbated by the

²⁶ The First Sino-Japanese War refers to the military conflict that occurred between Japan and the Qing Dynasty in 1894.

conflicting messages that emerge from a 'nationalism-as-normal' model of state identity. Japan's official identity since WWII has been one of pacifism as enshrined in Article Nine (Kersten 2006: 303). There are NGOs and individuals in Japan who have unearthed evidence concerning atrocities committed by Japan during WWII (Wakayama 1999). In Europe, Germany's facing squarely its past made it possible for her to return to the international society as a normal country. In the face of bitter opposition from within his own party, Konrad Adnauer recognized that an unqualified acknowledgement of past wrongs matched by a significant program of restitution was essential if the country's reputation was to be restored (Moses 2007: 148). Kansteiner points out, by the first decade of the new millennium, Germany was able to deploy troops to Afghanistan and the former Yugoslavia, and had become a key player in world affairs *because of* rather than *despite*, the 'extensive, routine display of Holocaust memory in Germany (2006: 104.)

In Japan, however, official recognition of war wrongs was rather belated and patchy at best, and it was not until the 1970s that there was any official acknowledgement. It was becoming apparent that the lack of public memory of wartime behavior was impacting negatively on Japan's identity abroad and hindering foreign policy goals (Edwards 2005) The US historiography that insists the Pacific War rather than Greater East Asian War diverted attention from East and Southeast Asia to US occupation policies and marginalization of Japan's wartime activities (Conrad 2003: 92). The Occupation authorities soon encouraged themes of both democracy and patriotism as a response to perceived threats posed by USSR and China (Nelson 2002: 30). This is why several Class A war criminals could have gone on to carve out successful political careers in the postwar Japan.

Take Kobayashi's *Sensoron*, which has sold more than 650,000 copies, provoking wide public responses, both positive and negative. Its cover carries a question: "Will you go to

war, or will you stop being Japanese?” Patriotism for Kobayashi clearly is a must for the nation, who insists that he is merely “trying to wake up patriotism that exists in ordinary people, rather than trying to force upon them something that does not exist”. Historical images, therefore, are invoked in his attempt to remind ordinary people of their “unconscious patriotism (*mujikaku-na aikokushin*)”. He does this by illustrating the wartime heroism of “dying for the nation” with the poignant and powerful image of kamikaze soldiers, glorifying the idea of their self-sacrifice for something larger, whether it be “loved ones”, “homeland”, “the emperor”, or “nation”. This intangible “something” emanates from what Benedict Anderson called “the beauty of *gemeinschaft*”, found in the unchosen “natural tie” between the individual and the nation as an imagined community. Dying for something that one has no choice over, as Anderson suggests, signifies a “disinterested love and solidarity” and is an ultimate act, pure sacrifice (Anderson 1991: 142)

The end result of the ‘history problem’ is the widening identity distance between China and Korea on the one hand, and Japan on the other. Views of morality and trustworthiness are especially salient. Japan is viewed as immoral and untrustworthy, and it harbors hidden motives and militaristic intentions. Therefore China and Korea must be careful when dealing with Japan. As will be seen in Chapter Four, such views lead to increased threat perception of Japan, which in turn leads Japan to perceive a greater level of threat from China and Korea.

In addition, nationalist feelings increase as a result of the history problem. It is not an aggressive type of nationalism, but one that is based on emotions. The target of nationalism is neighboring countries. So for China and Korea, it is Japan that their nationalism is directed at. For Japan, it is China and Korea toward which its nationalist feelings are aimed at. There is a tendency in both countries to find the cause of conflict in

either a dangerous and monolithic “Chinese” or “Japanese” nationalism in a way that gratifies one’s own national identity and nationalism. A tragedy of this mutually reinforcing nature of nationalism is that while nationalists in each of the three countries hate each other, but their existence and vitality critically depends on the existence and vitality of their kind in other countries.

Chapter 4. The Emergence of Mutual Threat Perception in Sino-Japanese Relations

“Taking history as a mirror and facing forward to the future”

(以史为镜 面向未来 *yishi weijing mianxiang weilai*)²⁷

-- Tang Jiakuan 6 June 2006 --

Introduction

Threat perception is an important variable in affecting conflict.²⁸ For some, it is the decisive intervening variable between event and response in international crisis (Cohen 1979: 3). When threat is not perceived, there can hardly be a mobilization of resources for defensive or offensive purposes, even in the face of apparently objective evidence. Threat perception also fuels a significant military build up, and causes the security dilemma (Christensen 1997; Ball 1993/94).

In IR, the dominant realist theory states that threat perception is a function of power asymmetry and geographical proximity. Variants of realist theory introduce intention as a factor, but do not go beyond mentioning it as a factor. In this section, I argue that intention is a crucial element in determining threat perception, along with power asymmetry. I advance two arguments. First, intention matters for threat perception, and reflects deep-seated views of ingroup virtues and outgroup vices i.e. identity distance. This is why threat narratives are typically bound up with stories of morality and justice (Rothbart and Korostelina 2006: 30-37). Second, threat perception is hardly uni-directional, regardless of power asymmetries. Rather it occurs in a cyclical pattern in which one state's increased threat perception of another leads the latter to perceive greater threat from the former as

²⁷ Speech at the opening ceremony of the "60th Anniversary of the Repatriation of over One Million Japanese Emigrants from Huludao & the Forum on China-Japan Relations" available at <http://jm.china-embassy.org/eng/xw/t260840.htm>.

²⁸ Threat can mean either active undertaking or passive perception of danger. In the former sense, threat means declaration of intention to inflict harm on others, while in the latter sense, threat is a passive outcome of perceiving danger. I use the term threat to mean the perception of danger. For more details see D. A. Baldwin. 1971. "Thinking about Threats" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 15: 71-78.

well. Since both the realist explanation and the explanation I advance in this section predict the same outcome for Japan, I focus mainly on China's threat perception of Japan in this section.

Sino-Japanese relations provide a useful case study to examine how intention is assessed and affects threat perception, for both power disparities and identity distance as well as threat perception have varied much since the 1972 diplomatic normalization. The explanation I offer here takes the 'history problem' as the root cause of the widening identity distance between China and Japan, and the former's assessment of the latter's aggressive intentions.

The case of the PRC-Japan dyad is theoretically puzzling and practically important. If realist theory were correct in saying that threat perception was a function of power asymmetry, then we would expect Japan's threat perception of China to rise, while China's threat perception of Japan to decline, as Chinese economic and military power has caught up with and surpassed that of Japan throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Despite this power transition, what has occurred is the emergence of *mutual* threat perception. Not only has Japan come to perceive greater threat from China, but China has also come to regard Japan as greater threat. Practically, the bilateral relationship is of huge importance for East Asia. Peace between the second and third largest economies in the world is vital for prosperity of the region and the world.

The chapter is organized in the following. First, I briefly review the political relationship between the two countries. Then I present the puzzle, namely, the emergence of mutual threat perception, followed by a discussion of how China's official discourse on Japan has evolved over time. The next section shows an empirical analysis of how the 'history problem' led to the widening identity distance between the two countries. The

analysis is based on a content analysis of the official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), *the People's Daily*, from 1970 to 2010. I end the section with implications for taking identity and intention seriously for our understanding of threat perception.

The Emergence of Mutual Threat Perception in Sino-Japanese Relations

Japan and China have a long history of economic, cultural, and diplomatic interactions. Under the sino-centric tributary system that operated in East Asia before the advent of Western powers in the 19th century, China assumed the central position in the region and was accorded with due respect by other regional countries (Kim 1980). That stable asymmetrical relationship was destroyed violently, first by the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894 when fast-modernizing Japan since the Meiji restoration in 1868 defeated weakening Qing dynasty, and later by the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 when Japan launched a full-scale war against China and took control over Manchuria, northeastern part of China. This violent period in the bilateral relationship between China and Japan came to an end with the latter's defeat in the Pacific War in 1945.

There was no official relationship between the two countries between 1945 and 1972, although leaders of the Communist Party of Japan paid several visits to China and met with Chinese leaders. No doubt, memories of the war, the ensuing Cold War, and the preoccupation with domestic agenda all provided barriers to the immediate normalization of the relationship. It was both changes in the international political environment and in domestic political situation that led to the diplomatic normalization. Internationally, the US-PRC rapprochement provided an opportunity for Japanese leaders to initiate diplomatic normalization with China, and prime minister Tanaka Kakuei took full advantage of it by visiting Beijing in 1972 to begin the talks of diplomatic normalization.

Domestically, in China, after the disastrous political experiment of the Great Leap

Forward that resulted in tens of millions of deaths, China was seeking to focus on socio-economic development and Japan was useful both as a model and a source of investment in this regard. In Japan, Tanaka Kakuei had long been interested in normalizing relations with China, especially since he became the minister of Ministry of Industry and Trade. He believed that resource-poor Japan could benefit greatly from economic relations with China.

In 1978 the Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed between the two countries, and in 1979 prime minister Ohira Masayoshi announced during his visit in Beijing the first of what would become a series of economic aid packages to China. Japan's economic support for China's development efforts became the fundamental rationale and basis for postwar political relationship between the two countries. The positive views, or at least the absence of negative views, of each other were important in advancing the normalization and bilateral cooperation in the 1970s.

However, this fundamental basis eroded throughout the late 1980s and 1990s due to several changes in both China and Japan. In China, the Reform and Opening Policy (*gaige kaihfang*) led to remarkable economic development in China, but it has also weakened the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) legitimacy based on the communist ideology, as market principles slowly but surely governed Chinese society and minds. CCP sought to boost up its weakening legitimacy by promoting nationalism as a replacement ideology for communism. On the other hand, In Japan, economic stagnation began in the late 1980s. The so-called 'lost decade' still continues today. Furthermore, the 'normal country' debate arose and intensified in the same period, with the aim of revising Article 9 of the constitution so as to allow the Self-Defense Forces to participate more freely in international activities, mainly in peacekeeping operations.

The 'history problem' and war memories have been at the center of most of these

changes that have occurred in both countries. Both China and Japan are an indispensable part of defining each other's national identity, and the "history problem" (*lishi wenti*) has defined how both perceive the other since the 1980s. It encompasses such issues as Nanjing massacre, visits to Yasukuni shrine, and history textbook. Although much ink has been spilled on detailing what each of these issues is about, there has been relatively little attention paid to explaining the rise of the "history problem," and even lesser attention to its effect.

The rise of the history problem since the 1980s reflects both domestic political changes within Japan as well as China. In Japan, the history problem is "produced" by the small but vociferous right-wing groups, who are discontent with what they perceive is an overly masochistic interpretation of Japan's modern history. The movement to revise the history began in the 1950s in Japan, but became an international issue only in the 1980s and gained a momentum throughout the 1990s and 2000s. In China, on the other hand, the 'history problem' is "consumed" by its nationalists, who harbor doubts about Japan's militarism. A side benefit for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is that it boosts its legitimacy through intensifying nationalism. Due to the market-oriented economic reform since 1979, the communist ideology has weakened considerably, and the CCP sought to maintain its legitimacy. One key means for this purpose adopted by the CCP is increased emphasis on patriotic education, especially on the critical role played by the CCP in dispensing imperialists, including the Japanese.

One consequence of the rise of the history problem in Sino-Japanese relations has been the emergence of mutual threat perceptions. In the 1970s and even in the 1980s, both China and Japan regarded each other in favorable terms. In the 1970s, the Japanese government argued that the Chinese communists were different from the Soviet communists

and were nationalists disguised in communist clothes (thus more akin to many other countries). After the Tiananmen crackdown in 1980, when the West imposed sanctions on Beijing, Japan only reluctantly joined the West in the effort and quickly removed its sanctions the next year when permitted to do so. In the same period, China also regarded Japan as the exemplar model for socio-economic development. Japan's imperialism and atrocities in China were de-emphasized; instead, Japan was depicted as the country for China to emulate.

Although some scholars take an optimistic view that recent bilateral friction between China and Japan is a hiccup in the long term trend toward greater cooperation, because bilateral economic interdependence has increased between China and Japan (Hagstrom 2008), most analysts have noted that the bilateral relationship has significantly worsened in recent years (Friedberg 1993; Christensen 1999). Some attribute the worsening relationship to burgeoning military modernization of China and ensuing balancing behavior by Japan, with domestic motivation of normalizing Japan's foreign and security policy (Calder 2006; Chung 2009; Hughes 2009), while others point to the escalation of nationalist sentiments as a key source of friction (Jin 2006; He 2007).

Indeed, by the 2000s, both countries began publicly calling each other as threat or enemy. The 2005 National Defense Program Outline in Japan identifies China as a "major threat" to Japan's national security, along with North Korea. This is a remarkable deviation from the previous 1995 outline, which refrained from mentioning the names of specific countries. Former foreign minister of Japan Aso Taro explicitly referred to China as a 'considerable threat' on several occasions in the mid 2000s. In China, an influential figure in the People's Daily, Lin Zhibo, calls Japan an "enemy" and urges a tough policy against Japan

(China Daily 4 January 2006).²⁹ Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said, “we [China] express our deep concern over the major readjustments of Japan’s military and security strategy.”³⁰ Furthermore, Chinese scholars who promoted ‘new thinking’ (*xin sikao*) toward Japan were labeled as traitors by other scholars and some nationalistic citizens (Gries 2005).

Figure 6 below presents the evolution of Chinese threat perception of Japan since 1972. The threat score is calculated as the average of all threat scores assigned to individual articles on Japan in a given year. The articles on Japan are selected based on the appearance of the word Japan in the title, with n equal to more than 15,000. See Appendix for details.

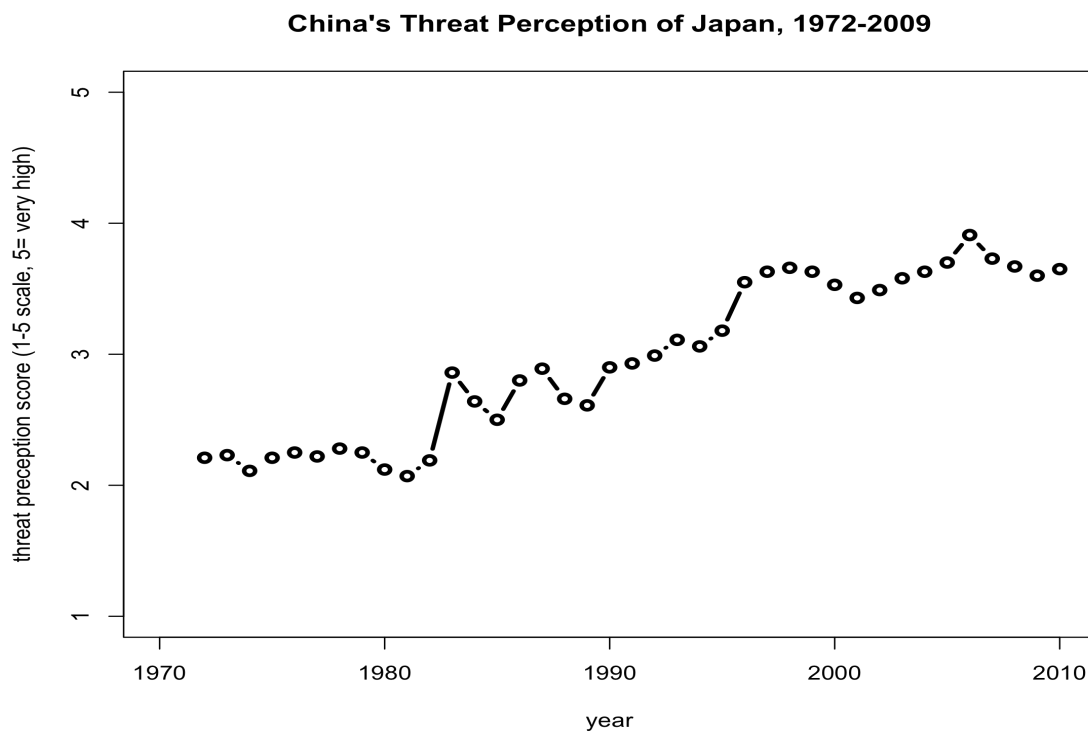


Figure 6. China’s Threat Perception of Japan, 1972-2009
Source: The *People’s Daily* 1972-2010

²⁹ The newspaper article is available at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2006-01/04/content_509150.htm. Accessed on 28 October 2011.

³⁰ Zhang Qiyue, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman, Comment on Japan's New Outline for National Defense, Beijing, December 14, 2004, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2535/t174804.htm>.

The graph clearly shows that China's threat perception has increased over time, although it does fluctuate from year to year. It is especially interesting that the threat perception begins to rise starting in 1982, the year when the history textbook issue became a controversy in the bilateral relationship. Between 1972 and 1981, China's threat perception of Japan hardly changed. But since 1982, it has steadily increased.

The trend of rising threat perception shown in the above graph is broadly consistent with another study done by Tomonori Sasaki (2010). Based on an analysis of academic writings published in journals, Sasaki shows that the average threat perception of Japan among the Chinese academic circles has increased since the mid 1980s. One of the findings in that paper is that the average threat perception score of 'history issues' is similar, or in some cases even higher than, the average threat perception score of the military capability (Sasaki 2010: 574-579).

Existing Theory of Threat Perception: Geographical Proximity and Power Asymmetry

Classical realism, structural realism, and offensive realism all state that power asymmetry is the key determinant of threat perception. Geographical proximity also matters, but since it hardly varies, it plays much lesser role in the assessment of threat perception. The canonical statement in the realist argument comes from Thucydides. Writing of the war between Sparta and Athens, Thucydides states, "what made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta" (Thucydides 1951, Book I: 23).

Whether it be the desire to dominate others (Morgenthau 1963), to protect one's own security (Waltz 1979), or to achieve hegemony as a way of guaranteeing security (Mearsheimer 2001), the uncertainty created by the condition of international anarchy makes all states actual (classical and offensive realism) or potential (structural realism) threats. If a

neighboring country has more power than you do, you should feel threatened because nothing in the anarchical system prevents them from using force against you to resolve a conflict or to conquer you. As put by Mearsheimer, “Given the difficulty of determining how much power is enough for today and tomorrow, great powers recognize that the best way to ensure their security is to achieve hegemony now, thus eliminating any possibility of a challenge by another great power.” (2001).

In this view, threat and power are perfectly correlated, and intention does not matter. As Doyle points out, the realist theory claims that “power—capacity—is the valid and complete measure of threat and that we need to balance against capacity, whatever the intentions that the states are currently expressing” (Doyle 1997: 168), for intention is always uncertain and impossible to discern with certainty.

While I do not deny the importance of geographical proximity and power asymmetry for the determination of threat perception, it is doubtful whether the realist explanation is sufficient. If their explanation were correct, then we would expect the Chinese threat perception of Japan to decline, for its military power has surpassed that of Japan.

Figure 7 on the next page shows the annual military expenditures of both China and Japan, and the trend is clear: Chinese military expenditure has increased at a much faster rate than that of Japan. There is more to the graph. A big chunk of Japan’s military expenditure is allocated to the maintenance of the US base in Okinawa, which has been there for several decades. Obviously the maintenance expenditure does not constitute the same level of threat, as, say, the acquisition or development of new weapons. The Chinese military expenditure, on the other hand, is likely to be understated. Analysts believe that a lot of R&D expenditure, which is not part of the military expenditure statistics, relate to military weapons or the like. Thus the rates of growth in military power are likely to be more

The Annual Military Expenditures of China and Japan, 1988-2010

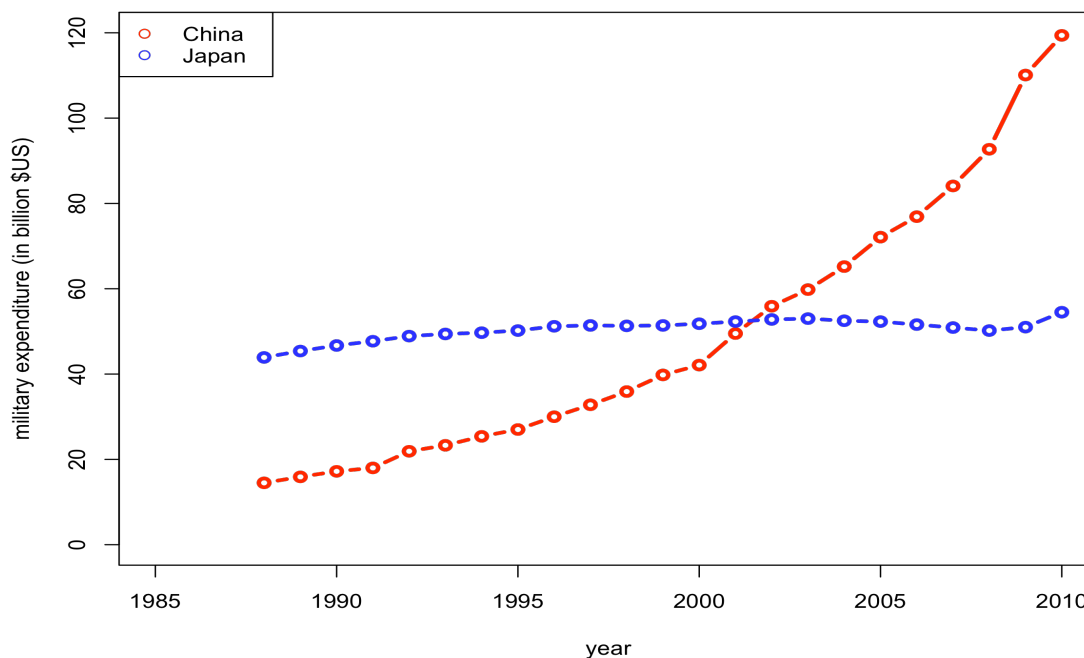


Figure 7. The Annual Military Expenditures of China and Japan, 1988-2010

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Military Expenditure Database available at <http://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>

asymmetrical in favor of China than what the graph suggests. However, despite the reversal trend of military expenditure, Chinese threat perception of Japan has increased rather than declined during the period.

Identity, Aggressive Intentions, and Threat Perception

What is lacking in the realist theory of threat perception is the role of intention in influencing threat perception. This is rather puzzling because as early as the 1950s, scholars took intention as an important variable in determining threat perception. Singer (1958), for instance, states that threat perception is a function of estimated capability and estimated intent, and argues, “a combination of recent events, historical memory, and identifiable socio-cultural differences provides the vehicle by which this vague outgroup suspicion may be readily converted into concrete hostility toward a specific foreign power.” (1958: 93).

Moreover, it is doubtful if intention cannot be known at all. Uncertainty about intention varies according to information and identity. Pruitt argues that threat perception involves an inference about danger and future action, which can be partly based on predispositions that affect the interpretation of evidence (1965: 401). As Knorr succinctly put it (1976: 78):

“Threat perceptions rest on estimates of the past and present. These estimates are inferences from usually fragmentary, opaque and contradictory bits of information.”

Different variants of realism—power transition theory and balance of threat theory—also go beyond the objective factors of power asymmetries and geographical proximity, and add psychological factors such as dissatisfaction and aggressive intentions, as a key determinant of threat perception. Walt (1987) argues that states balance against threat rather than against power, and explicitly states that threat perception is a function of four factors: (1) aggregate strength; (2) offensive capability; (3) geographical proximity; and (4) aggressive intentions (1987: 22). Although Walt introduces the variable of aggressive intentions, he does not theorize the relationship between intention and threat perception.

Similarly, power transition theory builds on power, and adds a state’s position in the power hierarchy of states and the state’s satisfaction level with the status quo as important factors (Organski 1968). Organski argues that peace is achieved during a period of hegemonic dominance. Under international anarchy, rising powers are threats, but they are only potential threats. They become actual threats only when they are dissatisfied with the status quo. However, Organski does not discuss how dissatisfaction arises. We know from empirical cases such as the peaceful transition of power from Britain to the US that not all rising powers are dissatisfied with the status quo. However, even when they factor intention in the analysis, it does not go beyond mere mentioning without much theorizing.

A key weakness in the realist explanation relates to their untested assumption that intention cannot be known, and therefore economic and military power, which is more

readily observable, should be the sole basis to assess intention. But this assumption is questionable. While it is true that intention can never be known with perfect certainty, it does not follow that it cannot be known at all. The assessment of intention should vary according to the amount of information and identity. Information not only involves information about economic and military power, but also includes information about the actor's identity (purposes, values, etc) and its relationship with that actor i.e. identity distance. The most recent treatment of the subject rightly treats identity as an indispensable element in threat perception (Rousseau 2006).

In this section I discuss how identity matters in determining or assessing aggressive intentions. I utilize the two identity theories developed in Chapter Two, namely, role identity and identity distance, to illustrate how identity is the crucial variable in assessing the aggressive intentions of other states.

Self-Role Identity: One major concern in realism is the existence of revisionist states. Morgenthau, for example, distinguishes 'status quo' from 'imperialist' states, and believes that the former is unlikely to initiate violence (1963: 42-45). Waltz also concedes diversity of state type existed in the beginning of the system, although he argues that competition leads to selection (what he calls socialization) and survival of those states that engage in balancing behavior (1979: 127), thereby leading to the uniformity of state goals over time. If a state doesn't learn to balance against power or threat, the state will be selected out of the system.

Even if rising powers become actual threats only when they are dissatisfied with the status quo, the hegemon nonetheless could perceive threat from all rising powers, regardless of the level of dissatisfaction. It could be the case that identity can play an important role in determining the perception of dissatisfaction. As noted, Organiski argues that war did not occur between the reigning hegemon Britain and the rising power the US at the turn of the

20th century because US was satisfied with the status quo. This was in no small part due to the fact that the British-dominated system reflected the values and beliefs of the US, and the fact that a shared language and history made it much more likely that both Britain and the US perceived each other as part of the same “group”.

Indeed, liberals, who focus on domestic politics, have proposed that certain domestic attributes lead to different types and goals of states. The democratic political regime—what Kant calls Republican—is argued to be conducive to producing peace (Kant 1795; Russett 1993). In democracy, the fact that individuals paying for war are the same individuals deciding on whether to wage war, decreases the propensity for states to engage in warfare. Democratic states are also more likely to engage in international trade, which is conducive for peace. This fact, in turn, can reduce threat perception of democratic states to other states.

Thus to liberals, not all states are threatening, but only revisionist, imperialist, or revolutionary states are potential and actual threats in the international system. If democratic and trading states are less likely to use force in their relations with other states, then they should generate less threat perception, all things being equal. But it is more complicated. As Doyle argues (1997: 272), the same ideologies that cause liberal states to be at peace with each other inspire idealistic wars with the illiberal, whether to defend oppressed foreign minorities or avenge countrymen settled abroad.

The discussion of particular political and economic regime type can be put in a broader category of states with certain purposes or role conceptions. States with different identities can have very different purposes and values that they want to promote in international relations. Revolutionary states that want to promote a particular political and religious ideology can be extremely threatening, and so are imperialist states that are bent on

aggrandizing other states, while states with a deep sense of war guilt such as Germany and Japan can orientate their foreign policies more toward promotion of peace and mediation.

Furthermore, as Johnston illustrates, cultural traits can generate a particular strategic culture with particular cognitive and psychological lens through which to interpret the world and actions done by others (1995). Thus the *parabellum* belief system that is prevalent in Chinese culture can lead Chinese policy makers to more easily perceive threat from other states.

Identity Distance: While self-role identity looks at the purposes and values the state seeks to promote, and how those purposes and values make a particular state threat or non-threat to other states in the system, identity distance examines the relational dimension between a dyad of states and how they perceive each other. If they are close to each other on measures of identity that they consider are important to them, then they are less likely to perceive each other as threat. On the other hand, if they feel far apart on the same identity measures, then they are more likely to perceive aggressive intentions—and hence greater threat—from the other.

Here perception matters a great deal, since the intention of the other is hard to discern. While certain actions and statements can be used to discern intention when they stepping over a boundary on a conceptual dimension (Schelling 1960), in most cases, such actions and statements are not so obvious or it might be too late to perceive threat and take appropriate measures from such actions and statements.

Observable realities rarely produce unmistakable meaning. They usually generate more than one reasonable interpretation, and hence are inherently ambiguous. Thus threat perception is above all a ‘cognitive construct’, which creates an image of reality (Knorr 1976: 78). Actors would rely on their own identity as well as identity distance with other actors, in

order to choose a particular interpretation of actions by other actors. For example, let's assume that State A announces that it will acquire new tanks as part of regular updating its weaponry. State B, which is geographically proximate to State A, weaker than State A in terms of military power, but is far from State A on identity distance, would likely interpret such policy as harboring a hidden ulterior motive, which is really about getting an upper hand in a struggle for military superiority. However, another scenario is possible, too. If another state, say, State C, which is geographically proximate to State A, is weaker than State A in military strength, and is also close to State A on identity distance, is unlikely to perceive the same level of threat from State A's policy. State C might even give the benefit of doubt in the absence of further information, and trust the rationale behind the arms acquisition policy given by State A.

One interpretation of democratic peace relates to identity distance. Democratic states tend to identify with one another, and it is this sense of shared identity and close identity distance that results in favorable interpretations of actions by other democracies, which results in less threat perception and peace between them (Doyle 1997).

Intention, Power Asymmetry, and Threat Perception

The relationship between intention, power asymmetry, and threat perception is more complex than what the current literature suggests. While I have argued that intention is a critical factor in determining threat perception, in addition to power asymmetry, its effect will be different for different actors depending on the degree of power asymmetry. There are two possibilities.

Low power asymmetry: In the first scenario, if power differences between two states are small, then intention will matter for both states. If both actors do not perceive aggressive intentions from each other, then no threat perception will arise. If a state misperceives the

other state's aggressive intentions when there are none, or fails to perceive nothing when there are aggressive intentions, then it will face serious consequences. Thus the right assessment of intention is crucial in this situation.

High power asymmetry: If power differences between two states are large, then intention will not matter for the more powerful state, since the weaker state lacks the capability to do damage. In this situation, intention will matter only for the weaker state, but it matters even more now. This is because once power differences go over a certain threshold, variation in power asymmetry will not be much of a concern for the weaker state any longer and will be treated as a given just like geographical proximity. Hence in this situation, all that matters for the weaker state is the aggressive intentions of the more powerful state.

The Evolution of the Chinese Official Discourse of Japan

Both China and Japan have been an indispensable part of defining each other's national identity. In Japan, historically "Asia", in particular "China, has served as the most relevant "Other" through which to compare and construct Japan's collective identity (Doak 2008). The 'China problem' (*chugoku mondai*) has been a domestic battle to interpret and thereby appropriate relations with PRC as part of a political struggle to define national identity. A century ago when Japan was emerging to challenge China's supremacy in the region, it labeled China as an 'uncivilized' Other, while Japan would resist this uncivilized identity and would present itself to the European states as a 'civilized' power (Suzuki 2005). The 'China problem' in postwar Japan is a contest to interpret and thereby appropriate relations with PRC as part of a domestic struggle to define national identity. Thus it is bound up with the issue of nationalism and wartime responsibility. Staking a position on China policy is integral to coming to terms with Japan's past and war responsibility.

Contrary to the popular understanding that the pro-PRC position is associated with the leftist, anti-state nationalist narrative, Hoppens demonstrates that the initial pro-PRC position in postwar Japan was part of the conservative nationalist effort that sought to achieve greater independence from the USA (2009). The narrative that emerged over the course of the 1970s is how changes in the international political environment transformed the China problem from a powerful support for leftist and progressive construction of national identity into a support for the postwar conservative order and the nationalist narratives that supported it. This transformation had the effect of alienating progressives, while simultaneously increasing right-wing voice in the China problem discourse. By the end of the decade, the conservative Japanese government emerged as the main champion of closer Sino-Japanese relations garnering lukewarm support from the progressive and leftist forces alienated by Chinese nationalism, and under increasing criticism from the right-wing of the conservative movement.

Different discourses on nationalism in Japan existed in the immediate aftermath of defeat. But over time, the conservative narrative that saw the split between state and nation as problematic of Japan's national identity came to dominate nationalist discourse in Japan. The Chinese official discourse depicting Japan has changed substantially over the years, and the change correlates well with the changes in Chinese public sentiments towards Japan. In the 1960s, Mao Zedong praised Japan as a "great nation," and insisted, "Chinese and Japanese people should unite" because "all peace-loving countries should unite."³¹ Indeed Japan was used as an exemplar model for economic and social development in China. The PRC leaders stressed the compatibility of Chinese and Japanese nationalism and

³¹ Mao Zedong, *People of the World, Unite and Defeat the US Aggressors and All Their Lackeys* (Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1966): p. 12.

emphasized the common struggle of the Japanese and Chinese nations in a movement for “national consciousness” (*minzu juewu* or *minzoku kakugo*), and common cause in national resistance to US imperialist domination (Mao 415). In return, nationalist concerns were the primary motivation for a pro-China position in postwar Japan (Hoppens: 21-22). Pro-PRC Japanese saw identification and cooperation with PRC as a way to assert Japanese national autonomy and independence from USA. These compatible and favorable images and identity was as important in promoting cooperation as interests in PRC and Japanese foreign policies.

However, beginning from the mid-1980s, this positive image of Japan changed radically. The 1994 propaganda launched by the CCP Propaganda Department aims to educate the younger generations of Chinese about Japan’s wartime atrocities. At the same time, the Chinese government increased funding to build the country’s wartime memorials, of which the anti-Japanese resistance war was to be a key component. As a result, a number of museums commemorating the war against Japan’s aggression sprang up, including the Anti-Japanese Resistance War Memorial (*kangri zhangzheng jinianguan*) in Beijing, the Nanjing Massacre Memorial in Nanjing, and the expanded Unit 371 Exhibition Hall in Harbin. The public opinion in China regarding Japan has also undergone a dramatic change during the same period, with the mid 1980s being the turning point. In a 1987 survey conducted by a Shanghai journal, over 30% of the respondents selected Japan as the “foreign country with the best image.” This figure is much higher than the percentages for USA (8.4%), Western European countries (16.9%) and the Soviet Union (2.3%) (cited in Rozman 2002: 98). However, in a 1996 survey of young Chinese throughout China, only 10% of the respondents replied that they “liked Japan.”

I argue that the rise of the history problem is the cause of the change of both the official discourse and the Chinese public's sentiments towards Japan. I will test the validity of this argument using the survey data in a later section, but even without the test, there is ample reason for the connection between the two.

Before the rise of the history problem, the Chinese government downplayed Japanese aggression by indicating that it was part of an unpleasant past. Between 1945 and 1972, although books, memorials and other vehicles of public memory in China carried stories of Japanese behavior in the 1937-1945 period, it was often difficult to distinguish them from other enemies, especially Nationalist forces under Chiang Kai-shek and USA with which the CCP was much more concerned (Mitter 2003: 118). Thus the investigation of Japanese war crimes was suppressed. The official narratives sponsored by CCP also accorded with beliefs within Japan that the war had been instigated by a small number of militarists of which ordinary Japanese were also victims (He 2007: 47).

For instance, in the October 5 1963 People's Daily article, the author characterized the Sino-Japanese relations in an extremely positive light, praising the "frequent cultural and economic exchanges" for the past 2,000 years. Invoking the traditional Chinese metaphors, the article indicates that Sino-Japanese relations benefited from "extremely deep roots and had fully blossomed leaves" (*genshen yemao*). The article also paints a positive future development of the bilateral relationship saying that it has "come a long way from upstream and has a long distance that will go down forever" (*yuanyuan liuchang*).

This positive depiction of Japan continued until the mid 1980s. One article in Nov 3, 1971 stressed the important role that Japan's friendship would play in China's economic development and improvement of status. Another editorial in Sep 10, 1982 praised the Japanese government for rejecting a proposed modification to history textbooks that would

have downplayed Japan's past wartime atrocities. The editorial commends the Japanese government for its efforts to maintain and further develop the friendship between the two countries, and largely casts Japan in a positive light.

During this period, even when articles made references to Japanese aggression, they did not focus on Japan's past brutality and instead looked forward to the burgeoning bilateral relationship.³² They often occurred within the context of describing isolated right-wing extremists who desire to "make the younger Japanese generation forget about Japan's wartime aggression." (使日本年轻一代忘记日本侵略). As late as 1986, this official discourse seems to persist. In a Sep 20 1986 article, the People's Daily describes the right wing extremists who wanted to rehabilitate the image of Japanese war criminals and portray as patriots. But it stresses how the Japanese prime minister had repudiated these activities by stating that Japan had "already accepted the judgment of international war tribunals about Japanese war criminals."

Figure 8 below plots the proportion of articles on the topics of 'economy' (*jingji*) and invasion (*qinlue*) out of all newspaper articles on the topic of Japan appearing in the *People's Daily*. The red line represents the proportion of 'economy' articles, while the black line represents the proportion of articles on 'invasion'. The figure suggests what image of Japan (economy vs history (i.e. invasion)) has been dominant in the official media of China from 1972 to 2010.

Both lines fluctuate greatly from year to year, but what the graph suggests is that the 'economy' image of Japan has been the dominant one, especially between 1972 and the early 1990s. It is still present today. For our purpose, however, what is interesting is the rise of

³² July 1 1956 People's Daily

The Percentage of Articles on Invasion and Economy out of Total Number of Articles

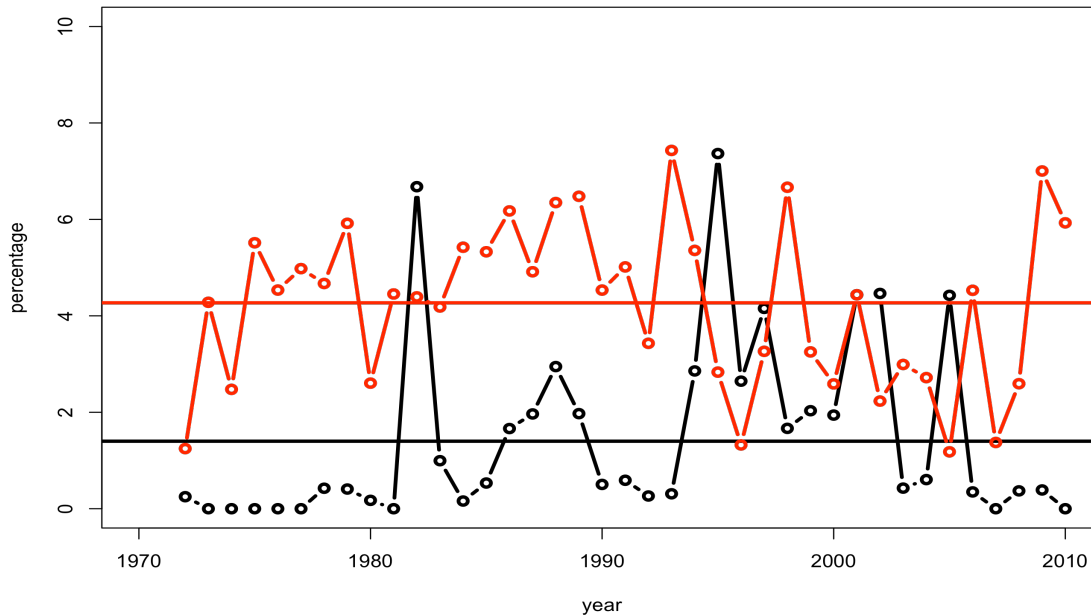


Figure 8. The Percentage of Articles on ‘Invasion’ and ‘Economy’ as Keyword in the Title out of Total Number of Articles on Japan
Source: *The People’s Daily* 1972-2010

‘invasion’ image of Japan. The first huge spike occurred in 1982, the year the history textbook issue became controversial and salient in the bilateral relationship. The image lasts through the 1990s and 2000s, with another big spike in 1995.

This positive depiction of Japan and the bilateral relationship is replaced with an extremely critical and negative portray of Japan. In 1995, an article lambasted the individuals in Japan who refused to accept responsibility for the country’s wartime transgressions. The article quotes a conversation of Jiang with Japanese visitors in which he stated that it was crucial for Japan’s image in the world to show remorse for its aggression during WWII.³³ The Feb 22 2004 article reports an incident in which 44 Chinese citizens had been hurt by chemical weapons that were left behind by the occupying Japanese army. It quotes one victim, who says “for me, two generations have been hurt [by the Japanese]”.

³³ August 31, 1995

This negative depiction of Japan reaches its peak in 2005. A July 5 article containing a reference to Japanese friendship notes that Sino-Japanese relations are worrisome (*ling ren dan you*) and that they are getting worse by the day (*shi tai fazhan ri yi yanzhong*). On Sep 13, another article revisits Japan's wartime aggression and describes in detail the atrocities the Japanese troops had committed. The article underscores Japan's brutality by noting that 35 million Chinese had been either killed or seriously wounded in battle. The Aug 31 edition of the People's Daily carried an article with the title "Trial of the Century" describes brutal actions that Japanese war criminals committed during the Nanjing massacre. The article presents gruesome details about the atrocities during the war.

There is little doubt that the official discourse on Japan and the Sino-Japanese relations has undergone a radical change throughout the 1990s. A positive depiction of Japan has changed into a negative one, with emphasis placed on the past atrocities committed by Japan and on the lack of remorse by the Japanese as evidenced by the intensification of the right-wing movement in Japan.

The Japanese affect for China has also undergone a significant change in the same period. Hagstrom and Jerden find no depiction of China as a 'trustworthy' partner in the minutes from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House of the Diet in their limited but useful analysis of the minutes of the Foreign Affairs subcommittee in the Japanese Diet in the 2000s (2010). Both 'radical' and 'moderate' views of China exist in the minutes. The radical view stresses China is untrustworthy, favors politicization of the China issue, and promotes open criticism and a confrontational approach. The moderate view stresses the lack of transparency in China as the main problem, favors quiet diplomacy and depoliticization of China problem, promotes non-confrontational and restrained approach. Both views share a deep sense of insecurity about China

Shinohara Takashi of LDP portrayed China as a “country that often tells lies”³⁴. Takemasa Koichi of DPJ accuses China of “unilaterally falsifying the contents of a joint document” between the two countries and concludes “if countries do not respect agreements based on . . . law and justice, then diplomacy cannot be conducted.”³⁵ Radical views on Japan’s neighboring countries such as China and Korea find their way into political speeches, right-wing media, or in the proclamation of any number of right-wing NGOs and NPOs who agitate for politicians to adopt a broad right-wing agenda. (Jonston 2007)

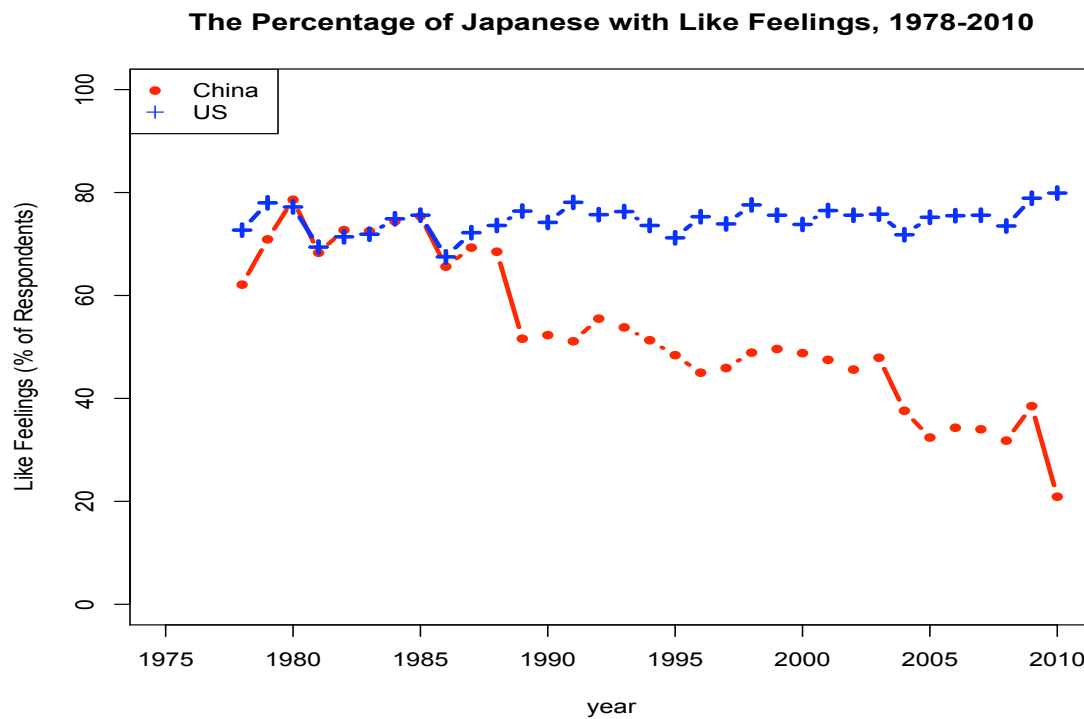


Figure 9. The Percentage of Japanese with Like Feelings Toward USA and China, 1978-2010
 Source: Cabinet Office, “*Gaiko ni kansuru yoron chosa*” [opinion poll regarding foreign policy] available at <http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/index-gai.html>.

The public opinion survey conducted annually by the Cabinet Office of Japan shows a clear downward trend in the Japanese public’s favorable feelings for China. As Figure 9 shows, while the Japanese public has maintained a favorable view of the US steadily

³⁴ Diet Session 169, Foreign Affairs Committee meeting 3 (DS169, FAC3)

³⁵ DS169, FAC4.

throughout the period, their view of China has significantly worsened in the same period, and reached a historic low of 20.9% in 2010.

The ‘History Problem’ and Widening Identity Distance between China and Japan

Why did the history problem become salient since the 1980s? After all, World War II had occurred four decades earlier. With the number of people who directly experienced the event dwindling, it is puzzling why the history problem became more salient over time. The proverb “time heals” does not seem to apply to the case of Sino-Japanese relations. Instead, the past has dominated the present of the bilateral relationship more and more since the 1980s.

The causes for the rise of the history problem are complex. People like Gong point to a structural factor, namely, the end of the Cold War, as the main cause for the resurgence of history-related issues in East Asia (2001). Although the end of the Cold War undoubtedly played an important role, it should be regarded as a permissive cause. More direct causes can be found in the domestic politics of both countries.

Most analyses of the history problem tend to examine what I call the “demand side” of the problem, that is to say, how the history problem serves an important function for the Chinese leadership. There are two views. The first claims that the CCP strategically and rationally uses the history problem (Shambaugh 1996; Downs and Saunders 1999; He 2007). In this view, the Chinese leadership actively incites anti-Japanese sentiments, and the Chinese public always responds with nationalistic feelings against Japan. There are two purposes for the Chinese leadership. One is to extract political concessions from Japan using the history issues as a bargaining tool. This view is popular among Japanese scholars.

A number of Japanese scholars believe that the Japanese policy toward China has been excessively accommodating of Chinese demands. They believe that the improvement

of relations in the 1970s was made possible by Japanese rectifying their wrongdoings during WWII and accepting the Chinese position on issues like Taiwan. Furukawa Mantaro argues that normalization was the result of a struggle by reflective, responsible pro-China Japanese against the Japanese government's immoral and submissive policies of cooperation with the US containment of PRC (1981). There is a widespread sense among Japanese analysts that the Japanese rushed to establish relations with China in 1972 without adequately considering the strategic import of their policy. Infamous Mayor of Tokyo Ishihara Shintaro argues that Japan suffers from a 'passivity complex' due to weak national consciousness (p. 228).

In their view, Japanese policy toward China has been based on emotion rather than reason, and has been habitually non-confrontational and conciliatory (Kojima 1988). For some, this timid and non-confrontational approach is the result of the lack of a healthy nationalism in postwar Japan. Okabe Tatsumi traces it to the "weakness of collectivism and the absence of nationalism in postwar Japan" (2001). For him, the lack of nationalism makes it difficult for the Japanese to deal with countries like China where nationalism is powerful. Kitaoka Shinichi argues that the "recent mounting evidence of nationalism in Japan is merely a backlash against the excessive oppression of these feelings since the country's defeat in WWII."

Ijiri Hidenori calls it an "asymmetrical pattern of attitudes between the two countries." (1980: 640). China criticizes Japan by raising the question of Japanese militarism, and Japan always responds by adopting a 'low posture' because they retain a sense of guilt. China is argued to be adopting "carefully planned tactics" and a "well-calculated policy", while Japan is habitually accepting China's demands without strategic calculation (Ijiri 1980: 640). The assumption underlying these analyses is that a sense of war guilt or contrition leads to non-confrontation and accommodation and that it has been an important factor

affecting the Japanese policy toward China. However, Ming Wan (2006) and Hoppens (2009) debunks this view showing that there were hardly any mention of history issues in the negotiation phase, and that Japanese policy makers were seeking to take advantage of China's economic resources for Japan's development.

The other goal is more domestic, and here the CCP aims to boost up its domestic legitimacy by promoting Chinese nationalism. The CCP under the leadership of Jiang Zemin began the patriotic education campaign (*aiguo jiaoyu yundong*) (Zhao 2000), as a way to counter its weakening legitimacy based on the communist ideology. Historical sites of Japanese aggression were utilized by the CCP leadership in their patriotic education campaign (Komori 2003). The history issue has also been linked to factional politics, where the leadership utilizes memories of Japanese aggression to 'coalesce support and weaken opponents' (Deans 2000: 124).

This argument appears persuasive in the context of CCP's dwindling legitimacy. Not only have communist regimes around the world collapsed, but China itself has also decided to depart from communism, at least in terms of the economy. The leadership often talked about 'three spiritual crises' (*sanshin weiji*), which included a crisis of faith in communism. As a result, the CCP is seen as dependent on its nationalist credentials, along with economic performance, for maintaining the legitimacy of its rule.

But there are also a number of problems with this explanation. First, while it is true that the CCP has promoted Chinese nationalism through the history problem against Japan, the cultivation of overtly anti-Japanese sentiments may not be 'rational' or 'strategic' sense. This is so because Japan remains one of China's key trading partners and can play a crucial role in the latter's socio-economic development. Furthermore, fervent nationalism in China directed against Japan fuels the 'China threat' view in Japan and can provide political

rationale for Japan to strengthen its military power, which goes against China's security interests.

Another problem is that this 'rational' or 'strategic' Chinese leadership explanation implies that the Chinese leaders are somehow autonomous from historical memories and the biases and negative feelings against Japan (Downs and Saunders 1999: 123), which is unlikely to be true given how widespread these views and sentiments are. This argument also does not address why Japan can be used so effectively by the Chinese leadership in inciting nationalist feelings and used for regime legitimation. It can only work only when the rhetoric has resonance among enough number of people in the public. Moreover, the Chinese leadership cannot create the history problem out of vacuum. This explanation glosses over the origin of the problem.

I side with the other explanation that emphasizes psychological factors. The traumatic experiences resulting from Japan's aggression on Chinese soil have left a deep scar on the Chinese psyche (Whiting 1989; Suzuki 2007). The most dominant narrative of China during Western and Japanese invasion portrays China as a victim in a 'century of humiliation' (*bainian guochi*) (Yahuda 2000). This victimization psyche against Japan had been dormant until the 1980s when the history problem became controversial. The more salient the history problem became, the stronger the Chinese victimization psyche and the more fervent its nationalism against Japan.

To be sure, the victimization narrative of China is not just about Japan. It also includes stories of Western imperialism and ensuing Chinese suffering. For example, speaking of the Western economic sanctions on Beijing after the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989, Deng Xiaoping stated (quoted in Suzuki 2006: 35):

"I am Chinese, and understand the history of foreign invasion of China. When I heard that sanctions against China had been decided in the G7 Summit, I

immediately thought of the time when the eight-country allies invaded China in 1900. With the exception of Canada, all countries, with the addition of Tsarist Russia, were all members of the allied forces”

But the theme of Japan as the Other has gained greater salience in recent years due to the rise of the ‘history problem’. The events of historical revisionism in Japan are given wide-scale publicity in China (Morris-Suzuki 2000). Media hype over Japanese ‘revisionist’ actions has intensified Chinese attention to Japan and its past imperialist history.

The Chinese public exhibits a high degree sensitivity to any form of debate or action that denies its truth of its victim narrative and identity. Many Chinese feel indignation and outrage toward Japan when Japan refuses to atone or apologize for its past aggression (Zheng 1999), depicting Japanese victimization of China not merely as a past phenomenon but also something that continues to present. According to a 1999 Yomiuri/Gallup poll, when asked what Japan reminded them of, 39.2 % of Chinese respondents said the Sino-Japanese War and the Anti-Japanese War. Interestingly, these categories scored highest among respondents between eighteen and twenty-nine years of age (Okabe 2002: 230).

There are many books in Chinese that play up the theme of Japan’s unrepentant attitude by drawing a contrast between Germany and Japan. Zi Shui and Xiao Shi argue that China’s principled posture in its diplomacy is juxtaposed to an unethical historical amnesia displayed by the Japanese (1997). The same authors also describe Japanese economic and technological assistance to China as a ‘cherry blossom with a sting’ (*dai ci de yinghua*), suggesting that Japan’s assistance has an ulterior intention and motive and could bring harm to China (1997: 299).

This is not to deny the role of the patriotic education campaigns and other top-down activities aimed at bolstering CCP legitimacy (Rendwick and Cao 1999; Zhao 1998). Perhaps, the most reasonable view is offered by Alisa Jones, who points out that there is a congruence

between officially propagated national history and popular collective memory of an essential, civilized, national self, which was degraded by the hundred of humiliation, in spite of the fact that the “narrative of legitimate succession and the inevitability of CCP rule itself is often questioned” (Jones 2002: 563).

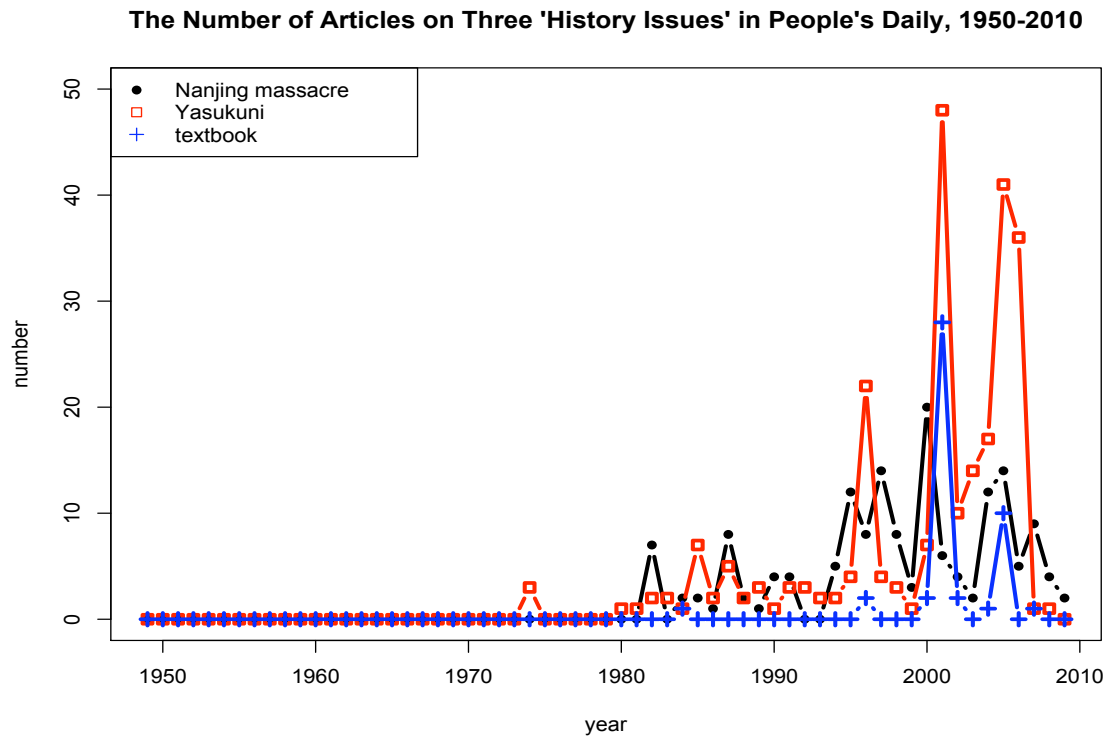


Figure 10. The Number of Articles on Three 'History Issues' in the *People's Daily* 1950-2010
Source: the *People's Daily*

Figure 10 above plots the number of articles on three key history-related issues that have appeared in *People's Daily* since the 1950s. It clearly shows that the history problem emerged in the 1980s, and rose in salience throughout the 1990s and 2000s. A very similar trend is present in the *People's Liberation Army Daily* (*jiefang junbao*).

Accordingly, the Chinese affect for Japan has declined significantly. Figure 11 below represents the proportion of articles that refer Japan as friend (*riben pengyou*) out of all Japan articles in the *People's Daily*. One could be skeptical and argue that such reference as calling

The Percentage of 'Japanese Friends' Articles out of Total Number of Articles

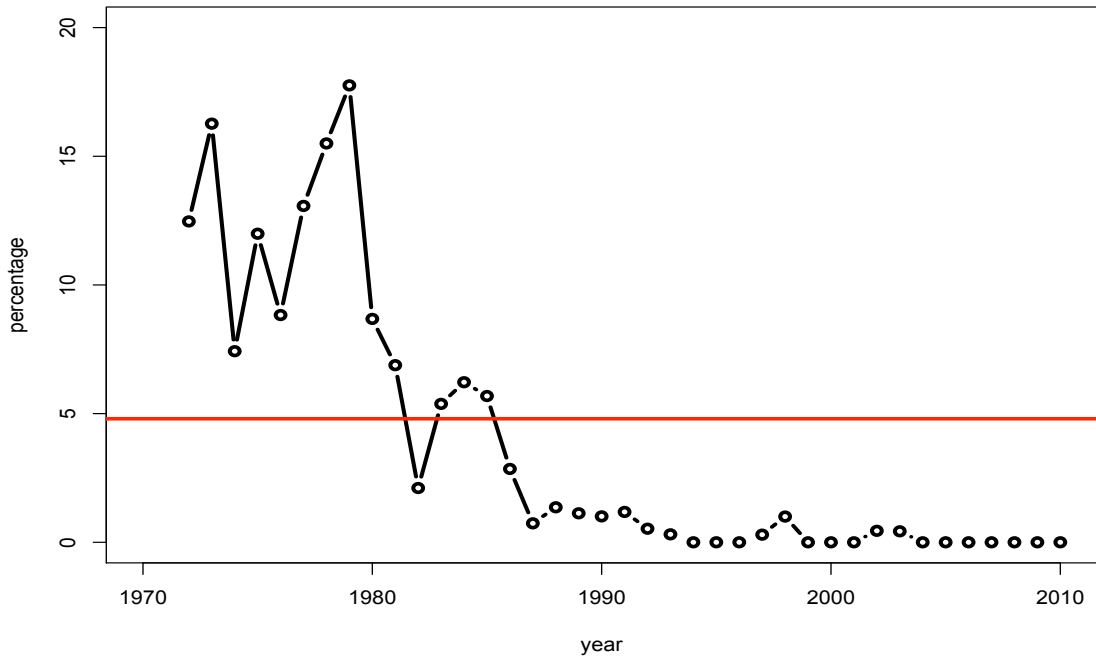


Figure 11. The Percentage of 'Japanese Friends' Articles Out of Total Number of Japan Articles in the *People's Daily* 1972-2010
Source: the *People's Daily*

The Number of the Phrase 'Japanese Friends' Mentioned Annually

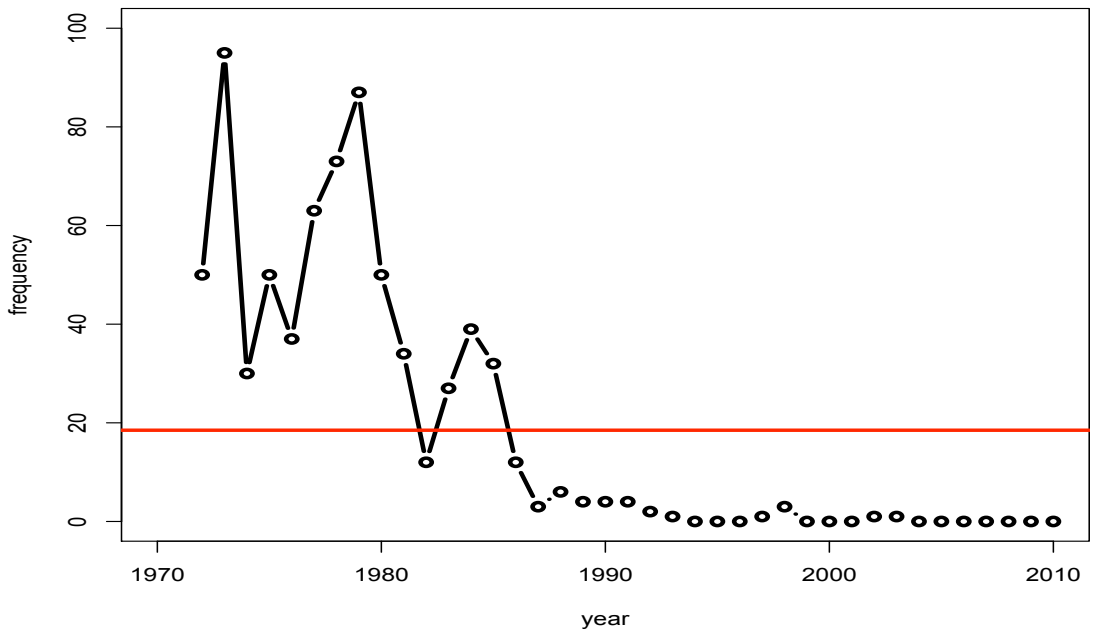


Figure 12. The Number of 'Japanese Friends' Articles Per Annum 1972-2010
Source: the *People's Daily*

strangers friends is done out of courtesy, and Chinese do not necessarily mean it when they use the word “friend”, but the fact that it has declined and virtually ceased to exist over time indicates a worsening affect of the Chinese for Japan. Between 1972 and 1980, as large as 17% of all Japan articles contained the reference “Japanese friend” in their titles, but it sharply declined in the early 1980s, and disappeared throughout the 2000s. The red horizontal line represents the grand average proportion of articles that contain the phrase ‘Japanese friends’ and is just below 5%.

Figure 12 plots the annual number of articles in the People’s Daily that contained the phrase “Japanese friend” in the titles. It shows virtually the same trend as in Figure 11. As many as 94 articles referred Japan as friend in the early 1970s, but such reference declined dramatically in the early 1980s, and gradually disappeared throughout the 1990s and 2000s. The trend coincides with the appearance and rise of the ‘history problem’ in Sino-Japanese relations. The history problem is unlikely to disappear in the future, and continue to mar the relations between China and Japan. For example, in 1995, Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen reopened the reparation issue by stating that while the Chinese government had forgone the right to raise state-to-state claims, it would still be possible for individuals to demand compensation from the Japanese government separately (He 2007: 24). While the Japanese side formally rejects such claim from China, the fact that China has not given up the claim suggests that the ‘history problem’ will continue in the future.

Alternative Explanation: Expansion of the US-Japan Security Alliance

A potential alternative explanation would look at the expansion of the US-Japan Security Alliance, especially Japan’s role in it. While it is true that the development of Japan’s military power has been slow, and Chinese economic and military power has surpassed that of Japan at least in aggregative quantitative terms, the combined power

capabilities of US and Japan are far superior to China's capabilities. Therefore, the expanding role of Japan in the alliance can be a legitimate security concern for Beijing and lead the Chinese elite to perceive greater threat from Japan.

Japan's security concern has changed its emphasis from 'homeland defense' to 'regional' and 'international' security. The main focus of the 1976 NDPO was how to restrain the Soviet threat and its potential attack on Japan's territory. But the 2005 NDPO explicitly states that one of its goals is "improving the international security environment so as to prevent threats from involving Japan". In addition, in Feb 2005, a Japan-US joint statement that raised the possibility of inclusion of Taiwan in the areas of concern for the alliance, caused dismay in Beijing.³⁶ The message it carries suggested that the focus of Japan's defense policy has expanded from the defense of its homeland to the one of maintaining international security. Thus, Japan's military force is prepared to go to the world. Reflecting this long-standing ambition to have the SDF play a role in a more far-flung scope, the NDPO stresses that Japan will actively take part in international peacekeeping activities.

While this is a reasonable argument, there are two problems with this explanation. First, many Chinese analysts regarded the US-Japan alliance as a bottleneck on Japan's militarism, a costly but useful constraint to keep Japan down (Wu 2005: 119). Christensen also argues, "the common belief in Beijing security circles is that, by reassuring Japan and providing for Japanese security on the cheap, the US fosters a political climate in which the Japanese public remains opposed to military buildups and the more hawkish elements of the Japanese elite are kept at bay" (1997: 58).

³⁶ "Beijing opposes US-Japan Statement on Taiwan" *Xinhuanet* 20 Feb 2005, available at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-02/20/content_2596291.htm. Accessed on 8 March 2010.

Even though the Chinese are concerned with potential Japan's involvement in the areas surrounding Taiwan, the most significant development in Japan's military and security activities in the post Cold War era has been its active participation in the peacekeeping operations (PKOs) activities. But Japan's PKO activity should not pose threat to China, nor should it be perceived as such by Beijing, unless the Chinese leadership sees it as a slippery road to something more militaristic. In fact, based on its official statements on PKO activities, China should welcome Japan's activism in this area. According to a statement on PKOs in 2003, China attaches "great importance" to PKO activities, and see them as an "effective means for the UN to perform its duty of maintaining international peace and security".³⁷ Since 1990 when China sent its first group of military personnel to participate in the UN Truce Supervision Organization, China has sent more than 15,000 people to PKOs around the world. It has also established a peacekeeping affairs office under the Ministry of National Defense as well as a training center for peacekeeping civilian police, and sponsored international and regional symposiums on PKOs in 2004 and 2007 (Beijing Review 30 September 2010).³⁸ Given that Japan's international military activity has been largely confined to PKO activities, it would be puzzling why Beijing would be so concerned with the expansion of Japan's role in the alliance with the US.

The second problem is that even if China's threat perception of Japan is based on the expanding Japan's role within the alliance with the US, of which the major part is about PKOs, the 'history problem' still matters and plays an important role in threat perception. For example, Thomas Christensen argues that "Beijing would fear either a breakdown of the

³⁷ Permanent Mission of PRC to UN. 2003. "[United Nations Peacekeeping Operations \(PKO\)](http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/thematicissues/peacekeeping/t29394.htm)" available at <http://www.china-un.org/eng/chinaandun/securitycouncil/thematicissues/peacekeeping/t29394.htm>.

³⁸ The article entitled "Protecting the World" is available online at http://www.bjreview.com.cn/quotes/txt/2010-09/26/content_300152_2.htm.

US-Japan alliance or a significant upgrading of Japan's role within that alliance" and China's fear of Japan is based on historically rooted distrust of Japan (1997: 52). His analysis suggests the fundamental cause of the Chinese fear of Japan's role in the alliance is the historical experience with Japan, and a low level of trust firmly rooted in that experience. A similar view is offered by a leading Chinese expert on Japan. Liu Jianguo argues that the reason that China is concerned with the US-Japan alliance is because its traditional function of constraining Japanese military buildup has changed to fostering the growth of Japanese military power since the 1990s (Liu 1998).

In this sense, 'the history problem' would contribute to the Chinese perception of threat from Japan by invoking the memories of past Japanese aggression and militarism, thereby altering its assessment of Japan's aggressive intentions.

Conclusions

This chapter looked at the emergence of mutual threat perception. The realist explanation, with its focus on power differences and geographical proximity, has limited utility in explaining why mutual threat perception has emerged between China and Japan, despite the fact that the former has surpassed the latter in terms of aggregate economic and military power.

In addition to power differences, I have argued that the assessment of aggressive intentions is a critical factor in threat perception. The reason that the Chinese threat perception of Japan has increased is because its assessment of Japan's intentions of using its military power has changed due to the rise of the history problem. The history problem placed both countries far on identity distance, and heightened distrust and historically rooted fear of each other.

I have also suggested that the rise of threat perception is seldom unilateral. In reality, it occurs in a cyclical pattern in which an increase in one state's threat perception of another leads to the latter state to perceive a greater level of threat from the former, and so on and so forth. This cyclical pattern, however, is unlikely to occur if the power differences between the two states are so huge that only intentions matter only for the weaker state.

Chapter 5: The Black Swan? Korea-Japan Relations since the 1980s

The black swan was first discovered in Western Australia by a Dutch expedition led by Willem de Vlamingh in 1697. At a time when everyone thought all swans were white, the discovery of a black swan provided a shock that would force a reexamination and revision of existing knowledge and theories. Today the black swan is used as a metaphor for a surprise event or outlier that deviates from our regular expectations to the point of impossibility, and has a great impact (Taleb 2010).

The Korea-Japan relations might be a black swan event in international relations. Despite the presence of factors that would produce more peaceful and cooperative relations, the two countries have had troubled relations. Their relations have become more conflictual after Korea's democratization in the late 1980s. In this chapter, I examine the increasing level of conflict between Korea and Japan. Once again my argument focuses on the 'history problem' as the key cause for the increasing bilateral conflict. As the history problem involving the understanding of Japan's colonial rule of Korea arose in salience, so did bilateral conflict between the two countries.

Political Relations between Korea and Japan

Few countries in history have been subject to great power politics and rivalry in the way Korea has. Its strategic location in NEA generated sufficient interest from China, Russia, and Japan to seek influence or control over the Korean peninsula. The overlapping interests in the Korean peninsula among China, Russia, and Japan were a major source of international conflict in NEA in the late 19th century. The rivalry and influence of the great powers were also complicated by factional politics within Korea, siding with different great powers. In the end it was Japan that won the control of Korea by defeating both China and Russia in two wars at the turn of the century.

After the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan received China's recognition of "the full and complete independence and autonomy of Korea," thus ending Korea's tributary relationship with the Qing dynasty by signing the Treaty of Shimonoseki. After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan won Russia's acknowledgement of Japan's "paramount political, military, and economic interest" in Korea under the Treaty of Portsmouth. A separate agreement was later signed between US and Japan that recognized US interests in the Philippines and Japanese interests in Korea. In reality Korea became a Japanese protectorate by the Eulsa Treaty.

The formal annexation occurred in 1910 when the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty (*nikan heigo joyaku*) was signed by Terauchi Masatake, who became the first Japanese governor-general of Korea, and Lee Wan-Yong, prime minister of Korea. The first article of the treaty stated: "His Majesty the Emperor of Korea makes the complete and permanent cession to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea."

The name Lee Wan-Yong later came to be used to mean traitor in Korean politics and society, and is frequently used even today by politicians to accuse their respective opponents for policies they deem not to serve national interests. Also, the name of the treaty is often called differently in Korea. Rather than call it a *joyak* (treaty 条约), they call it *neungyak* (coerced treaty 勒约). The event is remembered as *gyeongsul gukchi* or "the humiliation of the nation in 1910".³⁹

³⁹ One illustration that shows contrasting views between the Koreans and the Japanese is the status of Ito Hirobumi. Ito was a key figure in the early period of Japan's imperial government, and is revered in Japan as the father of Japan's Meiji constitution and is so respected that his statue stands in the entrance hallway of the Diet buildings. In Korea, however, he is remembered as a national enemy and as someone who exploited Korea. The revered person in Korea is instead a Korean independence fighter named Ahn Joong-Guen who assassinated Ito. Ahn is regarded as a national hero, and someone young Koreans should look up to.

From 1910 to 1945, Japan ruled Korea with brute force, and implemented such assimilation policies as a ban on the use of Korean names and language, a collective memory shared among the Koreans regardless of age and political values. One byproduct of the Japanese colonial rule in Korea was the awakening of a national consciousness in the modern sense. The first national independence movement broke out on 1 March 1919, which spread nationwide. Thus born was modern Korean nationalism. Although few living Koreans have experienced it, the colonial period is well-remembered among the Korean, and right from the beginning Japan became the indispensable Other against which to form and build Korean nationalism.

Between Korea's independence in 1945 and 1965, there were no official relations between the two countries. Efforts were made to establish a formal diplomatic relationship, and there were both strategic and economic reasons for improving the relations. However, nationalistic sentiments trumped both geostrategic and material interests. No doubt, occasional unsavory remarks made by some Japanese officials justifying Japan's colonial rule in Korea did not help much.

It was when General Park Chung-Hee, who came to power through a coup de tat, sought to achieve Korea's economic development through his *saemaueul undong* (new village campaigns). For that end, he desperately needed foreign investment in Korea, and Japan served as a useful partner. But the Korean domestic opinion remained strongly committed to questions of historical justice, public protests against the diplomatic normalization broke out in major cities in Korea, and the opposition parties demanded at least \$2.7 billion in reparations, paid to both the Korean government as well as individuals.

South Korea pressed for reparations at an early stage and in the 1965 normalization pact received grants, loans and financial credits. The Japanese side showed some flexibility

on this issue, but insisted on defining the money it offered the Korean government as foreign aid, not reparations, thus avoiding explicit acknowledgement of responsibility for wartime behavior. The Korean government dropped the right to pursue reparations claims both by the government and by Korean citizens, which was kept secret for several decades (Seraphim 2006: 202-205). This is confirmed by the disclosure of diplomatic documents that recorded the proceedings of the treaty. The documents, kept secret for 40 years, show that South Korea agreed to demand no compensations, either at the government or individual level, after receiving \$800 million in grants and soft loans from Japan as compensation for its 1910-45 colonial rule in the treaty (Chosun Daily 17 January 2005). While the agreed sum was low, the Park regime desperately needed capital for its economic agenda.

One of the thorniest issues in the bilateral relationship today, namely, the issue of 'comfort women', was not addressed at the time. In fact little was known about it in broader circles (Manyin 2003). The broader culture of denial and shame, as well as the reluctance of the Korean government to recognize them as victims, prevented the issue from emerging until the 1970s. (Chungsee 1996). The US historiography that insists the Pacific War rather than Greater East Asian War diverted attention from East and Southeast Asia to US occupation policies and marginalization of Japan's wartime activities (Conrad 2003: 92).

Between the diplomatic normalization and the late 1980s, the relations between the two were not spectacular, but stable and grew at a steady pace. There were occasional issues regarding trade imbalances and the history problem in the 1980s, but the overall tone of newspaper editorials in this period was one of hope and high expectations for future Korea-Japan relations. Continuing economic aid from Japan, coupled with willingness to offer some form of apology for Japan's colonial rule, were key reasons for the stable bilateral relations.

In 1983, Nakasone visited Seoul bringing \$4 billion dollars worth of aid as well as a raft of new initiatives on economic and political cooperation. In 1984, Chun visited Tokyo, and met with Emperor. Nakasone in a dinner banquet offered “Japan caused great suffering to your country and your people during a certain period during this century. I would like to announce that the Japanese government and people express deep regret for the wrongs done to you and are determined to strictly caution them against repeating them in the future” (Wakamiya 1998: 198-99)

The bilateral political relationship would significantly worsen throughout the mid 1980s, however, and further deteriorated in the 1990s and 2000s, despite a brief period of 1997 and 1998 that marked a high point in Korea-Japan relations when president Kim Dae-jung and prime minister Obuchi Keizo were the leaders of the two nations. Obuchi offered an apology and Kim accepted it on behalf of the Korean people. Thereafter, agreements were reached on lifting the cultural ban on the import of Japanese cultural products to Korea, on fishing in disputed waters in East Sea, and on the joint hosting of the World Cup soccer games.

Notwithstanding that brief period of friendly relations with concrete results of bilateral cooperation, there has emerged since the 1990s a general pattern in the bilateral relationship that tends to repeat time and again. When a new leader comes into power in either country, he promises to improve the relations taking a future-oriented viewpoint. Less than a year or so, however, an issue regarding the ‘history problem’ breaks out, and they begin heated and emotional accusations and counter-accusations about the past history and Japan’s understanding of it. The end result is stalled political relations between the two countries, hardened biases about each other, and increasing conflict.

This pattern is most vividly illustrated by the Roh-Koizumi relationship. When Roh Moo-hyun became the president of Korea in 2002, he promised that he would take the bilateral relationship toward the future. In 2004, in a summit meeting with prime minister Koizumi, Roh said that he would not raise the issues relating to the past history (Donga Ilbo 23 July 2004), and establish the Korea-Japan Friendship Year, which was to be the year 2005. Even as late as January 2005, Roh stated, “Korea and Japan have long been neighbors [Both countries] cannot but be friends by fate. By holding hands together, we can construct a new relationship oriented towards a future of peace and prosperity.”

However, only two months later, after Japan voiced its claim to Dokdo/Takeshima, Roh would make an emotional and angry statement toward Japan. Referring to the island dispute, Roh stated:

“I have seen your [Korean public] anger through media reports. . . . Japan annexed Dokdo during the Russo-Japanese War. They took away Dokdo by force. 22 February, the ‘Takeshima Day’ that Simane prefecture declared, is the same day when Japan annexed Dokdo as part of Japan’s territory one hundred years ago. . . . Now we will react strongly. The Korean government shunned from criticizing Japan, not only because of diplomatic trouble or negative economic consequences, but also because of consideration for future-oriented Korea-Japan relations. But what we received in return is Japan’s action that does not take into account the future. . . . First off, we will deal with it diplomatically.”

In 2006, he went one step further, and declared a ‘diplomatic war’ (*waegyo jeonjaeng*) against Japan. In a nationally televised speech, Roh said:⁴⁰

“It [Dokdo] is not merely a piece of our land but one that carries historic significance as a clear testament to our forty years of affliction. For Koreans, Dokdo is a symbol of the complete recovery of sovereignty. Along with visits by Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine and Japanese history textbooks, Dokdo is a touchstone of the extent to which Japan recognizes its past history as well as of its commitment to the future of Korea-Japan relations and peace in East Asia.”

⁴⁰ The speech is available at <http://dokdo-or-takeshima.blogspot.com/2008/04/roh-moo-hyuns-angry-dokdo-speech.html>. Accessed on 10 September 2011.

One may suspect that Roh was using the issue to boost up his domestic popularity for some other political ends. Indeed his approval rating went up by approximately 20% after he made the speech in 2006 (Donga Ilbo 1 May 2006). It is hard to know what was his true intention and purpose was when he made the speech. But an alternative—I believe, more accurate—view is that Roh himself was genuinely upset with what he perceived was Japan's repeated denial of past injustice such as Yasukuni shrine visits. Political leaders are not autonomous from widely shared collective memories and sentiments. Most likely, Roh thought that Japan's claim to Dokdo/Takeshima was part of this denial of Japan's wrongdoings and guilt, and hence unjust and immoral.

The bilateral relationship has become somewhat better as no Japanese prime minister visited Yasukuni shrine after Koizumi stepped down—no one lasted long enough to visit the shrine! Since the turnover of political power to the Democratic Party of Japan, the relations have become stable with their pro-Asia policy. But the 'history problem' has not been resolved, and it could haunt the bilateral relations again in the future.

Increasing Conflict Between Korea and Japan since the 1990s

From the perspective of (neo)realism and (neo)liberal-institutionalism, the Korea-Japan dyad should stand out as an outlier. Both theories would predict a high degree of cooperation and stable and close political, economic, and military relations between the two countries. Both Korea and Japan were on the side of the liberal-capitalist camp during the Cold War, resisting the communist advance. Both face the North Korean missile threat, and are concerned with the growing power and influence of China as well as its uncertain intentions and political future. Both are key allies of the US, with whom they have extensive cooperation in the military and security areas, including joint exercises and intelligence gathering and sharing. Both are liberal democracies, share similar sociopolitical values, and

Korea's Trade with Japan, 1972-2010

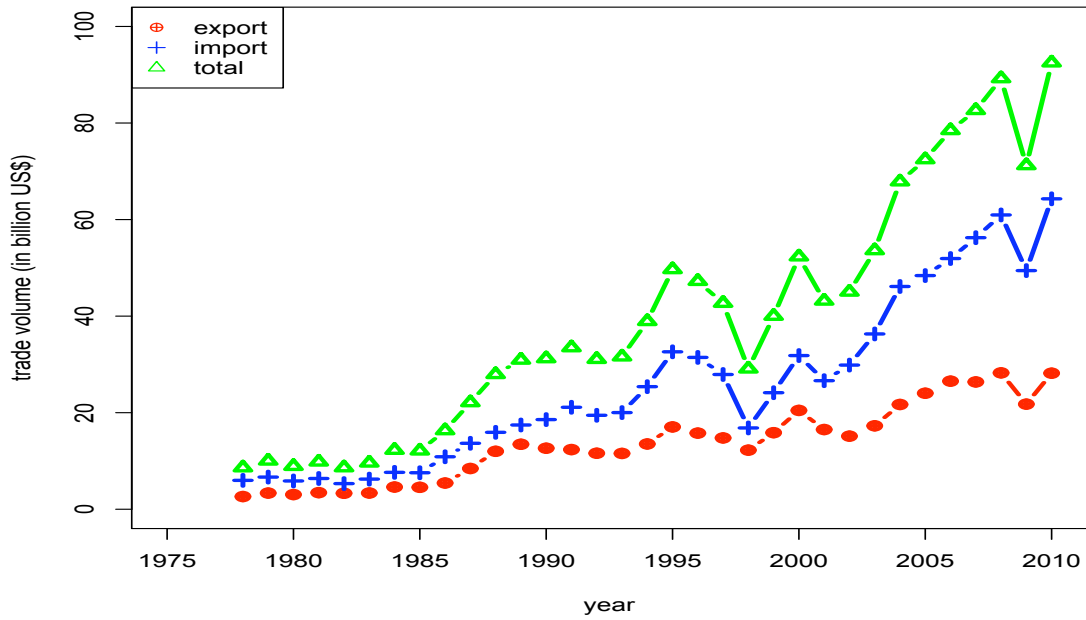


Figure 13. Korea's Trade Volume with Japan 1972-2010
 Source: Korea International Trade Association.
 Data are available at <http://www.kita.net/>

The Annual Number of Korean and Japanese Visitors, 1950-2010

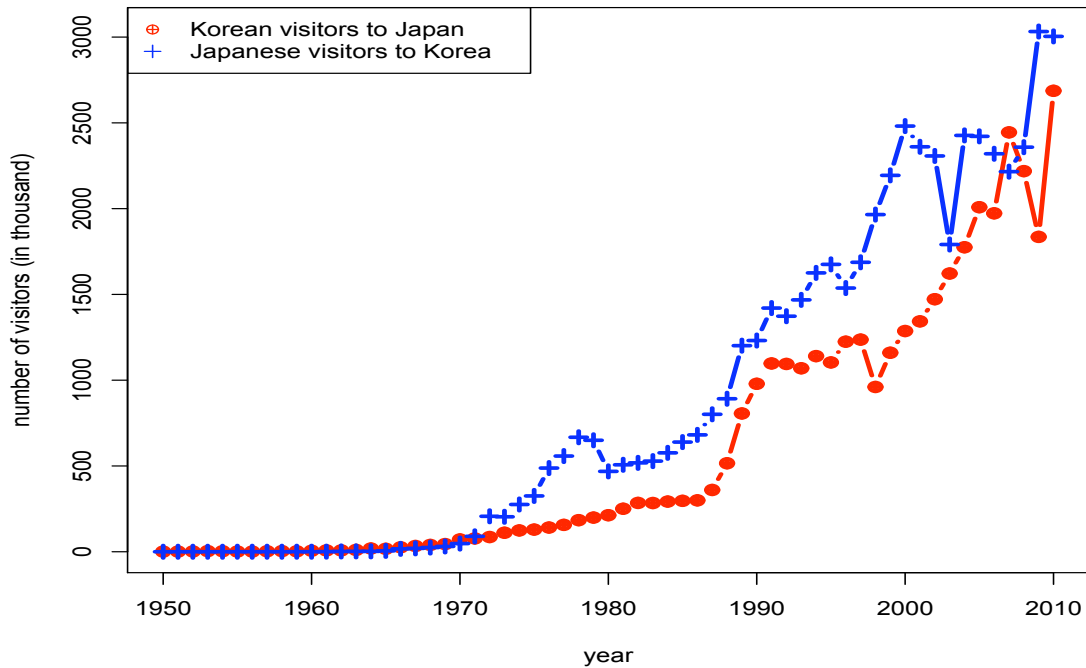


Figure 14. The Annual Number of Korean and Japanese Visitors, 1950 – 2010
 Source: Ministry of Justice of Japan and Ministry of Justice of Korea. The Data are available at http://www.moj.go.jp/housei/toukei/toukei_ichiran_nyukan.html (Japanese data) and <http://www.moj.go.kr/HP/TIMM/index.do?strOrgGbnCd=104000> (Korean data)

embrace the open market economy system. They enjoy each other's pop culture and food, and there are lots of human exchanges at various levels covering a wide range of issues. Therefore, on surface, there is strong reason to believe that the two countries should have extensive political and military cooperation.

The reality is somewhat different and presents a mixed result, however. In terms of trade and human exchanges, there has been a remarkable development. Japan is Korea's third largest trading partner only after China and the USA, and Korea the fourth largest to Japan. Their bilateral trade volume has increased and approached \$100 billion per year in 2010, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Their human exchanges have also increased at an exponential rate. In the 1950s and 1960s, there were only a few hundred Japanese and Koreans or even fewer visiting the other country, but in 2010, the number of Japanese visitors to Korea increased to more than 3 million, while over 2.5 Koreans visited Japan (see Figure 2 above).

Furthermore, the fact that Korea became a democratic country in the late 1980s, should contribute to improving relations between the two countries. One of the most celebrated theories in IR states that democratic dyads do not fight one another. This empirical finding is so strong that some even call it an empirical law (Levy 1988). Although a single case can neither prove nor disapprove a general theory, the Korea-Japan dyad should shed some light on the validity of the theory.

While Japan has been a traditional democracy since the end of the US Occupation in 1952, Korea was an authoritarian regime until the democratization movement became more widespread and gained public support in the 1980s. Since the first democratic election in 1987, the first civilian government was elected in 1991, and the Korean democracy has consolidated through two peaceful turnovers of political power since then (Huntington

1991). Figure 15 below plots the Polity IV scores for both Japan and Korea over time. The graph clearly shows that Korea has become more democratic over the years, and converged to the level of Japan.

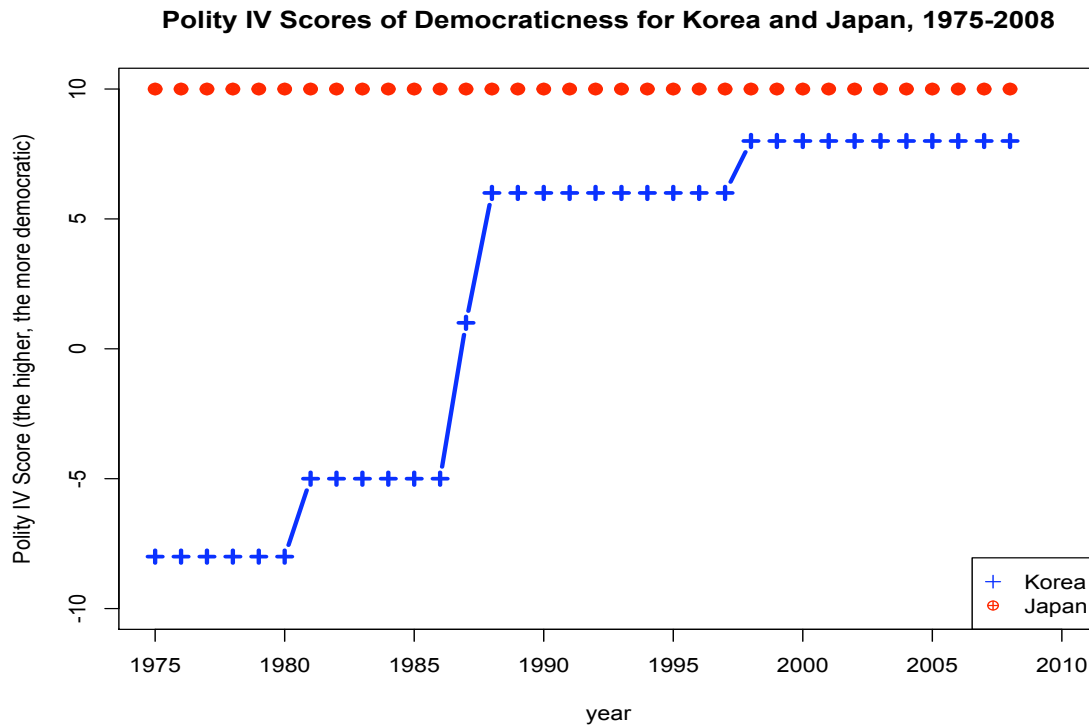


Figure 15. Polity IV Scores for Korea and Japan 1975 - 2008
 Source: Polity IV Dataset available at <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>

Democratic peace theory would predict that the democratization of Korea should be a positive factor in promoting peaceful relations with Japan, especially when there are other factors such as common security threat and economic interdependence that are conducive for a stable and close bilateral relationship.

Despite the positive trends in trade and human exchanges as well as convergence of political institutions and values between the two countries, there has been very little progress on military and security cooperation between Korea and Japan. For example, in January 2011, the defense ministers for Korea and Japan—Kim Kuang Jin and Kitazawa Doshimi—met in Seoul to discuss ways to deepen their military cooperation involving sharing

information and improving communications.⁴¹ When the media reported the news that Korea was discussing with Japan to improve military cooperation, the Korean defense minister was quick to announce that it would take a gradual approach taking societal feelings in Korea about Japan and that the military cooperation arrangements, if concluded, would only apply in non-combat situation i.e. only for humanitarian purposes.⁴²

On the same day a conservative newspaper Chosun Daily issued an editorial arguing that the reason the Korean government should be cautious about a military cooperation pact with Japan is because the partner is Japan. It continued, “considering the history of Japanese colonialism and Japan’s continuous claim of sovereignty over Dokdo, it is questionable whether it is appropriate to cooperate militarily with Japan.”⁴³

There are several disputes between Korea and Japan. The most important and intense dispute is the Dokdo/Takeshima, a group of small islets lying between Korea and Japan. The official Korean position is that there is no dispute about the island, Korea had administered the territory until Japan took it over as part of annexing Korea. The Japanese government, on the other hand, argues that Japan is the rightful owner of the island and Korea is illegally occupying the territory. Both sides present their own interpretations of historical documents, maps, and treaties, but cannot agree on which interpretation is the correct one.

Tensions over the island flared shortly after the Korean War came to an end. In January 1952, the president of Korea, Syngman Rhee, issued a declaration concerning Korea’s maritime sovereignty, the so-called “Syngman Rhee Line,” encompassing the

⁴¹ The two main topics were the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and the Allied Communications Security Agency (ACSA).

⁴² 5 January 2011, “Korea-Japan negotiating the first military cooperation arrangement” in Donga Daily

⁴³ “The Goals and Limits of Korea-Japan Military Cooperation Agreement should be made Clear” on 4 January 2011, Chosun Ilbo

disputed island. In 1953, after the island was designated as a free zone from US bombing range, and Japanese fishermen resumed fishing around the area. Korean fishermen were fishing at the same time. A Japanese coastal guard vessel demanded the Korean fishermen to stop illegal fishing and leave the area, and the Korean authorities fired upon the Japanese vessel to protect their nationals, resulting in several deaths and arrest of fishermen from both sides, who were imprisoned in the other country. In 1954, both countries de-escalated the situation by swapping the prisoners.⁴⁴ Since then, Seoul has maintained de facto control of the island, while Japan has not abandoned its sovereignty claim to the territory.

Between then and the mid 1990s, although occasional claims of sovereignty over the Dokdo/Takeshima by high-level Japanese officials led to public anger and protests in Korea, both sides managed to keep the dispute under control. But the dispute began to intensify in the 1990s, with a series of actions and counter-actions taken by both Korea and Japan, to strengthen their sovereignty claim to the territory. Nationalism played a crucial role in the intensification of the dispute in both countries.

This is not to say that nationalism was not important before the 1990s. On the contrary, as a newly independent nation, nationalistic feelings were very strong in Korea throughout the postwar period, especially against Japan. Anti-Japanese sentiments were so strong that it was not until 1998 that the national ban on the import of Japanese cultural products such as movies, songs, etc was lifted. Korean nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiments became even more intense because of the rise of the 'history problem' with Japan, and gained in strength since the 1980s. Several newspaper editorials called for a wholesale reexamination of Korea-Japan relations when the history problem arose. When

⁴⁴ For the Japanese version of the incident, please see the following webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/installation.html>. Accessed on 8 May 2011.

prime minister Nakasone made a public visit to Yasukuni shrine in 1985, it was said to be a sign of revival of Japanese militarism (Donga Daily 17 August 1985). When the history textbook issue broke out, the Koreans questioned the degree of contrition of the Japanese and demanded a strong apology (Donga Daily 2 August 1982). There was also evidence that Korea was generally concerned with any issue concerning the Japanese military, questioning the role and direction of Japanese defense strategy (Donga Daily 21 October 1981).

However, despite several incidents involving the 'history problem', the overall tone of newspaper editorials in the most of the 1980s was one of hope and expectation for better future relations with Japan. Whenever high officials of the two countries, the newspapers expressed that such meetings would produce a better understanding of each other and close cooperation between the two countries. Such optimism slowly gave in to a more pessimistic view about the possibility of a close relationship, and a negative view of Japan as a nation. Table 1 on the next page lists major events relating to the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute since the 1990s.

In addition, in Korea, citizens have become more active in the dispute. In 2006, five young Koreans called "Dokdo Riders" embarked on a world tour to raise the international awareness of the dispute and spread the message that Dokdo is part of Korean territory. On 1 March 2010, an advertisement was aired in New York Times Square by a Korean NGO, with the message that Dokdo is an indispensable part of Korean territory. In 2011, a famous Korean singer Kim Jang-Hoon launched a Dokdo campaign, to raise the public awareness of

the issue, mainly targeting young people. In addition, several institutes and websites have been created to promote Korea's claim over the disputed territory.⁴⁵

Table 5. Major Incidents Surrounding the Dokdo/Takeshima Since the 1990s

Year	Incidents
1996	Declaration of 200 nautical mile EEZ by Japan and Korea (Dokdo/Takeshima falls in the overlapping area) Foreign Minister of Japan Ikeda Yukihiko declares Dokdo/Takeshima is part of Japanese territory. Later, Chief Cabinet Secretary Gaziyama Seiroku supports the foreign minister's statement. Right-wing groups in Japan attack the Korean Embassy in Tokyo, to protest against Korea's occupation of Dokdo/Takeshima
1997	Korea establishes a facility for the parking and landing of ships on the island Seizure of Korean fishing ships by Japanese authorities The Korea-Japan Fishing Agreements
2000	Prime Minister Mori states that the island is part of Japanese territory
2001	Middle school textbooks in Japan begin to mention that the island is part of Japanese territory
2002	High school textbooks in Japan begin to mention that the island is part of Japanese territory
2004	Prime Minister Koizumi states that the island is part of Japanese territory
2005	Japanese Ambassador to Korea Takano Doshiyuki states that the island is part of Japanese territory Shimane prefecture in Japan declares 22 February to be the "Takeshima Day" North Kyungsang prefecture in Korea declares October to be the "Dokdo Month"
2006	President Roh Moo-Hyun delivers a special Dokdo speech arguing that Japan's claim to the island is based on its imperial aggression Japanese 'research vessel' attempts to conduct research in the surrounding area
2007	Korea builds desalinization plants capable of producing clean water.
2008	Foreign Minister of Japan states that the island is part of Japanese territory Ministry of Education in Japan sets the (new?) guideline that textbooks should include reference to Takeshima as part of Japanese territory

⁴⁵ Two examples are the Cyber Dokdo Musuem and Northeast Asian History Foundation. Their websites are: <http://www.dokdo.go.kr/Index.do?command=search> and <http://www.historyfoundation.or.kr/?sidx=85&stype=1>

There is also further sign that the dispute is intensifying and expanding. Some Koreans have argued that Tsushima (in Japanese)—known as Daemado (in Korean)—is part of Korean territory, although the Korean government does not make the claim. In 1948, the Korean government formally demanded that the island be ceded to Korea based on ‘historical claims’. However, the claim was rejected by the SCAP in 1949. In 1951, the Korean government agreed to drop the earlier demand for Tsushima. But in 2010, a group of 37 members of the Korean National Assembly formed a forum to investigate into Korea’s territorial claims to Tsushima.⁴⁶ A member of the forum stated that rather than baseless insistence of sovereignty, which is what Japan is doing with regards to Dokdo, they would thoroughly investigate into the historical origin and relationship between Tsushima and Korea.

Another bilateral dispute has been the name of an adjacent sea between the two countries. Japan calls it the Sea of Japan, while Korea calls it the East Sea.⁴⁷ The issue is only of symbolic value, and does not have any material consequences, as it would not affect the Exclusive Economic Zone claim by either of the two countries. But despite the absence of any material benefits involved, the issue consumed diplomatic resources of both countries. The widely used name has been the Sea of Japan, but the Korean government claims that that usage became popular in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries as a result of Japanese imperialism.⁴⁸ In 1928 the International Hydrographic Organization’s (IHO) *Limits of Oceans and Seas* officially accepted the name Sea of Japan. The Korean side argues

⁴⁶ See Chosun Daily 28 September 2010. The article is available at http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/09/28/2010092801353.html accessed on 18 October 2011.

⁴⁷ Incidentally, North Korea calls it the “East Sea of Korea”

⁴⁸ For the Korean position on the issue, see the following url of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea available at <http://www.mofat.go.kr/english/political/hotissues/eastsea/index.jsp>. The Japanese position can be found at the following url of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/maritime/japan/index.html>. Both accessed on 21 October 2011.

that Korea was occupied by the Japanese back then, and had no international voice to protest. Korea officially joined IHO in 1957.

Korea bases its dispute on both the 1974 IHO resolution and on 1977 UN resolution, which state:⁴⁹

“It is recommended that where two or more countries share a given geographical feature (such as a bay, a strait, channel or archipelago) under different names, they should endeavor to reach agreement on a single name for the feature concerned. If they have different official languages and cannot agree on a common name form, it is recommended that the name forms of each of the languages in question should be accepted for charts and publications unless technical reasons prevent this practice on small scale charts.”

“Considering the need for international standardization of names of geographical features that are under the sovereignty of more than one country or are divided among two or more countries,

1. Recommends that countries sharing a given geographical feature under different names should endeavor, as far as possible, to reach agreement on fixing a single name for the feature concerned;
2. Further recommends that when countries sharing a given geographical feature do not succeed in agreeing on a common name, it should be a general rule of international cartography that the name used by each of the countries concerned will be accepted. A policy of accepting only one or some of such names while excluding the rest would be inconsistent in principle as well as inexpedient in practice. Only technical reasons may sometimes make it necessary, especially in the case of small-scale maps, to dispense with the use of certain names belonging to one language or another.

The IHO agreed to conduct a survey of available evidence in 2011, and is expected to release its results at the end of 2011. The US officially supports the Japanese claim, which angered many Koreans, but there was a report that many of the 27 members of the working group that investigates into this dispute do not support the singular use of the term Sea of Japan.⁵⁰ Despite no consequential material interests involved, the dispute has occupied much government effort and public attention in both countries, particularly in Korea.

⁴⁹ For more details, see the following url of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea available at <http://www.mofat.go.kr/english/political/hotissues/eastsea/index.jsp>.

⁵⁰ See the following newspaper article in the Korea Times 12 August 2011 available at http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/08/116_92705.html. Accessed on 21 October 2011.

Given that both countries are democracies, are important trading partners to each other, and have a large volume of human exchanges, it is puzzling why the bilateral relations are not more peaceful and cooperative. In fact, cooperation is very limited in the military realm, and bilateral tensions have intensified over symbolic issues of national sovereignty such as territorial dispute and the name of an adjacent sea.

Bridled by the Past: Identity Distance, Democratization, and Conflict

My argument focuses on the interaction between democratization and identity distance as the key cause of intensifying conflict between Korea and Japan. Whereas the Korean government could suppress, contain, or control anti-Japanese sentiments during its authoritarian rule, democratization not only compelled the Korean government to reflect societal sentiments and views in its foreign policy, but also engendered activists and NGOs that would take up the cause for themselves, thereby contributing to the intensification of the dispute.

The argument advanced here has broader implications beyond Korea-Japan relations. One of the key questions in the democratic peace literature concerns the causes of democratic peace. There are three main causes put forward by scholars. The first cause is political institutions and the constraints they put on leaders for waging war (Rummel 1983; Morgan and Campbell 1991; Schultz 2001; Mansfield and Snyder 2002 & 2009). Mansfield & Snyder (2002 & 2009) hold that the democratic peace is the result of strong executive constraints in democratic states preventing leaders from waging unnecessary wars. According to institutionalists, democratic leaders cannot act unilaterally, and thus the deployment of military force is slowed down, giving diplomats more time to arrange peaceful solutions. The potential difficulty of gaining support in the legislature alone may give democratic leaders pause and prevent them from waging wars, except when it is absolutely

necessary.

In contrast to the institutional argument, some other scholars focus on normative constraints of democracies. Citizens of modern democracies remain as unwilling to bear the costs of war as Kant predicted the citizens of constitutional republics would be (Kant 1983[1795]; Doyle 1986). Normative theorists go on to argue that democracies externalize their internal norms of non-violent dispute resolution leading to compromise, cooperation and understanding between democracies (Maoz & Russett 1993; Dixon 1993, 1994; Rummel 1995; Peterson & Graham 2011). Dixon (1993) demonstrates this empirically by showing that international conflicts between democracies are more likely to be resolved by third party management agents such as international organizations than conflicts involving an autocracy.

And finally, Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003) explains the democratic peace in the context of selectorate theory. Bueno de Mesquita and his coauthors argue that the primary concern of all leaders, democratic or autocratic, is retaining office. The winning coalition is drawn from those residents with the right to express a preference over leadership formally, and this group of residents is called the selectorate. Democracies have larger winning coalitions than autocracies. A democratic leader who wishes to stay in office needs to provide public goods, enjoyed by all, in order to satisfy a large winning coalition, whereas an autocrat, on the other hand, can buy the loyalty of his relatively small winning coalition by providing private goods to this select few. Bueno de Mesquita and his coauthors argue that because a democratic leader's tenure depends on his ability to provide public goods, such as victory in war, she is more susceptible to losing office after a military defeat than an autocratic leader. This makes democratic leaders reluctant to enter into a war unless they are confident they will triumph. If both states involved in a dispute are democracies then each state must be certain it will emerge victorious from a war in order for the dispute to escalate,

which lowers the likelihood of conflict between democracies.

Skeptics argue that the apparent correlation between democracy and peace is spurious. They maintain that democratic peace is not a result of democracy itself, but is instead a consequence of other factors that happen to coincide with democracy, such as military alliances (Farber and Gowa 1995, 1997; Gowa 1999), economic interdependence (Gartzke 2007), or American hegemony (Rosato 2003). Such views suggest that democratic peace is a happy historical coincidence rather than represent a fundamental causal relationship between democratic features and interstate relations.⁵¹

In addition, Mansfield and Snyder challenged the democratic peace theory by arguing that the likelihood of war or conflict in fact increases during a period of democratic transition when governmental institutions are weak. Under such conditions, elites employ nationalistic rhetoric to mobilize mass support, which often leads to more belligerent foreign policies toward other countries, regardless of their regime type (2002). Although their argument and empirical findings have been heavily discredited by a later analysis done by Narang and Nelson (2009) using the same data, the initial question asked by Mansfield and Snyder is still a valid and important one. Does democracy or democratization always produce greater peace with other democracies?

One common weakness in the above-mentioned arguments is that they all black box identity issues. Mansfield and Snyder (2002) gives some attention in their argument about

⁵¹ Another issue in the literature concerns the mechanisms driving the causal relationship between democracy and interstate peace. Some attribute the democratic peace to institutional features of democracy, including elections through which voters can punish leaders for taking their country to war, or checks and balances that slow the pace of mobilization (Rousseau 2005). Others emphasize democratic norms, such as the tendency to compromise with political opponents (Russett 1993; Doyle 1983), or the willingness of soldiers to fight harder because they view their democratically elected leaders as legitimate (Reiter and Stam 2002). But despite volumes of research about the democratic peace, little consensus has emerged about which causal mechanisms are most important (Lektzian and Souva 2009).

transitional democracies when they argue nationalist mobilization is a key cause of international conflict among democratizing countries, but it is more similar to diversionary war theory than developing a precise connection with identity. In essence, democratic transition is about changing the political system in such a way to reflect the preferences of the public in national policies, including foreign policy. The previously dominant preferences of the dictator, oligarchs, or the elite are now replaced with those of the masses. Democratization would simply give greater representation to the identity views and policy preferences of the masses toward foreign countries than the dictator, oligarchs, or the elite.

Although I do not deny democratic institutions produce a positive effect on interstate relations on average, the analysis of Korea-Japan relations suggests that the relationship could be more complex than what most scholars suggest. The graph below shows the relationship between democracy, identity, and peace.

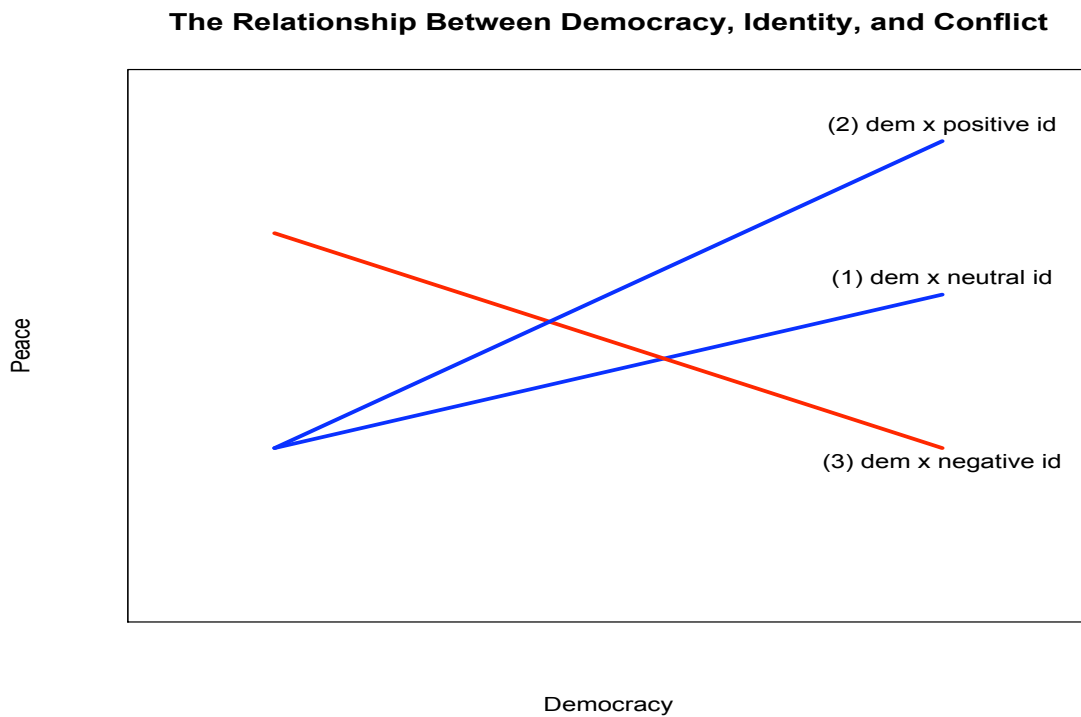


Figure 16. The Relationship Between Democracy, Identity and Conflict

The first line denotes the general relationship between democratic institutions and interstate peace. The more democratic a dyad is, the more peaceful their relations will be. Once we introduce identity distance, then the relationship becomes more complex. If the preexisting identity distance is a positive one i.e. narrow identity distance, then democratization would enhance preexisting peace between the two states. The second line captures this effect. However, if the preexisting identity distance is a negative one i.e. wide identity distance, then democratization would have a negative effect on relations between the two states, as it would permit negative sentiments and views to affect foreign policy. The third line represents this relationship, and it is the argument for increasingly conflictual relations between Korea and Japan advanced in this chapter.

The analysis of the Korea-Japan relations after Korea's democratization suggests that the relationship between democracy and peace more complex than what is advanced by democratic peace theory, and provides some support for my thesis. After Korea's democratization, popular anti-Japanese sentiments constrained Korea's policy options toward Japan, and the politicians were compelled to reflect these sentiments in their approach and dealings with Japan. This is especially so whenever the 'history problem' became salient in the bilateral relationship. As a result, highly symbolic issues of national sovereignty and independence from Japanese colonialism such as the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute intensified. At times, politicians also took advantage of such sentiments for their own domestic support. The outcome was troubled political relations with Japan, and a bilateral relationship that is bridled by the past.

The reason for this lack of progress in political and military relations has to do with deep-seated historical animosity and distrust between the two countries due to Japan's brutal colonial rule of Korea. Deep-seated hatred among some Koreans of Japan is also often

shown by extreme and irrational acts of self-infliction of harm as a form of protest against Japan. On 9 November 2011, a Korean man cut his little finger and sent it to the Japanese Embassy in Seoul in a present box (Donga Daily 9 November 2011).⁵² It is not uncommon to see some Koreans set fire on themselves in a public show of protest against Japan whenever some controversy erupts in the bilateral relations, whether it be history textbook, Yasukuni Shrine visits, comfort women issue, or Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Though not widespread, this extreme hared is real and places a constraint on Korea's foreign policy toward Japan.

The crucial difference between the 1980s and 1990s was the democratization of Korea in the late 1980s. Coupled with rising anti-Japanese sentiments due to the 'history problem', democratization of Korea opened a way to popular anti-Japanese sentiments to influence foreign policy. Not only did the government and the newspapers have to reflect societal sentiments and views, but citizens and NGOs also got involved in the dispute.

It fact, it would not have been possible or taken much longer and more efforts to normalize the diplomatic relations with Japan in the 1960s had Korea been a democracy back then. In 1960s, General Park normalized relations with Japan, an intense public demonstration took place against the policy. The entire opposition walked out of National Assembly in protest when it was up for ratification, and riots occurred in several Korean cities and Park had to deploy four divisions to Seoul to restore order.

I analyze the contents of Donga Daily newspaper editorials from 1980 and 2008, to support my argument. Donga Daily is one of the premier newspapers in Korea with nationwide subscription. It is conservative in political orientation, but due to the postwar

⁵² Donga Daily 9 November 2011 available at <http://news.donga.com/Society/New/3/03/20111109/41750902/1>

connection between Korea’s conservatives and Japan’s conservatives, it is likely to be less harsh when criticizing Japan. Thus it is a harder source than other left-leaning or centrist newspapers from which to discover negative views of Japan.

Editorials are selected if they contained the word “Japan” in their titles. There were a total of 344 editorials between 1980 and 2008, of which 73 were specifically on the ‘history problem’. I first examine how the appearance of ‘history problem’ editorials affects the negative portrayal of Japan. Figure 17 below shows both the number of history problem editorials and the frequency of editorials depicting Japan in a negative light. What the graph suggests is that virtually all ‘history problem’ articles depict Japan in a negative manner, and hence contributes to the overall negative depiction of Japan.

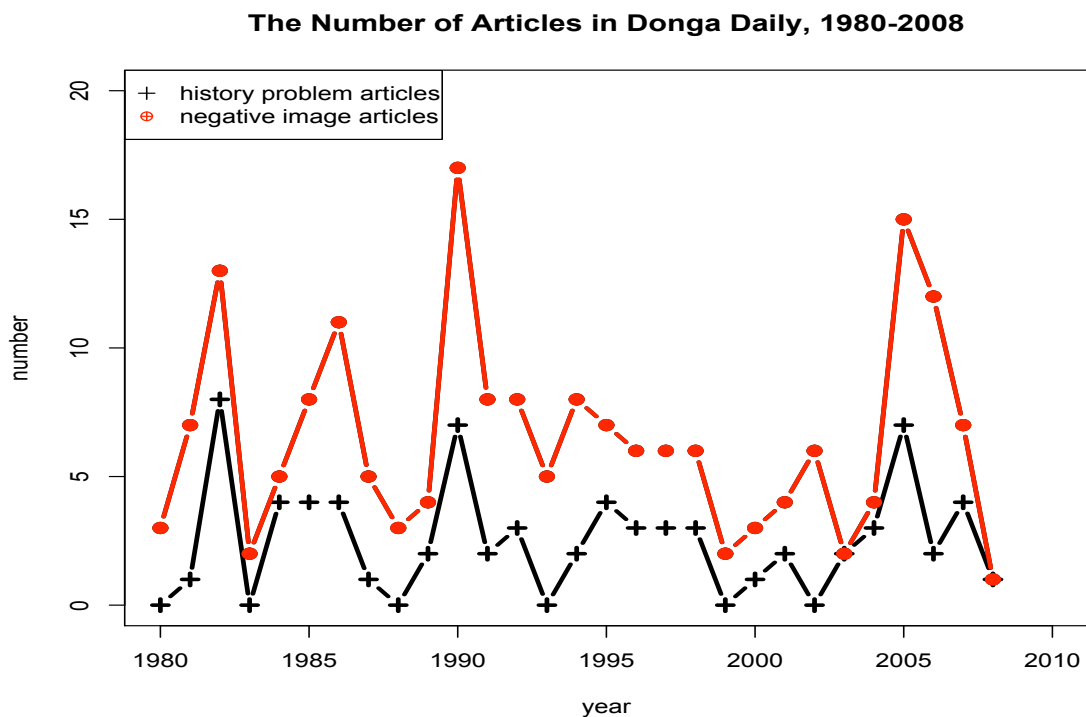


Figure 17. The Number of Articles in Donga Daily, 1980 – 2008
Source: Donga Daily

The editorials on the history problem covered issues such as apology, textbook, Yasukuni shrine, and comfort women issue, and the number of such editorials has fluctuated

during the period examined. This is consistent with the fact that the ‘history problem’ does not become salient unless it is produced by Japanese right-wing groups. The graph, however, clearly shows that the history problem has been a consistent feature in the bilateral relationship between 1980 and 2010. What is also interesting is that its appearance correlates very well with the number of editorials depicting Japan in a negative light. This is not surprising, since all history problem editorials are critical of Japan’s understanding and actions regarding the colonial period and WWII.

The next graph shows the number of editorials in Donga Daily that portray Japan in a positive, neutral, or negative way. Once again, the keywords appearing in the titles of newspaper articles were used in categorizing the articles as depicting a ‘positive’, ‘negative’, or ‘neutral’ image of Japan.

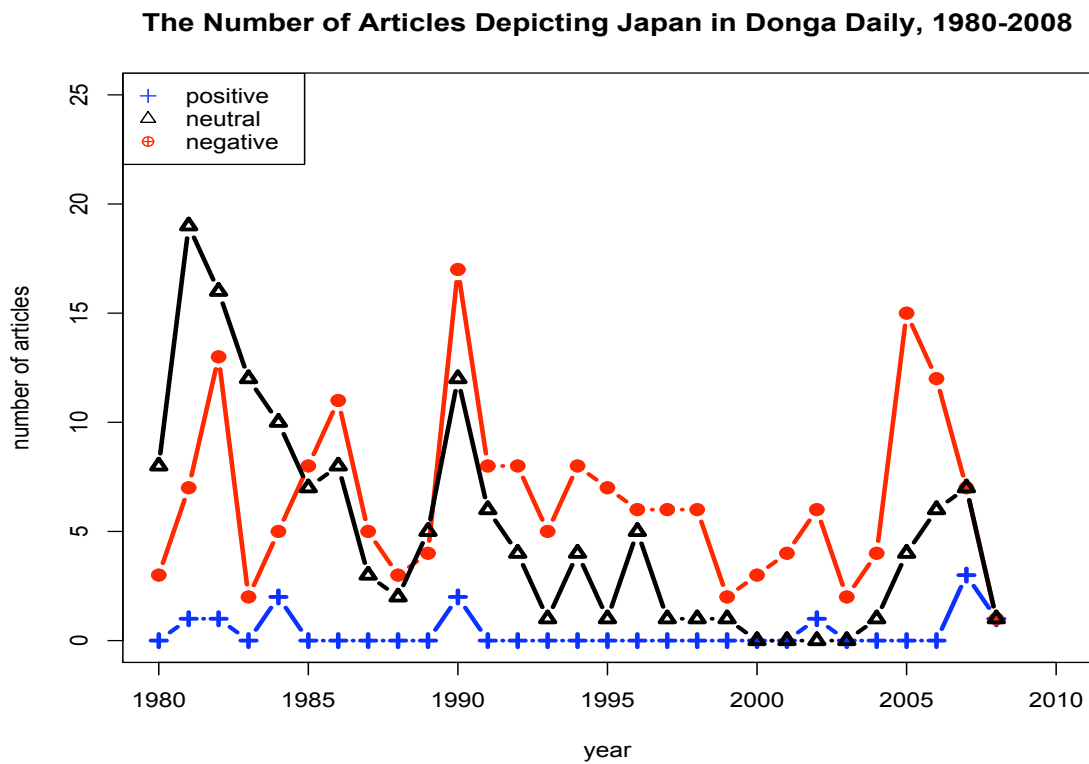


Figure 18. The Number of Articles Depicting Japan in Donga Daily 1980 – 2008
Source: Donga Daily

The positive view of Japan has been rather weak before and after the rise of the ‘history problem’ as well as before and after Korea’s democratization. The positive view is limited to science and technology and economic aid to other countries, and the editorials argue that Korea should learn from Japan on these issues. But overwhelming image of Japan is either neutral or negative. The neutral image of Japan was the dominant view up until the mid 1980s, around the time the ‘history problem’ was increasingly becoming salient. Since then, the negative image of Japan has taken over as the dominant societal view of Japan, at least in Donga Daily. The ‘history problem’ has been the main driver for this change of view of Japan.

In terms of actual contents of these editorials, the negative views of Japan center on the morality and trustworthiness, and are generated mainly, though not exclusively, by the history problem.⁵³

Morality: Some editorials question whether Japan (i.e. the Japanese nation) has a sense of morality, as they state that Japan ‘denies’ (*bujung*) and ‘distorts’ (*waegok*) its past wrongdoings, and hence is unjust and immoral (*doduksung gyeobyeo*). They argue that Japan is unapologetic, makes absurd remarks about the past (*mang eon* or *sil eon*), does not admit historical facts, and thus lacks a moral consciousness (*yang sim*).

Trustworthiness: Other editorials depicting Japan in a negative light criticize Japan for not acting in good faith or sincerity (*seongsim seongyi* or *seisin sei*). They state that when Japanese leaders apologized about the past at times, no action or contrary actions typically occurred later. They also mention that Japan has a closed island mentality—without defining it—and

⁵³ A non-history problem issue that has been influential in generating a negative image and view of Japan among the Koreans has been the treatment of ethnic Koreans in Japan. One could make a plausible case that this is also a part of the history problem, since most of the ethnic Koreans residing in Japan migrated to or were forced to migrate to Japan during the colonial period. However, I treat it as a separate issue, because it does not involve the understanding of WWII. Indeed, no editorials on this issue in Donga Daily linked the issue with Japan’s historical understanding of the past.

harbors hidden intentions or ulterior motives, and that Korea has been exploited by this concealment of intentions or motives by Japan in the past. Another popular theme is that the Japanese are not honest and their *honme* or real intention and meaning is different from *tatemae* or their displayed intention or meaning in public. Thus when a Japanese leader, who initially showed a friendly gesture toward Korea, later visits Yasukuni shrine or claims the disputed island is part of Japanese territory, the newspaper is quick to conclude that the leader has finally shown his “true colors” (*bon saek*), which is right-wing nationalism.

What emerges from the content analysis is a starkly opposite views of the ingroup (the Koreans) and the outgroup (the Japanese). The Koreans are innocent victims, and represent a morally superior, just, and trustworthy nation, while the Japanese are aggressive victimizers, who are immoral, unjust, and dangerous to trust. The existence of these deep-rooted negative views of Japan concerning morality and trustworthiness provides obstacles to bilateral cooperation, especially in areas such as military, security, and intelligence, that typically require a high degree of mutual trust among participants.

Implications

In addition to the theoretical implications of my argument, which are stated in the previous section, there are practical implications for regional interstate affairs in NEA. The ‘history problem’ is at the heart of deep ideational structure in NEA. It is the key reason why regional countries have deep-rooted suspicion about each other’s intentions, lack mutual trust, and have extreme nationalistic sentiments directed at each other. Some Japanese analysts quietly opine in private that the history problem exists only because there are no other important problems in bilateral relations. To them, therefore, the salience of the ‘history problem’ reflects the fact that the bilateral relations are sufficiently satisfactory.

Such view is problematic. Not only does it overlook the fact that the ‘history problem’ has been a key reason for the cancellation of summit meetings and a hindrance to cooperation on other issues, but it also misunderstands the extent to which the Koreans and Chinese take the issue seriously. On multiple occasions, both Chinese and Korean leaders have made it clear that the ‘correct’ understanding of the past is the foundation for future political relations with Japan. Thus if the history problem becomes salient again in the future, it will have a significant negative impact on bilateral relations and cooperation.

In fact, although it appears that the ‘history problem’ is put on the backburner in the Korea-Japan relations today due to domestic troubles in Japan, the ‘history problem’ still occupies a place in the relationship. On 12 October 2011, Chosun Daily that the Korean government raised the issue of ‘comfort women’ and organized rape and sexual slaves during WWII in the UN General Assembly, emphasizing the importance of ‘accurate’ education about historical facts, the Korean representative argued such acts qualify as war crimes and that UN members should make greater efforts at preventive measures, effective treatment of victims, and appropriate punishment of aggressors.⁵⁴

On the same day Chief Cabinet Secretary of Japan Osamu Fujimura announced in reply to the Korean government’s suggestion for negotiation over the comfort women issue that the compensation matter and the right of the Korean government to pursue compensation have been resolved completely and finally. He maintained the official

⁵⁴ “the Korean government raises the comfort women issue and wartime sexual violence in the UN” Article is available at http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2011/10/12/2011101200311.html?news_Head3 Accessed on 19 Oct 2011.

Japanese government position that the issue was settled once and for all in 1965, when Korea and Japan normalized their diplomatic relations.⁵⁵

What about avoiding the issue or keeping it quiet? While this is a better approach than making the problem salient, it cannot be a long-term solution. Negative views of Japan will not be uttered in public, but they will still reside deep down in the minds of the Chinese and Koreans. Without active resolution of the issue, the deep ideational structure based on the 'history problem', though dormant it might be, will not disappear.

Another important implication of the argument advanced in this chapter relates to democratization in China, and whether it will be a positive or negative force of China's foreign policy and relations with other countries. A common assumption is that democratization of China is unconditionally a good thing. No doubt, it will open up channels for the preferences of unrepresented and powerless domestic segments to be reflected in government policies. But at least in one area, relations with Japan, China's democratization is likely to bring more instability and trouble. As has been the case with the Korea-Japan relations after Korea's democratization, China's democratization will constrain the Chinese leadership to reflect popular anti-Japanese sentiments and views in its approach to Japan.

Furthermore, nationalistic domestic citizens and groups will organize themselves to promote nationalist causes such as reclaiming the Senkaku/Diaoyutai island dispute between Japan and China. There have already been incidents where Chinese activists from mainland China as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan attempted to land on the disputed island. With democratization, such movement will surely grow in number and strength. Currently, the

⁵⁵ "Japan's Chief Cabinet Minister Announces the Comfort Women Issue Has Already Been Resolved" accessed on 19 Oct 2011. Article available at <http://news.donga.com/Culture/New/3/07/20111012/41025364/1#>

CCP keeps a firm control on the 'Protect Diaoyutai' movement (*baodiao yundong*) banning internet-based websites, etc, but after democratization, the Chinese leadership will find it much harder to adopt such measures.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined the increasingly conflictual Korea-Japan relations since the 1990s. Coupled with the increased anti-Japanese sentiments due to the rise of the 'history problem', Korea's democratization has allowed domestic societal sentiments and views to affect its foreign policy toward Japan, thus contributing to worsening bilateral relations. The main bilateral conflict centers on the disputed island called Dokdo or Takeshima, and both sides have made greater efforts to educate their citizens as well as the international society that the island is part of their territory. But there are also other disputes such as the naming of an adjacent sea between the two countries. Even without any material consequences, the two countries have engaged in serious diplomatic jockeying and maneuvering to have their preferred name be the official name used by the international community. Without the resolution of the 'history problem', the two countries will still find it difficult to achieve 'deep' cooperation on sensitive issues relating to military and security areas.

PART III. Hanging Together in SEA: Identity Distance and Regional Affairs in SEA

“One Vision, One Identity, One Community”
— The ASEAN Motto in the ASEAN Charter—

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) provides an important case for the study of security communities. In the 1960s, the outlook for regional security and stability in SEA was rather grim. The region was portrayed as ‘the Balkans of the East’. There were a multitude of problems for the newly independent states: weak socio-political cohesion, ethnic tensions, communist insurgencies, interstate territorial disputes, potential of external intervention, ideological polarization and mutual mistrust between regional countries. All these problems made the survival of the regional states an open question.

In this context, the creation and continuation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was by no means inevitable. The previous two attempts at creating a regional association—the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) and the MALPHILINDO—had failed due to interstate disputes among the members. As Kenneth Young, US ambassador to Thailand during 1961-63, opined: (quoted in Acharya 2001: 5)

“It is doubtful that political regionalism or area-wide defense will emerge to play a part in encouraging regional equilibrium or regional institutions for political collaboration or collective defense. Centrifugal and divisive tendencies are too strong. Leaders will be more interested in relations with outside countries than among themselves, and more inclined to participate in Pan-Asian or international conferences and organizations than in exclusively Southeast Asian formations. Even the common fear of Communist China and the threat of Chinese minorities will not develop any sense of solidarity or serve to coordinate the divergent policies of neutrality and alignment.”

His prediction could not have been more wrong. Not only the regional countries have survived and formed ASEAN, but they have also managed to operate one of the most successful multilateral regimes in the world. Indeed, the achievements of ASEAN would even surprise the expectations of the founding members of the organization if they lived to

see them. Today ASEAN has its own charter, has become a more rule-based organization from a loose grouping based on a set of minimal guides for interstate interactions, and has been the main agent for the multilateral security frameworks in the region such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN+3.

While some scholars argue that ASEAN is more about making process than progress, and hence discredit ASEAN's achievements as unimportant (Smith and Jones 2007), their argument is mistaken for several reasons. First, the fact that there are disputes between the member states of ASEAN does not show that the grouping does not constitute a security community, just as the violation of norms does not prove that the norms do not exist. What is noteworthy in ASEAN is when a dispute occurs between member states, it is often de-escalated through peer pressure or influence by other members of the organization, suggesting that there is some degree of identification with one another and a collective sense that they belong to a grouping.

Second, making process is not unimportant. In fact, it is a necessary step toward making progress. It was especially crucial for SEA nations that had lacked any substantive previous experience of consultation and cooperation, and hence bringing them together in a regular process of interaction was no easy task. Much of ASEAN from its inception until the mid 1990s has focused on making process, laying the ground rules and norms for regional interstate interactions. It still spends a great deal of effort on consolidating these norms, since as Katzenstein states, "norms are contested and made and remade through politics" (1998: 38).

And lastly, such a view does not recognize important developments in the region. With an excessive focus on the present state of regional affairs, it discredits ASEAN's role

and importance in the positive developments that have taken place in SEA.⁵⁶ To be sure, there are still lingering territorial disputes and occasional low-intensity military conflict between Thailand and Cambodia and mutual suspicion of neighboring countries. But if one shifts the focus from what it is now to what has occurred since 1967, it is hard not to see the remarkable changes that have taken place in the region, and ASEAN has played a meaningful role in these changes. In addition, a focus on the trends in ASEAN would shed more light on where it will head to in the future.

Part III examines how the construction of a regional identity among the SEA nations has led to the narrowing identity distance between them, and its subsequent effect on interstate relations. I analyze two recent developments in the region, which provides further evidence that ASEAN has moved a step closer to being a security community. They are the establishment of a regional human rights mechanism called AICHR, the first of its kind in Asia, and the resolution of two key territorial disputes in the region through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Chapters 7 and 8 will examine them respectively. But first, Chapter 6 will discuss the origin of ASEAN and the conscientious regional efforts to construct and develop a regional identity.

⁵⁶ Jones and Smith seem to get some facts wrong as well. Writing of territorial disputes in the region in 2007, they state, “unresolved territorial conflicts include the Philippines’ outstanding claim to Sabah; competing Malaysian and Indonesian claims to the islands of Ligitan and Sipadan; and the contested ownership of the island of Pedra Branca by Malaysia and Singapore” (p. 65). But the Ligitan and Sipadan case had already been decided by the International Court of Justice by 2002, while the Pedra Branca case had been referred to the ICJ and was waiting for the court’s decision, which came in 2008. See Jones and Smith. 2007. *Asean and East Asian International Relations: Regional Delusion* (London: Edward Elgar Publication).

Chapter 6. Constructing a Regional Identity and Community

Two Contrasting Views on ASEAN

The study of Southeast Asian regional affairs has become a vibrant field of inquiry in International Relations thanks to the heated debate about one particular question: does Southeast Asia constitute a security community. One group of scholars led by constructivists argue that SEA has become a security community, though only in its nascent form (Acharya 1991 & 2001; Khong 1997; Sukma 2003; Sopic 1986). In support of their claim are the fact that SEA has not seen a war since Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in 1978, expansion of bilateral military cooperation, and the fact that ASEAN still exists and has spawned other institutions such as ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN+3. These scholars give much agency to ASEAN and regional countries, and emphasize intra-regional processes and interactions.

Another group of scholars led by realists argue that SEA is not a security community, and that mutual suspicion and lack of trust exist in regional interstate relations (Khoo 2004; Smith and Jones 2007). They point to incidents of military conflict between SEA nations, especially between Thailand and Cambodia, competing claims over Spratlys and Paracels in South China Sea, and a low level of trust between member states. They further argue that the survival and role of ASEAN is dependent on, and shaped to a large extent by, wider regional balance of power system underpinned by the US military presence (Leifer 1989). At best, ASEAN is a security regime i.e. formal or informal arrangements among states 'to maintain their sovereignty in conditions of peace among themselves and with outside states' (Emmerson 1987). In this view, ASEAN is nothing more than a policy coordinating body and a platform for collective bargaining over functional issues. ASEAN

is merely an institutional setting within which the member states engage in efforts to maximize their utility across different issues.

A major complicating factor in this debate concerns with how to define a security community and what standards to use when assessing whether a group of states or a region constitutes a security community. For instance, Acharya defines security communities by two conditions: (1) absence of war and (2) absence of significant organized military preparations vis-à-vis members (2001: 18). The two are closely related. A problem with this definition is that both the absence of war and of organized military preparations vis-à-vis members can be a result not only of the existence of a security community, but also of balancing behavior or hegemonic protection, and hence it becomes harder to separate which factor is the real cause. I argue that a better indicator for a security community is the active resolution of disputes among the members. This is because neither balancing behavior nor the presence of a hegemon would lead to the resolution of disputes between members, whereas members who desire to create a security community would find it necessary and appropriate to resolve their disputes.

While settling the debate is beyond the purpose of this chapter, I seek to analyze two recent developments in the region that should shed further light on the debate. The first is the development of human rights institutions, including AICHR. According to two former secretary-generals of ASEAN—Rodolf Severino (1998-2002) and Ong Keng Yong (2003-2007)—this is a truly remarkable and surprising development.⁵⁷ This is even more so when compared to the region’s active resistance to human rights in the 1990s in the name of “Asian values”. Today not only do various human rights institutions exist in the region, but

⁵⁷ Interviews with the author in Singapore on 10-12 February 2011.

the ASEAN Charter also makes the “promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms” as a key goal of ASEAN (Article 1.7).

The other significant development is the resolution of two key bilateral territorial disputes in the region through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). They are the Sipadan and Ligitan islands dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia, and the Pedra Branca dispute between Singapore and Malaysia. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, these countries have signed a special agreement to send the disputes to ICJ for a binding resolution. Since then the ICJ has decided on the cases, and the parties have accepted the decisions as final.

These two developments are certainly positive developments for regional peace and stability in SEA. However, when ASEAN was first established, no one predicted that several decades later ASEAN could lead to these outcomes. The task at hand is to explain how SEA got there.

In the Beginning . . .

A region requires not only a geographical reality but also a social and political one. For most of history, SEA offered something of the former, but lacked the latter. It was up to the regional countries to create a social and political reality of the region, and that moment came in 1967 with the creation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The label “Southeast Asia” is a relatively recent invention, and scholars generally credit the term to Britain’s Southeast Asia Command (SEAC). The region was given its geographic definition in a rather negative sense: it was what was not China or India, lying in the *South* of the former and *East* of the latter, the two great agglomerations that are still considered by ASEAN to be gravitational forces with the potential to tear apart ASEAN. There is little evidence that the peoples of SEA regarded themselves as a coherent region

prior to the twentieth century. Japanese imperialism and occupation of territories from Vietnam to Papua New Guinea was the closest catalyst to bringing together the countries that we now accept as Southeast Asia. The SEAC was formed with a limited geographic scope including only of Burma, Thailand, Malaya, Singapore, Borneo, Celebes, Java and Indochina south of the sixteenth parallel. But that political identity of Southeast Asia in the form of the SEAC was externally imposed with very little indigenous identification among the regional countries.

It was only after the national independence of key regional countries that an attempt was made to build an indigenous regional organization. In the 1950s, the SEA countries were only beginning to establish official diplomatic contacts after the war (see table 1).

Official connects among regional countries were rather sparse in the 1950s.

Table 6. Formal Diplomatic Relations among Southeast Asian Countries, 1950s

	Brunei	Burma	Camb.	Indon.	Laos	Malay.	Phils.	Sing.	Thai.	Viet.
Brunei										
Burma				D						
Camb.									D	
Indon.		D				C	D, C	C	L	
Laos									D	
Malaysia										
Phils.		(L fr.Th)		D					L	
Sing.										
Thai.		D	L	L, C	L	C	L	C		L
Vietnam									D	

Legend: "C" refers to consular representation; "D" refers to diplomatic representation; and "L" refers to legations. Based on Fifield 1958.

The implementation of specific development projects often financed by the UN and former colonial powers, slowly allowing national representatives in the region to work together and become more aware of common problems (Henderson 1955: 63).

At the end of World War II, the former colonial powers desired either to reassert themselves in the region by taking back their possessions (France in Vietnam, Portugal in East Timor, etc), or to 'guide' them toward independence (Britain in Burma and Malaysia). At the same time, the emergence of the cold war between the US and USSR significantly affected the region.⁵⁸ The USSR provided some support for communist movements in the region, while the US formed the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) to prevent Southeast Asian countries from falling into communism, although Thailand and the Philippines were the only Southeast Asian countries included in SEATO. This ideological polarization between communist and non-communist countries in the region contributed to the estrangement among future ASEAN members for almost four decades and prevented the early establishment of an ASEAN-Ten.⁵⁹

The European efforts to reassert themselves in the region led to various nationalist revolutions, which eventually replaced imperialism with nation-states as successor states, though with different timing and forms as well as levels of violence. But that is as far as the nationalist revolutions extended. The frontiers they inherited from their European masters were not challenged. The values the Western powers enjoined were followed, although in

⁵⁸ The only exception was Thailand. Thailand was never colonized by an external power during WWII, as France and Britain considered her as a useful buffer zone between their spheres of influence. National independence was achieved by SEA nations over a number of years, starting with the Philippines (1946 from USA), the following countries gained independence: Burma, also known as Myanmar, (1948 from Great Britain), Indonesia (1949 from the Netherlands), Cambodia (1953 from France), Vietnam (1954 from France), Laos (1954 from France), and the Malay States (1957 from Great Britain).

⁵⁹ For example, the Philippines (a staunch supporter of the US during the Cold War) suggested a *Southeast Asia Union* which included Taiwan and had a distinctly American leaning. According to Michael Haas, "Malaya specifically refused to join, preferring a more indigenous effort with an emphasis on economic cooperation" (1974, 1230). The proposal received a lukewarm response from Thailand, Indonesia, and Burma, when several regional countries were emphasizing non-alignment.

reality not necessarily practiced. Non-intervention and non-interference became the mode of conduct between them, while ‘minorities’ were left behind and old territorial claims unresolved and shoved aside. Tarling (2006) argues that although initial efforts by SEA nations to create a regional organization seemed puzzling and confused, the essential clue was their search for security, in particular with respect to their neighbors.

There were several problems facing the newly independent nations, which all shared the fundamental goal of securing national independence and consolidating domestic social solidarity as a nation. However, geography, history, language, and culture have all conspired against the countries of ASEAN to make their tasks of nation-building much more difficult than in NEA. Of the five countries, only Thailand has any reasonable claim to nationhood, described in its ideal form by Rupert Emerson as “a single people, traditionally fixed on a well-defined territory, speaking the same language and preferably a language all its own, possessing a distinctive culture, and shaped to a common mold by many generations of shared historical experience” (1987: 103). In all other countries, ethnic tensions, communist insurgencies, and weak socio-political and socio-economic structures suggested that the task was an uphill battle. Even today, the search for nationhood continues to be a major concern of ASEAN states.

In the 1950s, numerous proposals for a Southeast Asian grouping were forwarded by Malaya’s Tunku Abdul Rahman, Thailand’s Thanat Khoman, and Philippines’ Carlos P. Romulo and Carlos P. Garcia. The creation of the Association for Southeast Asia (ASA) came after several exchanges of draft plans (notably by the Tunku and by Thanat), and they utilized side meetings in the UN General Assembly to iron out their differences, with the first attempt at a regional organization occurring in 1961 when Malaya, the Philippines, and Thailand created ASA. Despite its explicit statement that the organization was “in no way

intended to be anti-Western or anti-Eastern bloc, or . . . a political bloc of any kind”, the alignment of pro-Western states in SEA meant that the organization was not perceived that way (Pollard 1970). As one American commentator remarked:

“There may have taken another first vital step toward the consolidation of all the defense arrangements of the Far East, from Japan to New Zealand, into a single sort of Pacific NATO, able to concert its defense efforts effectively. Such a consolidation could be the greatest victory for freedom since the creation of NATO back in 1949” (quoted in Pollard 1970: 246).

In terms of defining the geographic scope of Southeast Asia, it appears that they took Southeast Asia’s composition to be self-evident, i.e. the five founding countries plus Indochina. Thanat Khoman changed the original proposal for a formal organization to an informal one so that they would go slow on formal associations given the diversity of potential members (Wolfstone 1960, 596). In terms of political identity, ASA members recognized the need for cooperation and the strengthening of their connections. In a September 1960 article, it was reported that a Filipino official said that ASA would enable them “to acquire the habit of sitting down together, so that they have the opportunity of considering matters of common interest and common problems in fields indicated” (Wolfstone 1960, 596). But while the ASA declaration looked neutral, one cannot deny the salience of political affiliations, which defined the character of the organization as non- or anti-communist. In fact, Indonesia declined membership as it saw ASA as a way to link SEATO with non-SEATO countries (Sumito, quoted in Jorgensen-Dahl, 18).

But ASA was soon disrupted by a challenge to one of its fundamental principles, namely, the acceptance of the current frontiers as the basis of territorial integrity and sovereignty. Anxious over the future of the Borneo territories, Malaya sought to incorporate them in an extension of the federation called Malaysia, including the city of Singapore. But the inclusion of North Borneo as part of the Malaysian federation would deny the Philippine

claims to the territory based on the historical claims of the Sultan of Sulu. Thus ASA became dysfunctional before it could achieve any meaningful result.

The second attempt was even more disappointing. MAPHILINDO, an acronym for Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia, almost immediately became stillborn because of Indonesia's policy of *konfrontasi* toward Malaysia. Tensions were high among the members, especially between Malaysia and Singapore, and Singapore and Indonesia, reflecting a general distrust of Chinese-dominated Singapore by its Malay-Muslim neighbors.

Hence the creation of ASEAN was by no means inevitable, nor was there much hope for it to succeed once created. But it was the third attempt at regional association that would prove to be more enduring and successful. After the initial period of difficulty, following the destruction of the Sukarno regime, Indonesia agreed to the proposal of ASEAN. The seed of regionalism was thus planted in SEA.

Regional Solutions for Regional Problems

States are equal in sovereignty and law, but they are unequal in power and influence. A powerful state often sees itself entitled to exert a degree of influence commensurate with its power, at times beyond its borders. It is a matter of judgment to determine how far that may legitimately extend at the expense of others. This problem also existed in SEA and added to other regional problems. There were three major security conundrums that SEA nations needed to tackle at once.

The first is the possibility of great power intervention in the region. Acutely aware of great power rivalry can pit regional countries against one another, and with vivid memories of colonialism, the regional countries were determined to do what they could to prevent the possibility of permitting great powers to intervene in regional affairs at will. SEA leaders realized that division within as well as between them had led or invited external

intervention from outside and, if it were to be limited, they must seek both intra- and inter-state stability.

As Thanat Khoman of Thailand argued, regional cooperation insulated participating countries from manipulation by foreign powers, and answered the “need for a more effective effort to neutralize any eventual interference or intervention on the part of others in our affairs and interests.” (quoted in M. Gurtov 1975: 43). Adam Malik, foreign minister of Indonesia, explained it in 1974 that “mutual consultations and cooperation among the countries of the region in facing [security] problems may . . . lead to the point where the views of the region are accorded the primacy they deserve in the search for solution” (1975: 160). Lee Kwan Yew, the prime minister of Singapore, also stated that while regionalism might not enable regional countries to prevent the great powers from interfering in regional affairs, it could help them to ‘have their [region’s] interests taken into consideration when they make their compromises” (quoted in Acharya 2001: 64).

The subsequent Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) agreement was not merely an endeavor to contribute to peace in Indo-China. But the policy is meant to be “a proclamation that this region of ours is no longer to be regarded as an area to be divided into spheres of influence of the big powers,” as Dr Ismail said at the fourth ASEAN meeting in March 1971. “It may be regarded as a project to end or prevent small countries in this region from being used as pawns in the conflict between the big powers.” (quoted in R. K. Jain ed 1984: 153).

The power vacuum created by the US and British withdrawal from Vietnam and the region also made regional cooperation more urgent by raising doubts about the credibility of Western security guarantees. Singapore FM S Rajaratnam stated:

“The British decision to withdraw from the region in the seventies brings . . . to an end nearly two centuries of dominant European influence in the region. The

seventies will also see the withdrawal of direct American influence in Southeast Asian affairs. It must fill what some people call the power vacuum itself or resign itself to the dismal prospect of the vacuum being filled from the outside . . . We can and should fill it ourselves, not necessarily militarily, but by strengthening our social, economic, and political foundations through cooperation and collective effort”⁶⁰

The second is the role of Indonesia, and is closely connected with the first conundrum. Indonesia saw itself as the rightful leader in the region and wanted to exert its influence on regional matters. However, one state’s action to enhance its security could lead to increased insecurity for another, and regional countries had to find a way to resolve this security dilemma. Indonesia was interested in making sure that it would play a leadership role in the region. This can be seen from Indonesia’s rejection not only of SEATO model of a superpower-led military alliance, but also any regional organization dominated by a major Asian or Western power such as the Asia Pacific Council proposed by Korea, which would include Japan and Australia.

Within a regional organization, Indonesia would find a means of exercising its influence without eliciting an extra-regional challenge as well as without generating excessive fear or miscalculation from smaller states in the region. The imbalance within a region could be adjusted without the need for interference by external powers. The regionalist solution they have adopted, it was hoped, would provide a lasting and effective solution in which the influence Indonesia had in the region could be more legitimately deployed in a way that its neighbors could accept and hence would not need to call on external powers for assistance.

And lastly, the regional countries had to find ways to deal with their internal security. While external security issues were important, the most serious security challenge for SEA nations came from domestic sources such as ethnic tensions and communist insurgencies, which generated competing loyalties within domestic society. Welding a nation from diverse

⁶⁰ Rajaratnam at 2nd AMM, Jakarta, 6 August 1968.

and potentially antagonistic communities of Malay Muslims, Hindu Indians, and predominantly Buddhist Chinese would be difficult enough. However, when other socioeconomic cleavages reinforced ethnic compartmentalization rather than crisscross the clearly demarcated communal boundaries, the challenge was even greater. For example, in 1969 race riots that broke out between Chinese and Malay communities in Malaysia, not only increased the ruling Malay elite's perception of the threat from China, as they feared that Beijing might seek to exploit the pro-China loyalties of Malaysia's ethnic Chinese, a fear aggravated by its assumption of China's seat in the UN, but resulted in the Malay dominance of politics. Another internal challenge in Malaysia in the 1980s was occasional outbursts of militant Islam, the continuing pressure to push politics out of mid-stream and toward a more traditional Islamic republic.

Political problems stemming from primordial givens are plenty in the Philippines, too. A country of seven thousand islands speaking a dozen major languages and dialects faced a monumental task of political integration and nation-building. Furthermore, the Muslims of the south have never been fully integrated as a part of the various Manila-centric regimes, and in turn most regimes—Spanish, American, and Filipino—have treated the Muslim minority as outsiders and second-class citizens of the nation. In addition, a weak sense of civic responsibility or public empathy extending beyond the family also contributed to the weak unity of the nation.

As for Singapore, in addition to the regional context of being a 'Chinese nut in a Malay nutcracker', Singapore faced a large proportion of the domestic Chinese population who were very reluctant to part with their Chinese identity, and they faced an opposition leadership unafraid to use extreme violence and eager to exploit the alienation of the Chinese to achieve their own political ends, namely, the protection of perceived Chinese heritage. As

Tarling succinctly pointed out (2006), the dilemma was that insofar as Singapore succeeded in defending their Chinese heritage, they provided further proof to their Malay neighbors that they were transplanted Chinese and not fellow Southeast Asians. Singapore leaders faced a delicate task. They had to push their constituents to shed their Chinese identity and acquire a Singaporean multicultural identity fast enough to convince their Malay neighbors that Singapore was not a threat or could be used by an outsider power as a threat. But the process had to be slow enough to avoid a possible domestic backlash that might wipe out their gains.

Indonesia also faced a problem of intra-state regionalism as well as an abortive coup attempt, and there was no equivalent of a traditional force like a monarchy to forge unity among the disparate regions. Although the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, and Islam provide scarce unifying traditions counteracting the divisive forces of Indonesian regionalism, many Indonesians genuinely feared the destructive potential of renascent Islam, and this often put them at odds with their more traditional constituents. They watched developments in Malaysia with considerable concern. The memory of fighting the radical Islamic revolts in the Outer Islands was still vivid in the minds of military officers. *Panca Sila* has been officially supported by leaders to create and maintain a wall of separation between religion and politics, so far as this is possible.

Of all the ASEAN countries Thailand alone escaped a colonial history, and perhaps not coincidentally, Thailand has faced fewer internal political threats stemming from primordial givens. The monarchy provides an overarching unity that sets Thais apart from those outside their borders in the region. Although monarch's power is only nominal, and hence cannot make policies, but his opinion and support could make and break policy makers. Most Thais are followers of Theravada Buddhism, and the institution of the

monkhood, through which all young Thai males must pass, is a powerful homogenizing force in the country. But Thailand was not without its own internal obstacles to nation-building, either, the most serious of which is the presence of an unassimilated Malay community on the southern part of Thailand. Historically the south was ignored by Bangkok, resulting in resentment of Bangkok by ethnic Malays. The resentment is heightened by the prosperity gap between the two groups—southern Malay community and Bangkok Thais in the north. Hence it is not surprising southern Thailand developed an aloofness from Bangkok. In this environment a Malay separatist movement with deep roots in history prospered for a time, and still lingers on today and causes problems for Bangkok.

The five states in SEA unequal in size, ethnic make-up, and colonial history adopted one solution to tackle all three conundrums at once: regional association. The principles of coexistence and the practice of compromise could be strengthened by a regional organization built on independent states sharing common norms and purposes, while disparities of power could be moderated. With such framework of regular interactions, a habit of consultation and cooperation could develop over time. With better interstate relations, the regional countries could focus more on their domestic problem of nation-building through socioeconomic development. With a regional framework, smaller powers will be less tempted to look outside the region for support against a potential intra-regional hegemon, while the collective bargaining power will be enhanced in dealing with great powers. Within the framework, Indonesia could find a means to exert its influence commensurate to its power and size in consultation with other members, thus reducing fears and misperception on the part of neighboring countries. Singapore, acutely aware of its vulnerabilities as a ‘Chinese island in a sea of Malay’, could gain acceptance as part of SEA and play a bigger role by being able to influence other like-minded countries on issues of

mutual interest. Regional leaders managed to slowly displace an image of turmoil by one of stability and prosperity.

The five original members also believed in the inclusion of Burma and the Indochinese states, and thus tried to establish dialogues with them. For example, the 1967 Bangkok Declaration stated, “the Association is open for participation to all States in the South-East Asian Region subscribing to the aforementioned aims, principles and purposes.” In the 1969, 1970 and 1971 meetings of ASEAN, South Vietnam was a guest, and Laos also attended the meeting in 1969. And between 1975 to 1978, there were reportedly high-level diplomatic and trade missions between ASEAN states and now unified Vietnam (Ba 2000). Such contacts, however, stopped upon Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia, and in the end the Southeast Asian countries could not get beyond the regional ideological divide and had to wait until the rapprochements between great powers and the end of the cold war, to bring the countries of Indochina as part of ASEAN.

Though not stated in their declarations, the original composition of ASEAN was made up of anti-communist or neutral states with formal or informal ties with the US. This did not stop them from declaring the region a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in the 1970s. Another identity was as developing countries building their political institutions, safeguarding their states from internal threats, and building their economies. Associated with these various identities was the notion that national resilience would lead to regional resilience first informally discussed and later formalized in the Joint Communiqué for the 5th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (April 13-14, 1972, Singapore) and in articles 11 and 12 of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.

With the ASEAN’s political vision of bringing all regional countries into the organization, being part of ASEAN was synonymous with being Southeast Asian. By

limiting the membership criteria based on geography, the ASEAN defined who is included—and, by implication, who is excluded. The ASEAN also established a set of behavioral and procedural norms, thereby defining what it meant to act like ASEAN. The behavioral norms follow closely the Westphalian norms of respect for sovereignty, principle of non-interference, and territorial integrity, while the procedural norms—often known as the ASEAN Way—embody cultural traits and practical wisdom of consultation, consensus-based decision-making, face-saving and non-confrontational discussion, and backdoor/private diplomacy.

Acharya (2009) groups regional norms into two categories: rational-legal norms and socio-cultural norms. The former derived from international law and customs and are widespread international norms such as non-interference, non-use of force, and regional autonomy. The latter type was more particular to SEA, with emphasis on informality, organizational minimalism, intensive consultation (*musyawarah*), non-binding, non-legalistic decision making process, consensual approach (*mufakat*). As former president of the Philippines Fidel Ramos once remarked, “There are three ways of doing things: the right way, the wrong way, and the ASEAN Way”, the ASEAN Way has been a particularistic form of regional interstate interactions based on principles of pragmatism and flexibility. It was a key factor in facilitating the interaction between disparate countries in SEA, with mutual suspicion of one another and a history of interstate conflict.

The ASEAN Way has been a useful means to absorb national differences, which rigid rules and operations would have prevented. As Agerico Lacanlale states, ASEAN’s organization setup was “flexible enough to accommodate a diversity of interests without causing the collapse of the organization . . . it is the reluctance to commit themselves to rigid rules of conduct that seems to have strengthened ASEAN. The less the member states feel

bound by certain rules, the more willing they are to consult with one another and adopt a common position on common concerns. The fact that the coercive element in their collective conduct is minimized means that joint decisions are arrived at out of free choice and in the spirit of consensus and cooperation”⁶¹

The significance of the ASEAN Way was seen right from the beginning.⁶² Soon after the inception of ASEAN, a major dispute broke out between Malaysia and the Philippines over Sabah, which lasted between April 1968 and December 1969, after there was a report in the Philippines that the government was training a secret army on the Philippine island of Corregidor for a forceful takeover of Sabah. Bilateral talks broke down in June 1968, and the two countries suspended their diplomatic relations. As a sign of informal approach that would characterize the ASEAN process, Indonesian foreign minister Malik persuaded the foreign ministers of Malaysia and the Philippines to meet at his residence on 6 August 1968. At the meeting, both sides agreed to a cooling-off period, initially for 6 months, during which any further provocation by either side in word or deed was to be avoided (Achrya 2001: 60). Thailand was also active in sending its diplomats to diffuse the crisis. In Jan 1969, the Philippine ambassador to Indonesia announced that Manila would not bring up the question of Sabah in future ASEAN meetings, which opened a way for reconciliation.

Some aspects of the ASEAN Way such as non-institutional, non-legalistic approach to problem-solving has decreased in importance over time, as ASEAN’s coverage of issues multiplied and it moved toward greater institutionalization by creating the ASEAN Charter.

⁶¹ Lacanlale “Community Formation in ASEAN’s External Relations”: 399.

⁶² *Konfrontasi* was essentially resolved through a network of private contacts and communications, with the advent of new leadership in Indonesia. This kind of backdoor dealing and informality would carry over into ASEAN as the actors who worked to resolve *konfrontasi* were themselves part of the preparations for the establishment of ASEAN.

But other aspects are still relevant and important. For instance, in July 2009, after a heated dispute broke out over Ambalat waters—the disputed waters between Malaysia and Indonesia that are said to contain reserves of natural oil and gas amounting to 670 million cubic feet and 40 trillion cubic feet, respectively—the defense ministers of both countries met in Jakarta and agreed to organize joint patrols in the area in an attempt to abate tensions. What is particularly interesting is their remarks on the importance of organizing informal meetings. Juwono Sudarsono, the defense minister of Indonesia said, “from now on, we need to organize more informal meetings as an alternative to settling things in the future” and “I even strongly suggest that retired generals contact each other and see if they can contribute to settling problems in the future.” The Malaysian defense minister Dato Ahmad Zahid Hamidi echoed the same theme by saying “perhaps we focus too much on organizing formal meetings to deal with problems, and forget that these informal meetings are actually just as good as those formal ones for finding solutions . . . This is what our founding fathers used to do in the past” (Jakarta Post 1 July 2009: p.6)

Evolution of ASEAN: from Interstate Cooperation to Regional Integration and Community

ASEAN’s experience in regional cooperation illustrates how initial cooperation in “low politics” can lead to cooperation in “high politics” at a later time. Important in this process was the existence of a regional forum in the form of ASEAN that provided a venue for regular meetings where regional countries exchanged their views, discussed regional and international issues of concern, explored potential areas of cooperation, and worked to achieve consensus and a common stance on important issues. The development and consolidation of a collective identity was vital in the process, and ASEAN’s coverage of issues would expand from socio-economic and cultural issues in the 1970s to political and

security matters in the 1980s and 1990s and to deepening regional integration and community building since the late 1990s.

Year	Political Development	Significance
1967	Bangkok Declaration	Establishment of ASEAN
1971	Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN)	Intention to keep SEA free from interference from outside powers
1976	Declaration of ASEAN Concord I Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)	Blueprint for ASEAN coop. Desire to promote regional peace through regional coop; sets out principles of interaction
1992	ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA)	Establishment of free trade area among ASEAN members
1994	ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)	Establishment of a region-wide security forum in the Asia Pacific
1995	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ)	ASEAN intention to keep SEA nuclear weapons free
1997	ASEAN Vision 2020	Sets out a new vision for ASEAN as a concert of nations
1998	Hanoi Plan of Action	Sets out specific actions to advance ASEAN Vision 2020
2002	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea	Sets out rules of behavior in SCS between ASEAN and China
2003	Declaration of ASEAN Concord II	Establishment of ASEAN Community
2004	Vientiane Action Program	Sets out actions to implement ASEAN Concord II
2007	ASEAN Charter	Formalization of goals, principles institutional structure of ASEAN

Regional cooperation is to be on the basis of “equality, mutual respect for sovereignty, and territorial integrity.” Disputes are to be resolved by pacific means and, where no resolution is possible, to be put aside. A habit of cooperation was achieved through focusing on easy, non-controversial issues. The issues covered in the first few years focused on economic, social, and technological ones, where concern with relative gain is less

salient. A habit of consultation was achieved through the regular meetings among the foreign ministers. The existence of ASEAN forced meetings and discussions, which lead to consultation on issues. Table 1 lists the important political documents for ASEAN's political development since its inception in 1967.

When creating ASEAN, the member states did not desire to create a supranational organization that would take away state sovereignty. Rather, they wanted to create an association for interstate *cooperation*, mainly in socio-economic development. They took pains to emphasize that ASEAN was not a military pact, nor was it a political organization. Thus the driving force for the regionalism of SEA is located at the state level, largely insulated from domestic pressure, serving the purpose not of opposing an external enemy but of solidifying the unity of the SEA nations. Probably the single most important reason for this modality of development of regionalism in SEA is a high sensitivity to the erosion of state sovereignty and fragile domestic stability. Because of these two reasons, the national government desired to be in firm control of any regional development, which made the progress of ASEAN necessarily incremental and inter-governmental. The foreign ministers were given the task of formulating and overseeing various projects, initiatives, and overall development of ASEAN.

The Bangkok Declaration of 1967, the founding document of ASEAN, lists seven aims of ASEAN, the first two of which are economic growth and regional peace and stability. The two goals were seen as mutually reinforcing and necessary conditions for national and regional autonomy. While the prospective members agreed on matters such as the need for economic development and the need to focus on internal processes, other matters were subject to negotiation such as foreign policy alignments and the presence of

military bases in the region. In fact, the first few years of ASEAN were marred by bilateral conflicts serious enough for some members to break off diplomatic ties with each other.

The most important achievement in the first several years of ASEAN, however, relates to the practice of regular meetings, consultation, and low-level cooperation. While ASEAN did not achieve any major economic or political breakthroughs, and no summit of ASEAN heads of government until 1976, the initial period of regular meeting and consultation was crucial for a group of states that had lacked such experience and never tasted the benefit of doing so. The foreign ministers met annually, except for 1970, to exchange their views on potential areas of cooperation, and produce policies to advance regional cooperation on those areas. Up until the late 1970s, the areas of cooperation were limited to socio-economic issues such as commerce and industry, tourism, shipping, transportation, fisheries, food production and supply, and science and technology. The experience of regional cooperation on these issues of 'low politics' was positive, and would provide additional motivation to continue regional dialogues and consultation.

Beginning from the mid 1970s, the issue type and scope of ASEAN states began to expand covering political and security matters, in addition to socio-economic and cultural matters. In 1974, the foreign ministers of ASEAN states announced that ASEAN would enter into the 'second phase' of economic cooperation and discussed trade liberalization and other issues of functional cooperation such as environment, natural disaster, and drug trafficking. Another important achievement in this period was the recognition of ASEAN by the European Economic Community (EEC), and ASEAN-EEC Joint Study Group was set up (Joint Communique of 1975 ASEAN Ministerial Meetings).

The catalyst for ASEAN's political and security cooperation occurred in 1978 when Vietnam invaded Cambodia. The event was by far the most serious challenge to ASEAN,

and led to the most intense consultation, discussion, and cooperation on political and security issues within ASEAN until that time. Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia was not just a local event from ASEAN's point of view. It was a regional and international conflict with involvement of great powers—USSR, China, and US—something that it had wished to avoid in the region. Moreover, although neither Vietnam nor Cambodia were members of ASEAN at the time, it was a direct challenge to ASEAN's modus operandi in regional interstate relations as well as a diplomatic blow to ASEAN, which had sought to build relations with Indochinese countries since a few years earlier.⁶³ ASEAN's immediate priority was to deny Vietnam a *fait accompli* in Cambodia. If Vietnam's action went unopposed politically, it could have created a dangerous precedent in the region.

The Cambodia issue occupied ASEAN's agenda from 1979 to its resolution in 1991 through the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement. During this period, ASEAN's collective diplomatic efforts in the United Nations succeeded selling its version of the event in the international community. Vietnam depicted the conflict as a domestic power struggle between rival Cambodian factions, the outcome of which had been the overthrow of the genocidal Pol Pot regime by a Cambodian 'salvation' front. Hanoi's deployment of troops to Cambodia to sustain the Heng Samrin government in power was justified under the terms of a subsequent 1979 security treaty. It rejected the view that it was a direct party to the Cambodia conflict and insisted that the withdrawal of its troops required the prior request of the Heng Samrin regime, the sole legitimate Cambodian government.

⁶³ In the 1977 AMM, Singapore's prime minister Lee Kwan Yew stated that it was time for ASEAN to build relations with Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea, with a view toward bringing those countries into ASEAN. See 1977 AMM available at <http://www.asean.org/3682.htm>. When voicing his opinion, Lee Kwan Yew was just repeating what had been ASEAN's long-time political goal of unifying SEA under the ASEAN framework since the inception of ASEAN.

Against Vietnam's version of the event, ASEAN argued that the central issue in the Cambodia conflict was Vietnam's invasion, rather than a domestic power struggle and focused on denying recognition and legitimacy to the Heng Samrin government, Vietnam's puppet government in Cambodia, to mobilize support for Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea, which had been overthrown by Hanoi, and to ensure Hanoi's international isolation both diplomatically and economically. It was characteristic of ASEAN's neglect of domestic political practices and predominant concern with regional norms of interstate behavior. In the end it was ASEAN's version that won the day, and in September 1979, the UN General Assembly passed an ASEAN-supported resolution calling for a ceasefire and the convening of an international conference on Cambodia.

The crisis gave ASEAN an opportunity to work on a major political problem and consolidate their identity regionally as well as internationally. Although the final resolution depended on the change in international politics, especially improvements in US-USSR and PRC-USSR relations due to Gorbachev's 'new thinking', ASEAN should be given credit for keeping the issue on the international agenda when the international community had little interest in the region. It illustrated what can be done if ASEAN acted together. It also portrayed ASEAN in a positive light. ASEAN's good neighborliness and desire for regional stability was contrasted Vietnam's expansionism, ASEAN's goal of ZOPFAN with Vietnam's alliance with USSR, ASEAN's pragmatic regionalism with the Vietnam's intense nationalism.

Acharya argues that ASEAN's role in the Cambodia conflict came at the expense of its norm of providing 'regional solutions to regional problems. For ASEAN, the need for maintaining solidarity against Hanoi at the international level took precedence over diplomatic formula that might have offered Hanoi the chance of a face-saving exit from

Cambodia through regional reconciliation (Acharya 2001: 117). Indeed, the crisis revealed limitations and differences within ASEAN, and increased regional dependence on external powers for solutions to regional problems, but perhaps it is too much to expect for ASEAN to resolve what was essentially great power rivalry reflected in a local conflict. The experience provided the catalyst for political cooperation among the ASEAN members.

It was in this period that ASEAN began to discuss political and security issues and began to adopt common stances on vis-à-vis outside world on key political issues. On the Cambodia conflict, ASEAN adopted a policy of ‘constructive engagement’. This meant that while de-legitimizing Vietnam’s puppet government in Cambodia, ASEAN countries, especially Indonesia, would still engage with Vietnam privately in quiet diplomacy. About a decade later, ASEAN would adopt the same policy on another major regional issue, the problem of Myanmar. ASEAN also discussed and produced collective stances on other international political issues such as the Israel-Palestine conflict, Afghanistan, and Apartheid in South Africa, to name but a few. The foreign ministers also discussed other security issues such as disarmament. This is a significant and qualitative departure from the original emphasis of ASEAN on socio-economic, cultural, and technical cooperation promoted by the founding fathers.

Another important development in ASEAN has taken place since the late 1990s, when ASEAN sought to transform itself from an organization of regional *cooperation* to one of regional *integration* and *community*. From the setback of regionalism during the Asian financial crisis of 1997, when ASEAN countries adopted individual responses to the crisis rather than a common regional policy, ASEAN bounced back with efforts to deepen their cooperation and institutionalize/formalize their relations.

The strengthening of mutual identification and the personalization of relations among regional leaders were crucial in the expansion of issue coverage. ASEAN not only provided a venue for policy coordination and collaboration in an exercise of utility maximization, but also acted as a social environment (Johnston 2001). The participants engaged with one another in an environment that constantly reminded them of regionalism such as ASEAN flag and logo. This is particularly so since the mid-1990s when symbols of ASEAN began to appear.

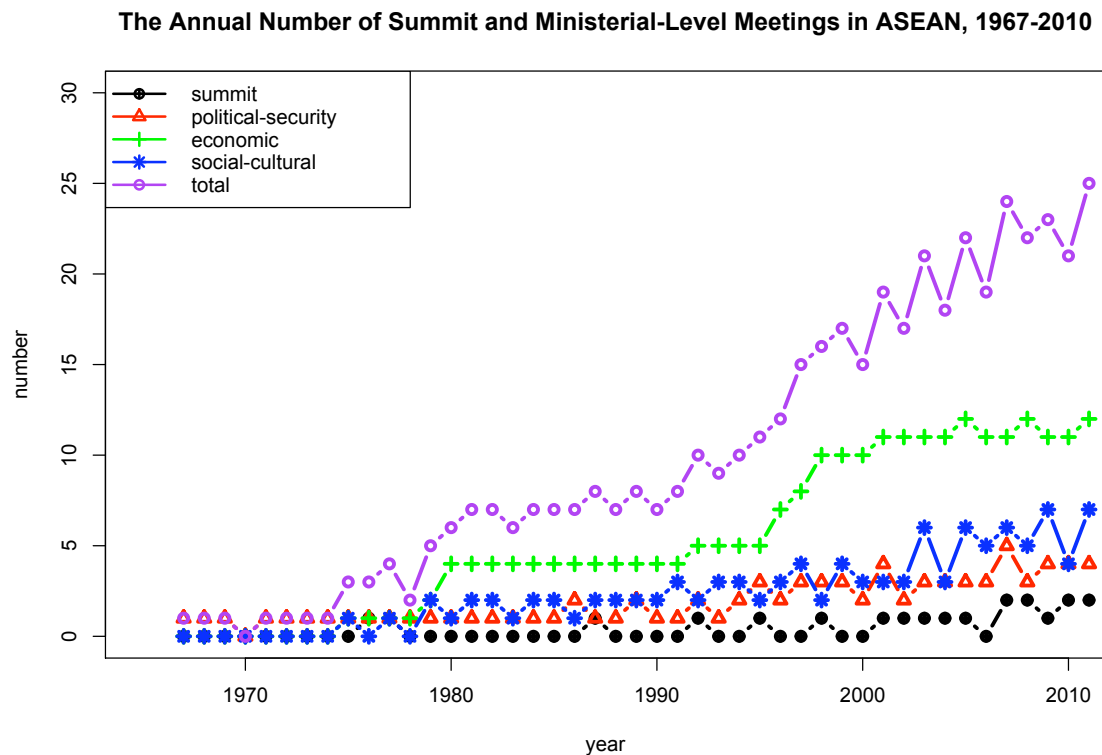


Figure 19. The Annual Number of Summit and Minister-Level Meetings in ASEAN 1967 – 2010
 Source: ASEAN Secretariat at <http://www.aseansec.org/index.html>

In addition, there were ample opportunity for personalization of relations among the leaders as well as socialization into ASEAN mode of thinking and behaving. Figure 19 above shows the annual number of ASEAN summit and ministerial-level meetings grew throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The number increased steadily, and the number in 2010

was five times that in 1980. If one were to include lower-level official meetings, the number of annual ASEAN meetings would multiply, and it is reported that in 2010 there were more than 900 official ASEAN meetings. Furthermore, today the ASEAN Charter officially require the ASEAN summit meeting to be held twice a year.

Combined with the long tenure of leaders and foreign ministers of ASEAN countries due to their authoritarian system, they had ample opportunity to personalize their relations. Informal meetings, rounds of golf, and casual dinners⁶⁴ all made it easier for them to develop friendship and raise the comfort level to discuss what were once sensitive issues. In the late 1990s, ASEAN would officially encourage the retreat of the foreign ministers, so that they could engage in more frank discussions on key issues affecting the region. Later, ASEAN would venture into open discussion concerning internal problems of member states and their human rights practices as well, a remarkable departure from the earlier practice of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states.

As mutual identification deepened, so did political cooperation among the ASEAN states. Political documents such as the ASEAN Vision-2020 and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II fundamentally altered the direction, aims, and structure of ASEAN. ASEAN desired to transform itself from a loose grouping of disparate states with different sociopolitical institutions and values to a more institutionalized and rule-based community of nations with shared purposes and values. The Vientiane Action Program sets out a detailed outline of action to achieve the goals set out in the ASEAN Concord II. The below figure shows the basic structure of ASEAN as outlined in the ASEAN Concord II and the

⁶⁴ To see how casually the leaders dress for informal working dinners, see the following clip available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZuGgq9_voY. Accessed on 6 August 2011.

ASEAN Charter. ASEAN would consist of three pillars: political-security community (APSC); economic community (AEC); and socio-cultural community (ASCC).

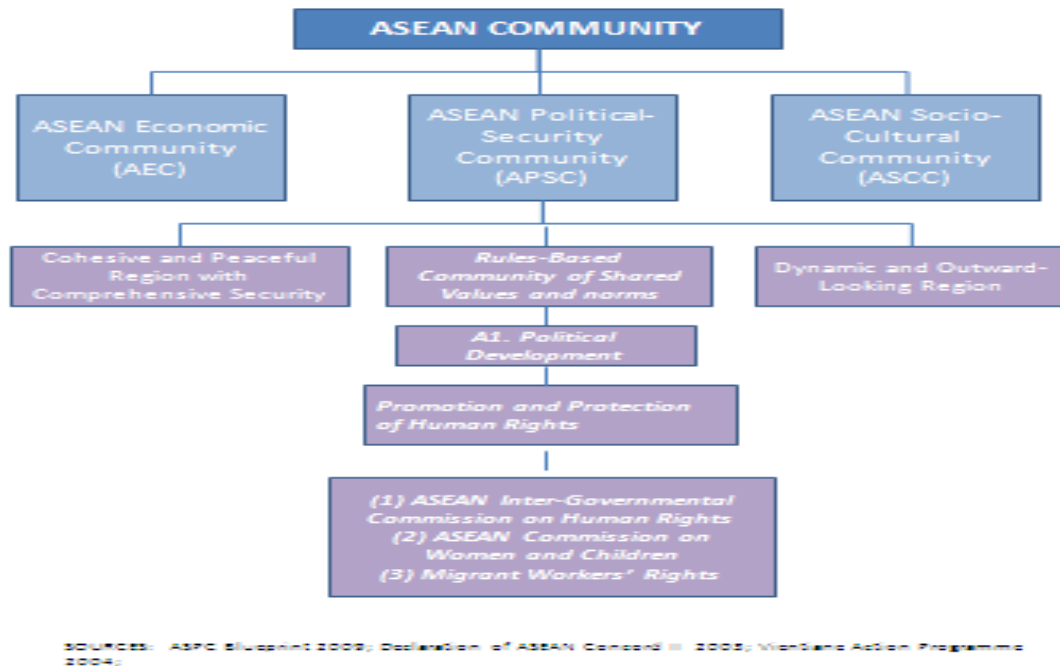


Figure 20. The Structure of the ASEAN Community

One of the interesting features of the Joint Communiqués of the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings over time is the appearance and use of the pronoun “we”. Surprisingly, it is not until 1999 that the ASEAN countries used the pronoun. Between 1967 and 1998, not even once was “we” used in the communiqués. However, since 1999, the member states began to use the pronoun extensively. One could suspect that the pronoun simply replaced the more traditional word “ASEAN” used to denote the grouping. But the usage of the word “ASEAN” has remained little changed over time, and is still one of the most popular words mentioned in these official documents.

The form and matter of ASEAN today is very different from what was created in 1967. Its aim has changed from regional cooperation to regional integration and

community. Its issue scope has expanded from socio-economic, cultural and technical types to political and security matters. The number of official meetings has increased dramatically over the years, and ASEAN symbols were produced in order to consolidate the collective ASEAN identity. In all this, ASEAN played a key role as a venue for social interactions.

Conclusions

The history of Southeast Asia after independence can be summed up as the process of constructing a regional community. Even in the 1960s, efforts were made by Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand to reach out to countries of Indochina. It has always been a key political vision of ASEAN to unite all regional countries in SEA in one regional framework, ASEAN. That goal was achieved in the 1990s, when Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam all joined ASEAN. With the founding vision of ASEAN accomplished, ASEAN sought to take regionalism to the next stage: deepening integration and creating a regional community. This effort led to the adoption of several key political documents, which propounded different visions, aims, and structure of ASEAN.

Once the 'Balkans of Asia', SEA has become more peaceful than ever before, and its regional cooperation deeper than ever before. Three key factors facilitated ASEAN's path toward being a region of peace. First, ASEAN norms laid the ground rules for regional interactions based on equality, mutual respect, and pragmatism. Second, regional institutions such as ASEAN, ARF, and ASEAN+3 facilitated socialization and close interactions among ASEAN policy makers, inculcating a habit of consultation and cooperation and promoting the personalization of relations. And lastly, mutual identification and the construction of a regional identity defined the collective interests of regional countries, enhancing their sense of ingroup based on common purposes and values.

Chapter 7. Regional Identity, Community Building, and Human Rights in SEA

Taking Care of the Neighborhood?

The Emergence of a Regional Human Rights Mechanism in Southeast Asia

Sovereign states have increasingly allowed the international community to review and judge their internal human rights practices by setting up human rights bodies and signing relevant treaties. Regional human rights mechanisms (RHRMs) are an important aspect of this growing internationalization of human rights. Indeed, most of the world's regions have established RHRMs with the goal of protecting and promoting human rights. In Europe, the European Convention on Human Rights was adopted in 1953, and was replaced in 1998 by the current system of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). In America, the Organization of American States established the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 1959 and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 1979. In Africa, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, which was adopted in 1981, came into effect in 1986, and its Commission was inaugurated in 1987. The most recent addition to this group of RHRMs is the Association of Southeast Asian Nation's (ASEAN) Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) established in 2009.

Explanations for the creation of international and regional human rights bodies can be categorized according to their level of analysis—international and domestic—and whether they focus on material or ideational factors (Donnelly 1998; Ignatieff 2001; Simmons 2009; Koo and Ramirez 2009; Powell and Staton 2009). We test each of these explanations with the case of the AICHR in Southeast Asia, and advance a regional-level ideational explanation. We argue that the RHRM is the outcome of regional norms, which in turn reflect the process of regional community building. In our view, the RHRM is essentially the regional expression of its conceptualization of human rights.

The creation of AICHR is arguably a least likely case for the emergence of an RHRM. The members of ASEAN have never been strong supporters of human rights, nor have they been advocates for intervening in the name of human rights. In fact, some policy-makers even believed that the suppression of domestic protests provided socio-political stability necessary for economic development, which contributed in part to the longevity of authoritarian governments in the region. Indeed, ASEAN itself was never created to promote or protect human rights. Its main goal was to stabilize regional relations so that members could focus on consolidating their newly-independent states. Its principle of non-interference, the public show of cohesion, and the “ASEAN Way” have been identified as screening, if not facilitating, the violation of international human rights norms. This ‘community’ of states was built on an “illiberal peace” (Kuhonta 2006), which had yielded positive returns for the nations’ leaders. Today, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch still criticize many ASEAN countries, including democratic ones, for their human rights records or the deficiency of their legal frameworks to protect human rights.

But why did the supporters of state sovereignty and the principle of non-interference agree to change their collective stance on human rights and establish the AICHR, especially when positive results came from its past practice of ignoring the issue? We argue that a change in regional norms is the critical factor for the creation of AICHR. The Asian financial crisis of 1997/8 challenged the efficacy of existing regional norms such as non-interference, while the effort to re-build an ASEAN Community introduced new regional norms such as rule of law, accountability, and good governance. These normative changes, coupled with democratization in several regional countries, permitted the discussion of domestic human rights practices of the ASEAN member states, paved the way for the

adoption of human rights protection and promotion as a key goal of the organization, and led to the establishment of AICHR.

The article is organized as follows. First, we review the existing theories for the creation of RHRMs. We then introduce our contention that the regional level is the most appropriate level of analysis to explain the creation of RHRMs as the change in regional norms is the key factor for the RHRM. Next, we test the various theories with the case of AICHR, and provide a detailed account of how the Asian financial crisis coupled with ASEAN's effort at community building led to a change of regional norms, which was pivotal for the creation of AICHR. We conclude the paper with a discussion on how the human rights discourse and institutions of ASEAN could develop in the future.

The Evolution of Human Rights Discourses and Institutions in SEA

There are three distinctive periods in the evolution of the human rights discourse and institutions in ASEAN. The first period is from 1967 to 1989 when ASEAN rejected and neglected the issue of human rights. The regional countries were preoccupied with domestic agenda such as economic development and regime stability, and paid scant attention to the issue of human rights. The second period is from 1990 to 1997, which was notable for the emergence of a regional stance on human rights. The ASEAN consensus rejected the Western notion of human rights, defended its human rights practices by advancing the Asian values argument, and upheld the principle of noninterference as the sacrosanct norm of interstate interactions. Significant changes in ASEAN's human rights discourse and institutions occurred in the third period, from 1998 to the present. Not only did human rights become part of ASEAN's official agenda, but the regional countries also established regional human rights bodies such as AICHR and ASEAN Commission on Women and Children (ACWC).

Rejection and Neglect of Human Rights (1967-1989)

ASEAN was established in 1967 primarily to stabilize the tumultuous interstate relations in postwar Southeast Asia.⁶⁵ Adhering to Westphalian norms of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, ASEAN members agreed not to interfere in each other's domestic affairs, which enabled them to concentrate on their domestic political and economic agenda. In this context, human rights were given virtually no attention. Key ASEAN documents from 1967 to 1992 do not even mention the phrase 'human rights'.⁶⁶ ASEAN's neglect of human rights is reflected in its refusal to address the genocidal acts of the Pol Pot regime during 1975-78 as well as ASEAN's response to the People's Power revolution in the Philippines in 1986.

The lack of attention to the issue of human rights by ASEAN reflects the organization's origin and its modus operandi known as the "ASEAN Way". ASEAN was never created to promote or protect human rights. Its main goal was to stabilize interstate relations in a region with diverse regime types, different levels of economic development, and a history of interstate conflict, so that the nations could focus on consolidating their newly independent states. Its principle of non-interference, strict interpretation of state sovereignty, and the public show of cohesion have also screened, if not facilitated, the violation of human rights. This 'community' of states was built on an "illiberal peace" (Kuhonta 2006), which had yielded positive returns for the nations' leaders.

⁶⁵ The founding members of ASEAN are: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam joined in 1984. After the Cold War, Vietnam (1995), Laos (1997), Myanmar (1997), Cambodia (1999) joined the organization.

⁶⁶ These key documents are: the [1967] Bangkok Declaration, the 1976 Declaration of ASEAN Concord, the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, all the annual joint communiqués of the ASEAN foreign ministers (known as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting or AMM), and statements from the leaders' meetings, the annual reports of the ASEAN Secretariat, and ASEAN's joint statements with its extra-regional dialogue partners from 1967 to 1992.

The absence of an explicit regional discussion on human rights does not mean that the ASEAN members disagreed on the treatment of human rights. In fact, this silence was founded on a tacit understanding that human rights were lower in the list of priorities compared to political stability, economic development and the survival of newly-independent states. The predominance of authoritarian regimes in the region also meant that most of the governments had problematic human rights records, and therefore had an incentive to ignore the issue especially if it was raised by domestic NGOs. For example, in 1983 an NGO called the Regional Council on Human Rights in Asia⁶⁷ issued a “Statement on the Promotion of Human Rights in the ASEAN Region” and a “Declaration of the Basic Duties of ASEAN Peoples and Governments” (reproduced in Scoble and Wiseberg 1985). The NGO claims that they gave copies of the Declaration to the ASEAN Secretariat, but there is no acknowledgment of their receipt in any official ASEAN document.

Taking a Stand: Asian Values (1989-1997)

By the 1990s, however, ASEAN could no longer avoid the issue of human rights. Both internal and external factors put pressure on ASEAN to develop a coherent position on human rights, a position popularly known as the “Asian values”. Internally, the 1991 Dili Massacre in Indonesia highlighted the problematic nature of human rights practices in the region, and led ASEAN dialogue partners to criticize ASEAN’s silence on the matter. Outside the region, enhanced global attention to human rights through the convening of the Vienna Conference on Human Rights in 1993 put further pressure on ASEAN countries to take human rights seriously.

⁶⁷ This is a human rights NGO founded in Manila on Feb. 18, 1982. It was mainly comprised of jurists and human rights activists from ASEAN countries. The meeting was held in Jakarta in December 1983.

In light of these challenges, regional countries articulated a stance on human rights in the form of the “Asian values” which has two main lines of argument.⁶⁸ The first is *situational uniqueness*: Regional countries argued that the human rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are based on Western enlightenment values and do not take into account the historical and cultural backdrops of other countries, specifically ones where the community (read: the state) is given priority over individual freedoms and rights. Many policy makers made a causal connection between their domestic governance practices and economic progress, arguing that it is this respect for the community that had helped them achieve economic prosperity (Vatikiotis 1996: 115). Thus the “expression and application [of human rights] in the national context are within the competence and responsibility of each country” (1992 AMM Joint Communiqué) and this application should balance rights with obligations (1993 AIPO Declaration).

The second line of argument is the *sequential promotion of human rights*. Regional countries argued that political stability and economic development should precede the promotion of civil and political rights. Giving up political rights would, many governments argued, allow them to fulfill the economic rights of their citizens. Therefore, civil and political rights need to be “balanced” with economic, social and cultural rights (Wanandi 1993; Bangkok Declaration 1993). For these reasons, ASEAN criticized the “tendentious application” of human rights in interstate relations (1991 AMM Joint Communiqué) and chastised Western countries for their double standards on the issue. Instead of ‘bullying’ other countries into accepting Western-based human rights, they suggested cooperation and

⁶⁸ The Philippines was an important exception. See Caballero-Anthony on sequential promotion and situational uniqueness (2006).

dialogue (1993 Bangkok Declaration). Most of the ASEAN members reiterated these points during the Vienna Conference in 1993.

But ASEAN's interest in human rights in this period did not go beyond justifying its hitherto problematic human rights practices. The 'Asian values' argument was not so much a development in the cause of human rights as an effort to legitimize ASEAN's traditional approach to human rights. Emphasizing respect for community and stability, which, in turn, helped them achieve economic prosperity (Vatikiotis 1996: 115), ASEAN members argued that human rights should be applied conditional on the historical and cultural backdrops of each country, and that attaining economic rights through development should precede the promotion of political and civil rights (1993 AMM; 1993 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Human Rights; Vienna Conference reproduced in Tang 1995: 213-249). Hence the "expression and application [of human rights] in the national context are within the competence and responsibility of each country" (1992 AMM) and this application should balance rights with obligations.

Despite these arguments, however, one positive development was the adoption of the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which encouraged countries "to consider the possibility of establishing regional and sub-regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights where they do not already exist."⁶⁹ Accordingly, ASEAN foreign ministers agreed to 'consider the establishment of an appropriate regional mechanism on human rights' (1993 AMM Joint Communiqué). It was understood that the matter would be discussed in unofficial (track-two) channels and that the 'appropriate' mechanism would take a form acceptable to the ASEAN governments. Although it was

⁶⁹ The document is available at <http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/%28symbol%29/a.conf.157.23.en>.

doubtful whether the foreign ministers were serious in establishing such a regional mechanism, at least at the national level, Indonesia and Thailand established national bodies to deal with human rights issues.

Incorporation of Human Rights into ASEAN's Official Agenda (1998-2009)

The thirtieth anniversary of the ASEAN could not have been more inauspicious. The Asian financial crisis brought economic hardships in the region, the coup in Cambodia demonstrated the fragility of democratization, and the regional haze problem challenged interstate relations. At the same time, ASEAN regionalism was gaining a momentum with the signing of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) in 1992. These regional crises and community-building efforts brought a gradual rethinking of ASEAN's existing norms, its vision for a Southeast Asian community, and the role of human rights in the region.

Both ASEAN's human rights discourse and institutions began to change in this period. In terms of discourse, not only has human rights moved into ASEAN's official agenda, but the situational uniqueness and sequential promotion arguments that figured prominently during the Asian Values debate could not be found in any the organization's key documents. In terms of institutions, vague statements of intent in the previous period were replaced by specific measures to promote and protect human rights, and later established AICHR and ACWC.

Initial signs of change began to appear in 1998 when the ASEAN members agreed to work for the benefit of women and children in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The 1998 Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA) also noted the need to exchange information "in order to protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all peoples

in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.”

Further developments occurred throughout the next decade. Various ASEAN documents such as the 2004 ASEAN Joint Communiqué reaffirmed ASEAN’s commitment to the promotion of human rights and to the establishment of an RHRM. The 2005 Kuala Lumpur Declaration incorporated the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms as one of the guiding principles for the organization and a new ‘ASEAN community.’ The 2004 Vientiane Action Program (VAP) listed the following targets: (1) creating an ASEAN instrument on migrant workers, as well as commission for women and children; (2) drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enable formal networking among existing human rights institutions including the creation of a work program on human rights; and (3) taking stock of existing sectoral bodies on women and children, as well as enhancing human rights education.

The most important developments for human rights were the passage of the ASEAN Charter in 2007 and the establishment of AICHR in 2009. The Charter explicitly states that one of ASEAN’s goals is to “strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedom.” The Terms of Reference for AICHR goes one step further and states that ASEAN seeks to “uphold international human rights standards as prescribed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights . . . and international human rights instruments to which ASEAN Member States are parties.”

The AICHR emerged as the result of political compromise between two camps within ASEAN. On the one hand, democratic member states—mainly, the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia—strongly supported the establishment of AICHR with strong

institutional features such as the ability to monitor and investigate human rights violations in member states. On the other hand, authoritarian regimes with problematic human rights records, especially Myanmar and Laos, strongly opposed the move to create AICHR. The distinction between the two camps carried over into the appointments of national representatives to the Commission (see Table 8). While democratic countries appointed either human rights activists or academics deeply involved in the promotion of human rights, the authoritarian members appointed government officials either from the foreign ministry or prime minister's office, thereby maintaining a close oversight of discussions and processes within AICHR.

The institutional features of AICHR reflect the compromises involved in its creation. For instance, when deciding on the name, most countries agreed to call it a commission similar to other RHRMs around the world, but at the insistence of authoritarian members, the phrase “inter-governmental” was inserted, so that the new institution would generate an innocuous image without any hint of infringement on state sovereignty.⁷⁰ The mandate of AICHR was also significantly restricted in the negotiation process, a price that had to be paid for establishing the body.⁷¹ The AICHR is to promote rather than protect human rights, which limits its activities and influence to enhancing national capacities and education for human rights, as stated in Article 4 of TOR.

The TOR also sets out the basic membership rules and goals of AICHR. The AICHR would consist of the ten member states of ASEAN, and each member can appoint one representative to the Commission. The representative serves a term of three years with

⁷⁰ The author's interview with former Secretary-General of ASEAN Ong Keng Yong, February 2011.

⁷¹ The report by the Eminent Persons' Group envisioned an RHRM with stronger mandate and a greater role for human rights groups. The final set-up for AICHR was a toned-down version of the initial blueprint imagined by EPG. See the Eminent Persons' Group report for details at www.asean.org/19247.pdf.

Table 8. Names and Career Backgrounds of National Representatives to the AICHR

Country	Name	Background
Indonesia	Rafendi Djamin	Convener of Solidarity for Asia People's Advocacy Task Force on ASEAN and Human Rights; Coordinator of National Human Rights Working Group
The Philippines	Rosario Gonzalez Manalo	Professor; Former chairwoman of the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and UN Commission on Status of Women
Thailand	Sriprapha Petchoramesree	Professor and director of human rights studies; Member of subcommittees on Human Rights Situation Assessment, Child Rights of the Thai National Human Rights Commission
Brunei	Abdul Hamid Bakal	Chief justice; Dept of Prime Minister's Office
Malaysia	Muhammad Shafee Abdullah	Member of Malaysia's National Human Rights Committee; Lawyer
Singapore	Richard Magnus	Member of the Public Service Commission; Lawyer
Cambodia	Om Yentieng	Senior advisor to Prime Minister
Laos	Bounkeat Sangsomsak	Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs
Myanmar	Kyaw Tint Swe	Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations; Career diplomat
Vietnam	Do Ngoc Son	Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs

the possibility of re-appointment for one more term, and her tenure is at the discretion of the national government. The chair of AICHR would be the representative of the country that holds the chairmanship of ASEAN in the given year, and hence its duration is only for one year. The Commission would hold two regular meetings annually with the possibility of more meetings if deemed necessary, and will be subject to a review by the ASEAN foreign ministers in five years from its inception (i.e. 2014).

The AICHR aims to (1) develop strategies to promote and protect human rights, (2) develop an ASEAN human rights declaration as a framework for cooperation, (3) provide advisory services and technical assistance, (4) engage and consult with ASEAN entities and civil society, (5) obtain information on the HR promotion and protection, and (6) develop common approaches and positions on human rights. The Commission would complement national and international efforts that promote human rights, and the members are enjoined to adhere to the “rule of law, good governance, the principles of democracy and constitutional government” and to “respect fundamental freedoms and promote social justice”.

As critics have pointed out, AICHR lacks teeth. The AICHR is not an independent body, and has to report to ASEAN foreign ministers. Figure 20 shows how AICHR fits in the broad ASEAN structure. It is informed by national representatives, and is directly responsible to the foreign ministers.

The restricted mandate means that the AICHR is essentially a consultative rather than a decision-making or law-enforcing body, characterized by the continued use of consensus and consultation in decision-making. It lacks both power and funding for more intrusive measures such as legislation, investigation and, if necessary, prosecution.

Sovereignty and non-interference still remain as key guiding principles in TOR, and the

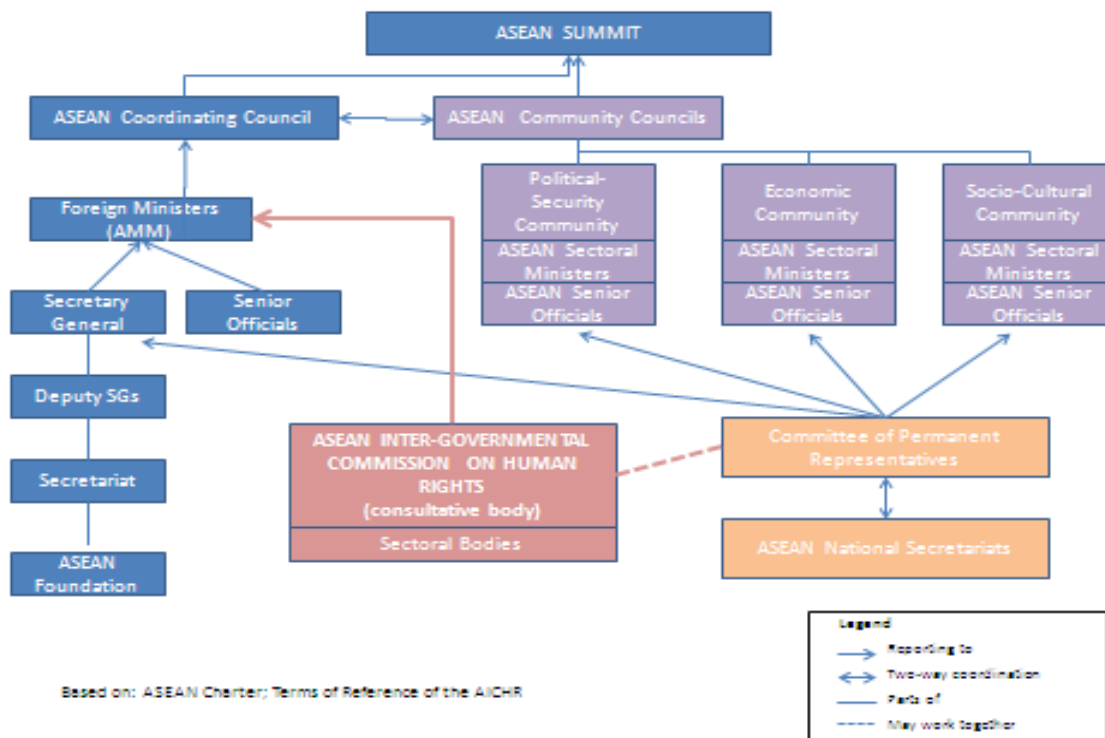


Figure 21. The Decision-Making Structure of ASEAN

Commission is asked to promote human rights “within the regional context, bearing in mind national and regional particularities . . . and taking into account the balance between rights and responsibilities” (Article 1.4). While these are significant restrictions on AICHR’s capacity and operation, they are an inevitable outcome of political compromise that was necessary to establish AICHR in the face of strong internal opposition. Even with these restrictions, the creation of AICHR is an important and puzzling development in ASEAN. As one key policy maker closely involved in the creation of AICHR opined, the creation of AICHR is one of the most important and surprising developments in ASEAN’s history.⁷²

Existing Theories of the Emergence of RHRMs

Why would a group of sovereign states agree to establish a human rights mechanism when they benefit from the practice of ignoring the issue of human rights, as the ASEAN nations

⁷² Interview with former secretary general of ASEAN Ong Keng Yong, February 2011.

have done? Existing explanations situate the analytic attention either at the international or domestic level, and explore the role of strategic/material as well as ideational factors (Donnelly 1998; Ignatieff 2001; Simmons 2009; Koo and Ramirez 2009; Powell and Staton 2009). Some prominent explanations include great power pressure on developing states to accept international human rights regimes (Morgenthau 1978; Hathaway 2007), transnational socialization and the persuasive power of democratic norms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Mihr 2009), the strategic use of international human rights regimes by domestic actors to 'lock in' future democratic reform and rule (Moravcsik 1995 and 2000), and the externalization of domestic democratic identity and values (Risse-Kappen 1996; Cortell and Davis 1996).

International Factors: Great Power Pressure or Transnational Socialization

Realist theories of international politics usually discount human rights and related institutions, including RHRMs, as epiphenomena of power (Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer 2001) and view the promotion of human rights in international relations as dangerously idealistic and naïve (Morgenthau 1978). When explaining RHRMs, they stress the role of the international distribution of power. Great powers pressure weaker nations to accept international human rights obligations and establish RHRMs. To spread their own ideologies and political agenda, they may use their preponderant bargaining position vis-à-vis a weaker power, or a combination of material incentives and sanctions (Hathaway 2007). Since authoritarian states are little concerned with the promotion of human rights, those great powers that seek to protect and promote human rights abroad tend to be powerful democratic nations.

Perhaps the best-known example of great power pressure is the European Union (EU). Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) states that a key goal of the

Union's common foreign and security policy is 'to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.' Subsequent EU treaties and agreements with other countries since 1992 have emphasized the centrality human rights and democracy in the EU's external relations (King 1999; Horng 2003). External aid has often been tied to human rights conditionalities, such that assistance is usually suspended in light of gross violations of human rights.

Another democratic great power active in promoting human rights is the United States (US). Not only has the US imposed a democratic constitution on the countries that it has occupied such as Japan (Dower 1999) and Iraq, but it has also linked the grant of its most-favored-nations status with human rights record in the case of China (Bachman et. al. 1994). Donnelly also argues that the United States used its hegemonic power to ensure the creation and operation of the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights (1986: 625).

In contrast to realist theories, structural ideational theories emphasize the persuasive power of transnational norms, ideas, and beliefs to alter actor identities (Kratowil 1989; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999). The most prominent ideational explanation for the establishment of regional human rights regimes relies on the persuasive power of democratic and liberal norms. Governments create and accept human rights regimes not because they are compelled by great powers or use human rights regimes as a means to some other material end, but because they are socialized by transnational actors into pro-human rights values and beliefs, a process that involves the transformation of their identities (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Keck and Sikkink 1998).

In the 1990s, the enhanced interaction between international actors and regional governments and human rights NGOs provided ample opportunity for transnational socialization. Indeed, the 1990s was the decade of human rights awareness and education

throughout the world with the launch of the 1993 UN Conference for Human Rights in Vienna and the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (HRE) from 1995 to 2004. The record number of international human rights treaties were signed and ratified in this period, as a result of the increased interaction between international and regional actors (Mihr 2009). These efforts have elevated democratic norms to the status of what may be called a hegemonic ideology in a Gramscian sense, and permitted international actors to educate regional counterparts with new beliefs and values based on democratic ideals. In these ideational theories, international actors are active norm educators, while regional actors are passive norm-takers.

Domestic Factors: Delegation of Authority or Democratic Identity

The liberal theory sees domestic politics as the primary driver of interstate outcomes. In essence, this explanation takes a strategic view of actors (Lake and Powell 1999) stating that regional human rights regimes emerge as a result of instrumental calculations about domestic politics, i.e. domestic political actors use regional human rights regimes as a means to attain domestic political goals (Moravcsik 1995).

Andrew Moravcsik offers the clearest formulation of this liberal theory. Writing about the case of Europe, he argues, “human rights norms are expressions of the self-interest of democratic governments in ‘locking in’ democratic rule through the enforcement of human rights” (2000: 228).⁷³ The key factor in this strategic calculation is whether or not the benefits of reduced future political uncertainty by signing onto regional human rights

⁷³ This democratic lock-in theory is silent on how a regional human rights regime can serve the purpose of preventing the reversal of democratization in domestic politics, which involves a wide range of political agenda, of which the protection of human rights is just one. One answer could be that the protection of human rights necessarily requires the upholding of key democratic principles such as judicial independence, the separation of powers, and a fair law-enforcement body among others.

treaties outweigh the sovereignty costs. If the expected benefits are greater than the expected costs, then we should observe the creation of a regional human rights mechanism.

Since domestic actors use regional human rights regimes in a strategic way to advance domestic political goals, this theory predicts that newly democratized governments have the strongest preference for establishing a regional human rights mechanism, as they face greater future political uncertainty than either established democracies or authoritarian countries (Moravcsik 2000: 229).

The strategic use of human rights regimes by domestic actors is not the only way domestic politics influence the outcome of regional human rights regimes. Newly democratized governments may create and accept regional human rights regimes not because they see it as a means to advance domestic reforms in domestic politics, but because they would like their foreign policies to reflect their democratic identity. Thomas Risse-Kappen (1996) argues that democratic governments seek to externalize their domestic values, including the protection and promotion of human rights, while Cortell and Davis (1996) show that the domestic salience of certain norms explains their acceptance at the international level.

In this view, the protection and promotion of human rights is an essential component of being a democracy. The wave of democratization that began in the mid-1970s (Huntington 1991) and peaked in the 1990s (Simmons 2009: 24-26), is therefore a crucial factor in spreading human rights norms and institutions. In contrast to Moravcsik's democratic lock-in thesis, this explanation suggests that the more established a democracy is, the more likely it is to espouse human rights as those norms are more deeply rooted in domestic politics. This explanation differs from transnational socialization in an important way, too. The former explanation focuses on the self-expression of domestic democratic

norms and ideals, while the latter involves the actual interaction between international and regional actors.⁷⁴

Application to AICHR

Applied to the case of AICHR, except for democratic identity theory, the existing theories have difficulty explaining why ASEAN countries have agreed to establish the human rights body. First, great power pressure had little effect on the creation of the AICHR. Up until the early 1990s, the great powers were not concerned with the region's human rights problems due to its strategic importance. The end of the Cold War opened up the space for promotion of human rights in international affairs (Simmons 2009: 18), and altered how the great powers approached the region's human rights problems. The 1991 Dili massacre was a catalyst that provoked much international (Western) criticism. The Netherlands and Canada suspended aid to Indonesia under the Intergovernmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI) arrangement, and the EC also refused to negotiate a new economic treaty with ASEAN. In October 1992, "the vice-president of the EC Commission warned in Kuala Lumpur that failure to respect human rights would have a 'severe impact' on the EC's relations with developing countries, including ASEAN" (New Straits Times 1991 cited in Acharya 1995). However, the international sanctions did little to change Indonesia's or ASEAN's position on the incident. In fact, ASEAN defended Indonesia's actions and later articulated the Asian Values conception of human rights. Indonesia also formed a new assistance group—the Consultative Group on Indonesia (CGI)—to replace IGGI (Weatherbee 2005, 242).

⁷⁴ Empirically, it would be rather difficult to show whether transnational socialization is the primary determinant of a regional human rights regime in a given case, since there are various levels of interactions between international and regional government and nongovernmental actors. Furthermore, governments do not usually admit that their actions are a result of transnational socialization; rather, they prefer to justify their decisions using democratic ideals and norms even when great power pressure or transnational socialization is the main cause of their human rights policy.

The human rights situation in Myanmar also drew much international criticism, especially from EU members. The EU suspended its aid to Myanmar under the General Systems of Preferences scheme, and postponed or cancelled the ASEAN-EU ministerial meetings because of Myanmar's suppression of the pro-democracy movement led by Aung San Suu Kyi (Moeller 2007). It was reported that ASEAN did not grant observer status to Myanmar before 1997 in deference to the objections of the US and EU (Acharya 1995: 178). But such pressure did not lead to any change in Myanmar's stance, nor did it affect ASEAN's policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar. As Manea (2008) argued, the EU's attempt to exert influence over ASEAN through the ASEAN-EU dialogue on human rights led to greater tensions between the two regional groupings and only hardened ASEAN's previous stance on human rights.

It is even questionable whether there was significant enough great power pressure in the first place. Based on interviews with EU officials, Katsumura (2009) argued that EU representatives do not put much pressure on ASEAN as a whole when it comes to human rights. This may be due to the division between the EU Commission and the EU Parliament over the Union's policy on using human rights conditionalities for aid allocation (Gates 2009). The former does not want human rights issues to jeopardize other aspects of ASEAN-EU relations, while the latter takes a more activist approach to human rights problems in Southeast Asia. Moreover, instead of putting pressure on ASEAN as a whole, the great powers have generally approached individual countries separately to improve their human rights, the logical outcome of which is the establishment of national human rights bodies. Thus it is doubtful that the great power pressure contributed to the creation of AICHR.

Moravcsik's 'democratic lock-in' thesis does not fare well in explaining the creation of AICHR, either. On the surface, the strong support by democratized countries for the creation of the AICHR seems to support Moravcsik's thesis. However, a closer examination of the positions taken by the democratic countries as well as the institutional features of AICHR reveals that that argument does not provide a satisfactory explanation for AICHR for two reasons. First, none of the democratized countries in the region linked the creation of AICHR with ensuring democratic political development in their countries. There is virtually no mention of domestic political reform in the discussions regarding AICHR. As mentioned in the previous section, current ASEAN provisions stressing the need for rule of law, good governance, and public consent to government rule are not so much directed towards the existing democracies but to the region's non-democratic members. In other words, the aim of the provisions on good governance and rule of law is not to advance democratic political agenda in the democratic countries, but to reform 'bad practices' in other ASEAN countries, practices that would negatively affect regional stability and prosperity.

Second, AICHR is a weak institution and hence cannot positively affect the domestic political development of its member states. As its name suggests, AICHR is essentially an inter-governmental body under the control of the member states, and, unlike the European Court, has little agency as an independent actor. If the member states wanted to affect their domestic democratic reform through AICHR, they should have created a more powerful institution. In fact, not much sovereignty was transferred to AICHR. The commission is constrained by the need to respect the sovereignty of each member state and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. Article 2.3 of the Terms of Reference (TOR) clearly states, "the primary responsibility to promote and protect human rights and fundamental

freedoms rests with each Member State.” Indeed, the basic function of AICHR is limited to promoting consultation among the members rather than implementing pro-human rights decisions. The consensus decision-making rule, which effectively gives each member state the veto power, further limits the capacity of AICHR to influence the domestic politics of its member states.

Lastly, although it is difficult to assess the effect of transnational socialization due to the unavailability of the minutes of the UN-sponsored human rights workshops where regional actors participated, the available evidence suggests that the interactions with the international community had little socializing effect on the regional states. The early half of the 1990s was arguably the most intense period in which the regional actors engaged the international community on the issue of human rights. The outcome of the interaction was not the adoption of the Western liberal view of human rights; rather, most regional countries resisted the liberal view and propounded their own interpretation of human rights in the form of “Asian Values.” During this period, Malaysia and Indonesia also attempted to limit the power of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to investigate human rights issues and to make binding recommendations (Weatherbee 2005, 225). While one could argue that the international human rights dialogue of the early 1990s nudged ASEAN to consider the creation of a regional human rights body, the members themselves did not display a whole-hearted commitment to the endeavor. By relegating the process to the unofficial ‘track-two’ process, the ASEAN members would be able to reject any proposal as they saw fit.

During the third period, the OHCHR held various regional workshops on human rights. Most ASEAN members participated in these workshops, providing ample opportunity for transnational socialization. For example, in track-two discussions on an

ASEAN regional mechanism (the 2001 Workshop on ASEAN regional HR mechanism), the participants adopted a “building blocks” approach as suggested in the OCHCHR’s regional meeting held in Tehran in 1998 (Eldridge 2002: 63; Muntanbhorn 1998: 415).⁷⁵ But once again, this transnational influence on ASEAN was limited. In the same 2001 Workshop, the participants stated that regional arrangements must address the needs and priorities “set by Governments in the region, with roles, functions, tasks, outcomes and achievements determined by consensus.” Indeed, both the ASEAN Charter and the AICHR’s Terms of Reference make it clear that despite ASEAN’s commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, it would not wholly subscribe to the Western liberal conceptualization of human rights. They emphasized the need to take into account national and regional peculiarities as well as regional stability and harmony when promoting human rights.

Regional-Level Explanations of Human Rights Institutions

Although the existing theories provide plausible accounts for the creation of an RHRM, they suffer from the common failure to explain why states would choose a regional body rather than a national commission or sign on to existing global regimes. For example, why would great powers demand the creation of an RHRM, and why would international norm educators socialize local actors to establish an RHRM when national human rights bodies would be sufficient—and perhaps more efficient—for protecting and promoting human rights? Would the existing global human rights mechanisms not provide a better means of locking in future governments in a democratic path, as their institutions are more powerful than newly established RHRMs? How can democratic countries externalize their democratic values and create an RHRM in a region where other countries are non-democratic regimes?

⁷⁵ The text can be accessed at http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/CHR/resolutions/E-CN_4-RES-1998-44.doc

These theoretical inadequacies make the existing explanations insufficient to account for the emergence of RHRMs.

I argue that what goes on at the regional level is critical to understand the emergence of RHRMs, which are essentially regional bodies reflecting regional concerns. We propose two potential regional-level explanations. Table 9 below presents the typology of theories for the establishment of RHRMs.

Table 9. A Typology of the Theories of RHRMs.

Level of Analysis	Rationalist Approach with Material/Strategic Factors	Non-Rationalist Approach with Ideational Factors
International	Great power pressure	Transnational socialization
Regional	Prevention of external intervention and international criticism; Ensuring foreign aid	Regional identity and community building
Domestic	Delegation of authority ('lock-in' thesis)	Externalization of democratic identity

Our first regional-level explanation emphasizes the strategic calculation behind creating an RHRM. Regional countries could establish an RHRM in order to prevent a potential external humanitarian intervention in the region, to preempt international criticism of the human rights situation of individual countries or of the region as a whole, or to ensure the continuing inflow of foreign economic aid.

Democratic great powers often link their foreign economic aid to developing nations' human rights records. The European Union (EU), for instance, is formally required by Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union 'to develop and consolidate democracy . . . and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms' in its foreign relations (King 1999; Horng 2003), and has linked its aid with human rights conditionalities, as in the case of

Turkey (Gates 2009). The US has linked the most-favored nation status with the recipient country's human rights record (Bachman et. al. 1994). Such linkage politics would generate strategic incentives for developing nations to maintain satisfactory human rights records in order to guarantee the continuation of external foreign aid and other economic benefits, and establishing an RHRM could be one means to achieve this purpose.

Another strategic motivation for creating an RHRM concerns preventing an external humanitarian intervention and international criticism of regional human rights situation. Great powers could decide to intervene militarily in case of gross human rights violations, and regional powers might like to prevent such external intervention. For instance, writing about Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which confers the Union the right of humanitarian intervention in a member state in cases of gross violations of human rights such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity,⁷⁶ Alex Bellamy (2006) argues that the African nations codified the interventionist clause in order to foreclose the possibility of intervention by non-African actors. Often combined with a history of colonialism and a resulting high sensitivity to loss of sovereignty, developing nations desire to prevent an external intervention in their region and international criticism of their human rights practices and situation.

The second regional-level explanation focuses on the process of regional community building. A regional community is imagined (Anderson 1983), and is defined by two characteristics (Taylor 1982; Adler and Barnett 1998: 31). First, members of a community have shared identities, values, and purposes. And secondly, they have close interactions and

⁷⁶ Although Article 4(h) does not explicitly mention human rights, it is obvious that it is related to human rights. The Constitutive Act does contain other clauses with the phrase human rights, most notably Article 4(m), which states that the Union shall function in accordance with "respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance." The Constitutive Act of the African Union is available at http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/key_oau/au_act.htm.

many-sided relations. In International Relations, social constructivists have examined the emergence of a community among a group of states and its impact on interstate security. Deutsch (1957) and Adler and Barnett (1998) show how a security community can emerge and transform the self-help system of constant insecurity and uncertainty into one of durable and dependable peace. Alagappa (1997: 427) regards community-building as a strategy to eliminate the use of force in the resolution of political disputes. While the focus of the security community literature is mainly on conflict prevention and resolution, community-building can also lead to other outcomes such as institutional change or build-up.

Community-building necessarily involves a debate about collective identity and what values and purposes the region should promote collectively. An important aspect of community-building process concerns establishing regional norms, and of particular importance is the issue of what state practices are acceptable in domestic governance, which involves a discussion about the citizen's rights and the state's obligations. In this regard it is not coincidental that one of the first documents produced under the European Political Cooperation was the "Declaration on the European Identity", which explicitly mentioned the respect for human rights.

For instance, writing about the same Article 4(h) of the African Union, MacFarlane and Khong (2006: 189) point to an interesting connection between the African desire for regional solidarity and the interventionist clause, while Kioko (2003) and Samkange (2002) note that a normative shift took place on the African continent from a norm of non-intervention to a norm of non-indifference. Adebajo and Landsberg (2006: 3-4) also argue that African leaders moved towards a norm of "sovereignty as responsibility" with protection of the fundamental rights of citizens. These accounts suggest that regional

community building can bring about a change of regional norms, which can lead to institutional change.

In the next section, we use the community-building theory to show how the process of constructing the ASEAN Community affected the revision and creation of regional norms in Southeast Asia and eventually led to the creation of AICHR.

Democratization, the ASEAN Community, and the Establishment of AICHR

The most convincing explanation for the creation of AICHR rests on two factors: democratization in several regional countries and ASEAN's community-building process. The former created key agents for pro-human rights initiatives within ASEAN, while the latter led to the official articulation and endorsement of new regional norms such as good governance and accountability, which provided a favorable context for the establishment of AICHR.

We use process-tracing to illustrate how the community-building process positively affected the development of AICHR. Defined as a type of within-case analysis, process-tracing is an "attempt to trace empirically the temporal and possibly causal sequences of events within a case" (George and Bennett 2001, 144). We provide a detailed analysis of the negotiation and creation of AICHR by examining key actors and their positions on human rights based on policy-makers' speeches and news reports. In addition, we analyze key ASEAN documents such as the AMM joint communiqués and action plans from 1967 to 2011, to shed light on how community-building evolved over time and affected the issue of human rights in the region.

Table 10 shows the positions taken by the ASEAN member states on the establishment of AICHR at critical junctures. As mentioned earlier, two factors were significant: democratization in several regional states and ASEAN's community building.

Table 10. Evolution of the Stances on AICHR by ASEAN States

ASEAN Member State	1990s	early-2000s	mid-2000s	late-2000s
Philippines	Pro-democracy and human rights	pro-AICHR		Support
Indonesia	Asian values			
Thailand				
Malaysia		Support for national human rights institutions.	Pro-AICHR	
Singapore		Reluctant	Reluctant but some support	
Myanmar		Oppose		Reluctantly acquiesce
Cambodia				
Laos				
Vietnam				
Brunei				
				Reluctantly agree

Throughout the RHRM negotiation, the region's democratic countries were a significant force in moving ASEAN beyond its old institutional framework and in actively promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms (Caballero-Anthony 2010: 139). Democratization in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines led to the demilitarization of foreign policy and opened door for various societal actors to influence foreign policy in all three countries (Dosch 2007: 35-66). For instance, in the 1990s, Indonesia was a strong advocate of the Asian values, arguing that the historical experiences of non-Western societies as well as their cultural traditions and social values were important in formulating any human rights policy. This stance changed after the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 that brought democratization in the country. Not only did Indonesia come to embrace developing an

RHRM, but it also proposed to reconsider the principle of non-interference in the case of gross human rights violation and to “adjust” sovereignty to enable members to assist each other in domestic political crises (Summary of Proceedings, 2010). As part of its sponsorship of the ASEAN Security Community concept, it even proposed the establishment of ASEAN regional peacekeeping forces.⁷⁷

The Philippines and Thailand also provided unrelenting support for AICHR. The Philippines had long been a supporter for human rights and an RHRM. At the 1993 Vienna Conference, for instance, the Philippines was a lone voice in deviating from the Asian values position stating that human rights promotion should not be sequential because these rights are indivisible and interrelated. After becoming democratic, Thailand also adopted a pro-human rights policy first by signing all six major international human rights conventions, and later by supporting the creation of an RHRM.

The united voice of democratic countries was not sufficient enough to establish AICHR, however. Of the ten ASEAN members, only three can be said to be more or less democratic, and the rest are either authoritarian or “soft” authoritarian regimes. In particular the Indochinese countries strongly resisted the creation of AICHR right from the start. Furthermore, there was the procedural constraint of consensus approach to decision-making, which essentially required approval from every member state to create AICHR.⁷⁸

The Acquiescence of Non-Democratic States to the Creation of AICHR

The other critical factor for AICHR’s establishment was regional community building based on a deepening sense of collective identity. Community-building has been an

⁷⁷ See “Indonesia Proposes Southeast Asian Peacekeeping Force” available at <http://www.aseansec.org/afp/20.htm>. Retrieved on 19 August 2010.

⁷⁸ This consensus approach to decision-making can be somewhat relaxed at times, in order to facilitate progress. The so-called “minus X” approach states that some countries can go ahead and start a policy or process and opponents can come on board at a later time as they see appropriate. This approach is often adopted by ASEAN, especially regarding economic issues.

important part of ASEAN's development. Right from the beginning, ASEAN's goal was to create a community of Southeast Asian nations, even though the shared sense of community remained rather weak. Community-building also provided the key rationale for the accession of the Indochinese countries into ASEAN. However, it was not until the late 1990s that the ASEAN members put serious efforts in constructing a regional community. Three factors converged to compel regional leaders to reexamine the direction of ASEAN and to transform ASEAN from a loose grouping into a community based on shared values and principles.

First, by 1997, the founding political aim of bringing all Southeast Asian nations under one organizational framework had been completed with the inclusion of the Indochinese countries as members of ASEAN. With this political goal achieved, ASEAN could move on to the next task of consolidating the grouping. Second, with the end of the Cold War and the rise of China and India in regional influence, ASEAN realized that it could no longer be an important actor with its loose grouping and institutional structure. The collectively shared fear of intrusive external powers and the desire to remain relevant in regional affairs increasingly drew ASEAN states closer to each other. And lastly, the lackluster response to a series of regional crises in the late 1990s—the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the haze problem, and the Cambodia issue—made regional leaders realize that existing regional norms and informal and loose structures were ineffective in coping with new regional issues. Some regional leaders such as Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and Thailand's Foreign Minister challenged the principle of non-interference by proposing a policy of “constructive involvement” and “constructive intervention”, respectively. In the end, ASEAN adopted a formula of ‘enhanced interaction’ under which

they would openly discuss domestic issues only if they would have clear regional ramifications.

Regional community-building since the late 1990s has been an explicit goal of ASEAN. In 1997, in the *ASEAN Vision-2020* ASEAN leaders declared that ASEAN would become “a concert of Southeast Asian nations” where there is peace “through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law and through strengthening of national and regional resilience.” The 2003 Bali Concord II established the basic structure of the ASEAN Community consisting of three pillars: the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), and ASEAN Security Community (ASC). The 2004 Vientiane Action Programme gave substance to the Bali Concord II by proposing the governing structures, purposes and principles of ASEAN, and the 2007 ASEAN Charter formalized these rules and structures, and conferred legal personality to ASEAN.

These efforts at redefining regional interactions led to a transformation of ASEAN from a loose grouping based on informal modalities to a regional community based on shared values, principles, and purposes. As the ASEAN Community project progressed, so did the sense of community. As discussed in the previous section, two key aspects of the sense of community are shared identity and purposes as well as transaction flows. We measure the sense of shared identity by the frequencies of key words such as ‘cohesiveness’, ‘unity’, and ‘together’, and the sense of shared purpose by the frequency of the phrase ‘ASEAN Community’ in the all AMM documents from 1967 to 2010. We use the number of minister-level meetings as an indicator of transaction flows. As shown in Figure 22

below, by all three measures, the sense of community in ASEAN has deepened over time, and the trend began to accelerate from the late 1990s.⁷⁹

Figure 3. The Sense of Community in ASEAN, 1967-2010

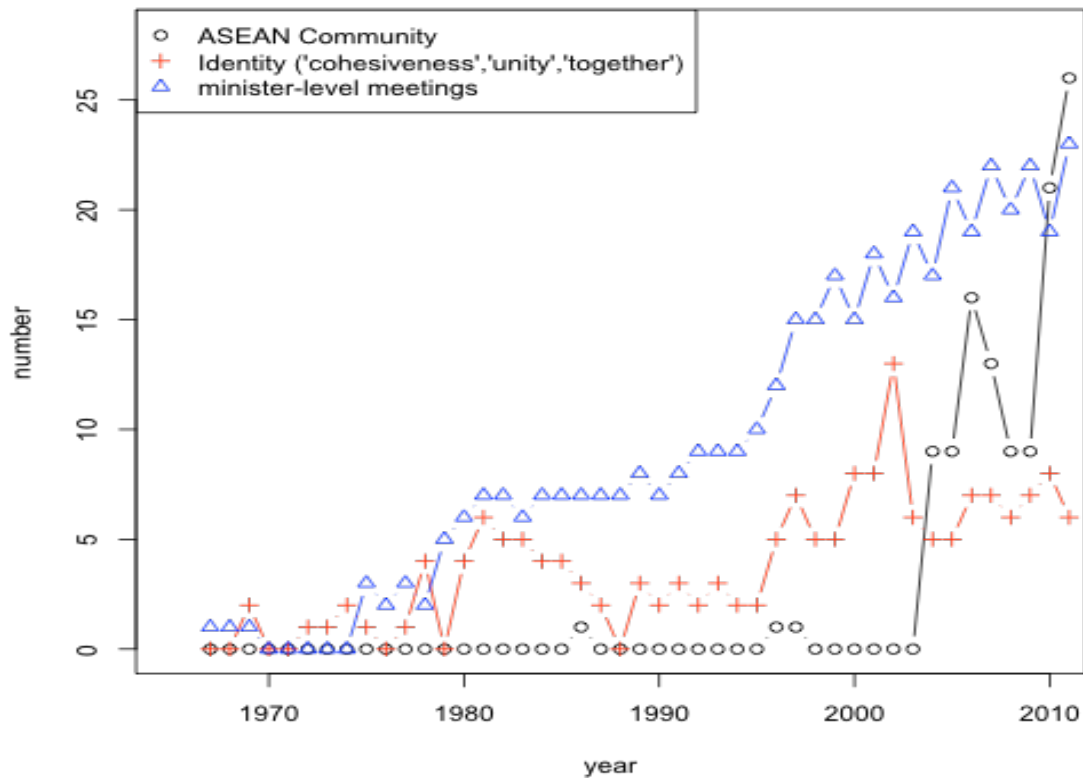


Figure 22. The Sense of Community in ASEAN 1967 – 2010
 Source: The Joint Communiqués of ASEAN Ministerial Meetings available at <http://www.aseansec.org/index.html>

The community-building process for the creation of AICHR was important for two reasons. First, it provided persuasive power to convince the non-democratic member states to acquiesce to the creation of AICHR. The non-democratic states did not necessarily share democratic values, ideals, or processes, but they all saw the need to develop a regional community based on shared values and purposes. This was particularly so in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s that curtailed ASEAN regionalism. The

⁷⁹ The effort to deepen the sense of regional community in Southeast Asia will intensify in the future, as ASEAN has come up with various plans to meet the goal of building the ASEAN Community by 2015. For more details, see “Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity” available at www.asean.org/documents/MPAC.pdf.

formation of AICHR was seen as adding an extra dimension to ASEAN, making ASEAN more meaningful and significant. It was therefore part of the continuing effort for ASEAN to build up its institutions and orientate ASEAN more toward the people.⁸⁰ While some members were hesitant to openly promote human rights, especially political freedoms, all member states desired to carry out what had been promised in the ASEAN Charter, give greater prominence to ASEAN as an international organization, and to advance regionalism in all aspects, including sociopolitical matters.

According to a Thai official involved in the creation of AICHR, community-building had positive influence in convincing the non-democratic states of ASEAN to set up AICHR. When the promotion of human rights was discussed on its own, several members became automatically concerned with external interference in their internal affairs and potential destabilizing impact such interference might have for domestic rule. But they became much more willing to discuss and develop human rights when the issue was couched in terms of promoting the ASEAN Community and advancing ASEAN regionalism. In addition, the fact that human rights were to be promoted in a regional context by regional countries in a gradual manner lessened the fear of external meddling in domestic affairs.⁸¹

Explaining why Vietnam agreed to AICHR, an official in Vietnam's foreign ministry stated that there were three main reasons. First, AICHR would take a gradual approach to the promotion of human rights, and hence was less threatening and destabilizing. In addition, as a member of ASEAN, Vietnam had responsibility and a stake to contribute regionalism in the form of promoting the ASEAN Community. And lastly, the promotion of democratic norms and freedoms are consistent with the open-door policy (*du moi*) of

⁸⁰ Author's interview with former Secretary-General of ASEAN Rodolfo Severino. February 2011.

⁸¹ Author's interview with an official in Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. December 2011.

Vietnam, and it would have a positive reverse effect on domestic political and economic reform in Vietnam.⁸²

This view is also supported by another official closely involved in the process of establishing AICHR. Former Secretary-General of ASEAN Ong Keng Yong opined that the CLMV countries were not against promoting human rights per se, but were concerned with the possibility of western countries to use human rights as a pretext for intervening in internal affairs. In convincing the CLMV countries by Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines, ASEAN cohesion was an important factor, and so was the previous ASEAN experience of cooperation and ASEAN Way i.e. quiet, informal, and gradual approach to problem-solving.⁸³

The other way community-building was important for the creation of AICHR is through change of regional norms. Community-building led to the introduction of new norms relating to domestic governance such as the rule of law, good governance, and protection of fundamental freedoms, which later became the basis for the creation of the AICHR. The process was also important in eliciting the agreement, or at least acquiescence, of non-democratic ASEAN members for the establishment of AICHR, as the new regional body was argued to be a crucial part of the ASEAN political community.

The community-building process had a positive impact on the development of regional human rights by affecting regional norms in two ways. First, it weakened the ASEAN Way, particularly the norm of non-interference. Regional leaders began to make statements on domestic governance, which can be construed as meddling with domestic politics. For instance, with regard to the Cambodian coup, the ASEAN leaders

⁸² Author's interview with a Vietnamese official in the foreign ministry of Vietnam. January 2012.

⁸³ Author's interview with former Secretary-General of ASEAN Ong Keng Yong. February 2011.

recommended specific measures such as direct assistance to firm up electoral processes and increased commitment to legal and administrative reforms (Tay 2001, 253). In the *ASEAN Vision 2020* where the idea of the ASEAN Community project was initially proposed, ASEAN leaders envisioned that their nations would be “governed with the consent and greater participation of the people with its focus on the welfare and dignity of the human person and the good of the community.”

ASEAN’s collective stance on the political problem in Myanmar, the region’s most serious human rights problem, also changed dramatically. For long, sticking to the ASEAN Way, ASEAN had adopted the practice of discussing the issue with Myanmar leaders privately during informal retreats of ASEAN ministers and shied away from public criticism. However, beginning in the early 2000s, ASEAN ministers openly discussed the Myanmar problem in their annual meetings, and every AMM joint communiqué contained a passage on the Myanmar’s domestic situation since 2003. Furthermore, they began to publicly criticize Myanmar’s junta government for its handling of democratic protesters, with an increasing degree of harshness over time. In the early 2000s, discussing the political problem in Myanmar, ASEAN ministers noted of the “efforts of the Government of Myanmar to promote peace and development” and urged Myanmar “to resume its efforts of national reconciliation and dialogue among all parties concerned leading to a peaceful transition to democracy” (2003 AMM). In 2008, however, ASEAN became more demanding and specific, urging the junta government to “take bolder steps towards a peaceful transition to democracy in the near future” and to “release all political detainees, including Aung San Suu Kyi” (2008 AMM).

Those outside the official ASEAN processes even called for suspension of Myanmar from ASEAN. Barry Desker, the dean of RSIS, a premier research institute in the region,

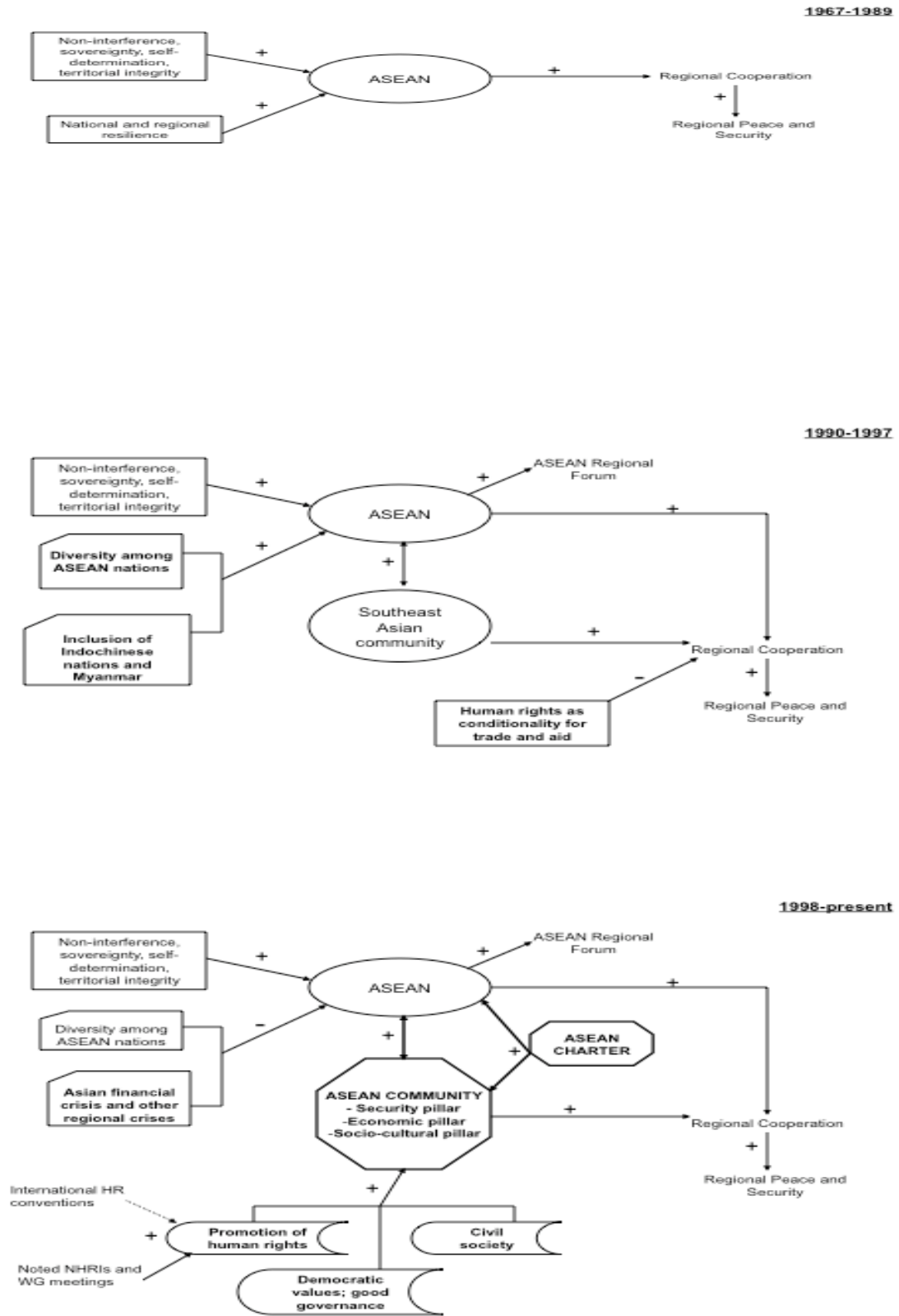
argued that until Myanmar can uphold its commitment to democracy, human rights, and good governance, ASEAN should suspend her membership (RSIS Commentaries, 4 October 2007). The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus, a group of legislators from six ASEAN countries, also urged ASEAN to suspend Myanmar's membership. In its 2011 statement, it argued, "oppression in Myanmar will be an obstacle to efforts by ASEAN to build an ASEAN Community by 2015."⁸⁴

Another positive influence of the ASEAN Community-building process has been the articulation of new regional norms such as good governance, principles of democracy, and rule of law. These new norms are perceived as contributing to the consolidation of the ASEAN Community by enhancing regional solidarity and harmony as well as by building collective responsibilities and common standards for acceptable governance in both domestic and regional politics. As stated in the 2004 Vientiane Action Programme, the members accepted the inclusion of "shaping and sharing of norms" as part of the process of creating the regional security community, and declared that ASEAN would build "collective responsibilities" to form "a standard of common adherence to norms of good conduct in a democratic, tolerant, participatory and open community."

Figure 23 presents three cognitive maps that collectively show the evolution of ASEAN's norms, its vision of regional community, and its fundamental objective, namely, regional peace and prosperity through regional cooperation. Cognitive mapping is a method used to show the relations between different factors or concepts and to represent causal or quasi-causal thinking (Axelrod 1976). The ASEAN cognitive maps in Figure 23 are drawn from the so-called 'vision statements' of ASEAN, the key agreements among all ASEAN states that have established the visions and structure of ASEAN since its inception in 1967.

⁸⁴ For more details see the website of the caucus at <http://www.aseanmp.org/?cat=5>

Figure 23. ASEAN's Norms, Vision, and Objectives



ASEAN's thinking has become more complicated over time, reflecting deepening regional integration. The most important development has been the initiative to create and build a regional community based on the official motto of "one vision, one identity, and one community." What is most relevant for our purpose is the appearance of new regional norms that are conducive to the promotion of human rights as well as the explicit connection linking the promotion of human rights with the advancement of the ASEAN Community. The second and third cognitive maps in Figure 4 show this clearly. In the second period, the promotion of human rights was perceived as negatively affecting regional cooperation. This changed in the third period where the promotion of human rights is believed to promote the ASEAN Community, which in turn facilitates regional cooperation. At the same time, new regional norms such as democratic values and good governance were articulated to be compatible with and conducive to the promotion of human rights.

Another noteworthy development relates to the role of diversity among the regional countries for regional cooperation. Diversity was once viewed positively as a catalyst for regional solidarity, but is no longer regarded as playing such positive role for ASEAN. In fact, it is viewed as a hindrance to the effectiveness of ASEAN. This change is consistent with the fact that ASEAN has promoted shared socio-political values and lay out acceptable domestic governance practices, including the promotion and protection of human rights, since the late 1990s. Although this does not mean that ASEAN will intervene in internal affairs of member states whenever there are human rights violations, it is a marked departure from the previous policy of ignoring the issue altogether or of justifying the regional human rights practices as being "Asian values."

The weakening of the old regional norms, coupled with the emergence of the new norms, provided a favorable milieu within which discussions of human rights-related issues

could take place and the AICHR initiative could be advanced and accepted. It is regional community-building process that has opened up room for the promotion of human rights in Southeast Asia.

The Future of Human Rights in ASEAN

According to Jeannie Henderson (1999), ASEAN faces a central dilemma. On the one hand, ASEAN desires to be an effective organization and the primary regional security manager, which requires it to intervene in the internal affairs of its member states when necessary. On the other hand, its commitment to the ASEAN Way based on the principle of state sovereignty and non-interference entails that it should shy away from interfering in domestic matters, thereby weakening ASEAN's effectiveness as well as solidarity (Emmers 2003: 420; Elliott 2003: 31).

The same dilemma exists in the way ASEAN approaches the issue of human rights. There is now a greater awareness within ASEAN that domestic political and social instability can lead to regional instability, and that it is important to maintain good governance practices, of which the promotion and protection of human rights is a key part. Some members, most notably Indonesia, even believe that ASEAN should be willing to intervene if some member state does not follow acceptable governance practices vis-à-vis their citizens. But ASEAN's attempt to influence its members' internal affairs risks violating norms of state sovereignty and non-interference, the *modus operandi* for regional interactions, leading some other members to oppose ASEAN's activism in human rights.

ASEAN's current conceptualization of human rights strikes a balance between elements of the old norms of the ASEAN Way on the one hand, and the new emphasis on domestic governance, rule of law, and democratic values, on the other hand. The current embodiment of human rights in various ASEAN documents and institutions is not a long-

term equilibrium, however, as it is an expedient political compromise that satisfies all ASEAN members for the time being. We do not believe that this dilemma will be resolved in the near future, given the lack of a regional consensus on the matter, but two factors will significantly affect the development of human rights in the region based on our analysis.

The first is democratization. If democratization spreads to the rest of the region, it could be a sufficient reason in and of itself to advance regional human rights. If democratization halts, however, we expect to see a weaker regional human rights regime in the future. We are not optimistic that democratization will spread to the rest of the region any time soon, however. Not only did the reversal of democratization in Thailand show the tenuous foundations for democracy in the region, but non-democratic members also doubt whether a democratic form of government is really necessary for political stability and economic development. Reforming bad domestic governance practices is not so much about promoting a particular form of government as it is about achieving domestic political and social stability. The dominant belief is this stability can be achieved under any form of government, be it democratic, authoritarian or semi-authoritarian forms of government. So long as domestic political and social stability is achieved through good governance practices, the final form of government is up to each country to determine, and ASEAN would have no role to play.

The regional community-building process is another significant factor for the future of the region's human rights. If the ASEAN Community project continues to expand in the future, we expect to see a corresponding development in ASEAN's human rights practices and institutions. The ASEAN Community project is essentially about promoting regionalism, thereby shifting the locus of decision-making power from the national to regional level, albeit slowly and gradually. Thus the Community-building effort is likely to

lead to relaxation of the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference, although the extent of this relaxation would depend on political bargaining among the members.

We are more optimistic on this front, and believe that the building of the ASEAN Community will continue and gain greater momentum in the future. This is because all ten ASEAN states are committed to the regional grouping, and see it as the best means to their economic development and regional peace. In addition, the legalization and institutionalization of the regional structures and rules have also laid a firmer basis for closer regional interactions, which should facilitate the community-building process in the future.

Conclusions

This paper has examined how the process of regional community-building in Southeast Asia has resulted in the creation of AICHR. It did so by weakening old regional norms, especially the norm of non-interference, and by engendering new norms such as good governance, rule of law, and accountability, which created a favorable context within which human rights issues and institutions could be discussed and developed. Based on the analysis of AMM documents and 'action statements' from 1967 to 2011, we have shown that the sense of community in ASEAN has deepened over time and accelerated since the late 1990s.

Following the deepening sense of community came the official endorsement of pro-human rights regional norms by ASEAN. Thus the process of community-building was a critical factor in compelling the regional countries to agree on developing shared norms and values, including human rights principles.

The process of ASEAN community-building was not the only important factor for the creation of AICHR, however. Two other factors were significant in influencing the creation of AICHR and determining its institutional features. First, democratization in several regional countries was important in that it created key agents within ASEAN who

pushed for pro-human rights initiatives. And second, political bargaining between the democratic and non-democratic camps within ASEAN affected the name, mandate, and goals of AICHR.

Our analysis suggests that without paying sufficient attention to regional-level factors, it is unlikely that we fully understand why RHRMs emerge and take on the features that they do. Indeed, the regional-level analysis will not only help us better explain the emergence of RHRMs, but also enrich our understanding of growing regionalization and regionalism in world politics.

Chapter 8. Territorial Disputes in NEA and SEA

In addition to the establishment of AICHR, the resolution of two key territorial disputes in SEA provides further evidence that the region has increasingly become a zone of peace not just in a negative sense (i.e. absence or decline of conflict) but also in a positive sense (active resolution of disputes). Territorial disputes are one of the most difficult international issues to resolve, and the usual means of settling them is bilateral negotiation. Through negotiation, parties can link the dispute with other issues and can extract concessions if they concede on the territory. Three key Southeast Asian nations have resolved their bilateral territorial disputes through the arbitration of the International Court of Justice. Thus not only is the fact that the SEA nations resolved their territorial disputes interesting, but the manner in which they have resolved them is significant, foregoing any possibility of bargaining and extracting concessions.

This approach to territorial disputes by the SEA nations contrasts sharply with the way NEA nations have dealt with their bilateral territorial disputes. China, Korea, and Japan have engaged in fierce claims and counter claims of sovereignty over their disputed territories. The contrast is puzzling because the NEA disputes share important attributes with the SEA disputes. They are all islands disputes involving actual or potential natural resources such as gas and fishing resources. They are all sovereignty disputes, and the parties claim all of the territory and do not want to divide it. And the parties perceive some strategic value from the territory. Despite these similarities, there has been a marked difference between the SEA and NEA nations in their approach to the disputes.

This chapter examines four key territorial disputes in NEA and SEA. They are the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute between Korea and Japan; Senkaku/Diaoyudao dispute between Japan and China; Sipadan and Ligitan dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia; and Pedra

Branca dispute between Singapore and Malaysia. My argument focuses on the contrasting development of identity distance in the two regions. The narrowing identity distance between SEA nations has made them more willing to settle disputes and cooperate on security matters between themselves, while the widening identity distance between NEA nations has resulted in the intensification of issues symbolic of national sovereignty. I support my argument with the analysis of an original survey of the political elites in five countries (Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore).

Brief Background Knowledge about the Territorial Disputes

There are about a dozen of territorial disputes between East Asian countries. Table 1 lists major territorial disputes in the region.

Table 11. The List of Territorial Sovereignty Disputes in East Asia

Country	Neighbor	Disputed Territory	Status
<u>Northeast Asia</u>			
China	Japan North Korea	Diaoyudao (Senkaku) Border	disputed disputed
Japan	South Korea	Dokkdo / Takeshima	disputed
<u>Southeast Asia</u>			
Indonesia	Malaysia	Sipadan and Ligitan Ambalat	settled (2002) in negotiation
Malaysia	Philippines Singapore	Sabah Pedra Branca	disputed settled (2008)
Thailand	Cambodia Laos	Preah Vihear Temple Border Border	settled (1962) disputed disputed
<u>Northeast & Southeast Asia</u>			
Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia Brunei, China, and Taiwan		Spratly and paracels islands	disputed

The four territorial disputes have different origins and history. While it is beyond the task of this chapter to cover the history of the dispute, it is necessary to understand the basic facts concerning the disputes and the different positions taken by the claimants.

Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute. Dokdo/Takeshim consists of two main islets and 35 smaller rocks lying about the mid-point between Korea and Japan. They are about 134 miles (215 km) from mainland Korea and 132 miles (211 km) from Japan proper. The total surface area of the islets is slightly over 46 acres (0.19 square kilometers), with the highest elevation of 550 ft (170 meters). The island has been administered by Korea since the mid-1950s, with its coast guard stationed on the island. Two Korean residents live on the islands, and a small number of administrative personnel and lighthouse staff are stationed in non-permanent positions. Both sides rely on historical documents as supporting evidence for their claim to the island, but given that both Korean and Japanese names for the islands have changed over time, it is hard to conclusively decide based on historical evidence to which country the islands belong.

The current position of the Japanese government is that the islands belong to Japan and South Korea is illegally occupying them. The islands were incorporated as part of the Shimane prefecture in the beginning of the 1900s. When Japan renounced all title and claim to Korea in the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the islands were not part of the territory that was to be returned to Korea, since it had not been part of Korea when Japan took over Korea. The Japanese side made a number of proposals to Korea to take the dispute to the ICJ in the past, but the Korean side rejected the proposal.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ For details of the Japanese position, see the following webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/position.html>. Accessed on 10 October 2011.

The basic position of the Korean government on the dispute is that there is no dispute, and therefore no issue to discuss or negotiate over with. It had been part of Korean territory, but Japan incorporated the island into the Shimane Prefecture in the midst of the Russo-Japanese War, which constituted a violation of international law. In 1910, when Korea became colonized by Japan, and so did the islands. So for Korea, the territorial dispute is part of the Japanese colonial history. The islands' exclusion from Japan's territory and administration was confirmed in the San Francisco Peace Treaty, and since 1951, Korea has maintained the effective control of Korea.⁸⁶ Interestingly, it is one of the rare international issues where North Korea supports the South Korean stance.

Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute. Senkaku/Diaoyu islands are a group of uninhabited islands located in the East China Sea between the PRC, Taiwan, and Japan. They are about 138 miles (222 km) northeast of Taiwan and 230 miles (370 km) east of the mainland China and southwest of the Japanese island of Okinawa. The biggest island is about 1067 acres (4.32 square kilometers). These disputed islands are currently administered by Japan, and claimed by both the PRC and Taiwan. The US occupied the islands from 1945 to 1972, when it reverted them to Japan. Both PRC and Taiwan claimed that the islands had to be returned to PRC and Taiwan, respectively, not Japan. Once again both sides present historical evidence in support of their claims, but it is inconclusive.

The official Chinese position is that the islands had belonged to China until Japan took control of them during the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894-95. The islands were formally ceded to Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki. The Potsdam Declaration states that

⁸⁶ For more details of the Korean position, see the following webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Korea available at <http://news.mofat.go.kr/enewspaper/articleview.php?master=&aid=1334&ssid=23&mvid=576>. Accessed on 10 October 2011.

“Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.” The “we” here referred to the victors of WWII, including the Republic of China. Japan accepted the terms of the Declaration when it surrendered.⁸⁷ When the administration of islands was transferred to Japan from USA in 1971, neither PRC nor Taiwan endorsed the transfer of control of the islands.

The Japanese government maintains that there is no dispute, and hence no issue to discuss or negotiation over with. The islands were incorporated as part of Japan in January 1895 based on a Cabinet Decision, and were neither part of Taiwan nor part of the Pescadores Islands, which were ceded to Japan from the Qing Dynasty in accordance with the Treaty of Shimonoseki in May 1895. Thus the islands were not included in the San Francisco Peace Treaty, came under the US administration as part of the Nansei Shoto Islands, which belong to Japan, and were reverted to Japan in June 1971.⁸⁸

Sipadan and Ligitan Dispute: The islands of Ligitan and Sipadan (Pulau Ligitan and Pulau Sipadan) are both located in the Celebes Sea, off the northeast coast of the island of Borneo, and lie approximately 17 miles (28 km) apart. Ligitan is a very small island lying at the southern extremity of a large star-shaped reef extending southwards from the islands of Danawan and Si Amil. The island is situated some 21 nautical miles from Tanjung Tutop, on the Semporna Peninsula, the nearest area on Borneo. Permanently above sea level and mostly sand, Ligitan is an island with low-lying vegetation and some trees. It is not permanently inhabited. Although bigger than Ligitan, Sipadan is also a small island, having an area of approximately 0.13 sq. km. It is situated some 15 nautical miles from Tanjung

⁸⁷ See People’s Daily. ["China's Diaoyu Islands Sovereignty is Undeniable"](#). 25 May 2003. Accessed on 10 October 2011.

⁸⁸ For details of the Japanese position, see the following webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/senkaku.html>. Accessed on 10 October 2011.

Tutop, and 42 nautical miles from the east coast of the island of Sebatik. Sipadan is a densely wooded island of volcanic origin and the top of a submarine mountain some 600 to 700 m in height, around which a coral atoll has formed. It was not inhabited on a permanent basis until the 1980s, when it was developed into a tourist resort for scuba diving.

The history of the dispute is complicated by the history of colonialism in both countries.⁸⁹ For our purposes it suffices to state that after independence, both Indonesia and Malaysia began to grant oil prospecting licenses in waters off the east coast of Borneo during the 1960s. The present dispute crystallized in 1969 in the context of discussions concerning the delimitation of the respective continental shelves of the two States. Following those negotiations a delimitation agreement was reached on 27 October 1969. It entered into force on 7 November 1969. However, it did not cover the area lying to the east of Borneo. In October 1991 the two Parties set up a joint working group to study the situation of the islands of Ligitan and Sipadan. They did not however reach any agreement and the issue was entrusted to special emissaries of the two Parties who, in June 1996, recommended by mutual agreement that the dispute should be referred to the ICJ. The Special Agreement was signed on 31 May 1997, and the dispute was sent to the ICJ for a binding decision. In 2002, the Court awarded both islands to Malaysia on the basis of the ‘effective occupation’ displayed by Malaysia’s predecessor i.e. United Kingdom and the absence of any other superior title. Both countries accepted the decision as binding.

Pedra Branca (Pulau Batu Puteh), Middle Rocks and South Ledge. Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh is a granite island, measuring 137 meters long, with an average width of 60 meters and covering an area of about 8,560 sq. meters at low tide. It is situated at the eastern entrance

⁸⁹ For the details of the colonial history of the island, see the judgment of the ICJ available at www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/102/7714.pdf. Accessed on 12 October 2011.

of the Straits of Singapore, and lies approximately 27 miles (44 km) to the east of Singapore, and 9 miles (14km) to the south of the Malaysian State of Johor. The names Pedra Branca and Batu Puteh mean “white rock” in Portuguese and Malay respectively. On the island stands Horsburgh lighthouse, which was erected in the middle of the nineteenth century. Middle Rocks and South Ledge are the two maritime features closest to Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh. Middle Rocks is located 0.7 miles (1 km) to the south and consists of two clusters of small rocks about 250 meters apart that are permanently above water and stand 0.6 to 1.2 meters high. South Ledge, at 2.5 miles (4 km) to the southwest of Pedra Branca, and is a rock formation only visible at low tide.

Once again the dispute is complicated by the colonial history, and it is impossible to give a fair treatment of it here.⁹⁰ The immediate history of the dispute goes back to December 1979 when Malaysia published a map entitled “Territorial Waters and Continental Shelf Boundaries of Malaysia,” which showed the outer limits and co-ordinates of the territorial sea and continental shelf claimed by Malaysia. The map depicted the island of Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh as lying within Malaysia’s territorial waters. By a diplomatic Note dated 14 February 1980 Singapore rejected Malaysia’s claim to the island and requested that the 1979 map be corrected. Singapore’s note led to an exchange of correspondence and subsequently to a series of intergovernmental talks in 1993-1994, which did not bring a resolution of the matter. During the first round of talks in February 1993 the question of the appurtenance of Middle Rocks and South Ledge was also raised. The ICJ concluded that the dispute as to sovereignty over Middle Rocks and South Ledge crystallized in February 1993. In view of the lack of progress in the bilateral negotiations, the Parties agreed to submit the

⁹⁰ For the details of the colonial history of the island, see the judgment of the ICJ available at www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/130/14492.pdf. Accessed on 12 October 2011.

dispute for resolution by the International Court of Justice. The Special Agreement was signed in February 2003.

The Court awarded Pedra Branca to Singapore based on actions of effective control taken by Britain and Singapore. In doing so, it once again gave importance to *effectivites*, actual actions and measures taken to establish sovereignty and administration of the territory, and existence or absence of protest or refusal by the other claimant. The Court decided, however, that Middle Rocks belonged to Malaysia on the original title of the Sultan of Johor and in the absence of evidence to the contrary. But it left the sovereignty over South Ledge an open question by concluding that it belongs to the State in the territorial waters of which it is located. Since South Ledge is located within the overlapping territorial waters between Malaysia and Singapore, both states will have to negotiate over the issue in the future.

The four disputes share broad similarities. They are sovereignty issues, involve a group of small islets and rocks, contain natural resources or potential thereof, and are perceived as having some strategic value by the claimants. Despite the similarities, the two disputes in NEA have intensified throughout the 1990s and 2000s, while the two disputes in SEA have been resolved in the same period.

In NEA, claims and counter-claims of sovereignty over islands intensified throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Taking the number of newspaper articles as a proxy for intensification, the graphs on the next page suggest an increasing salience of the disputes in NEA. On the other hand, the three Southeast Asian nations have negotiated over the disputes for resolution. When bilateral negotiation failed, they decided to refer the matter to the ICJ for binding arbitration, and accepted the ICJ's rulings henceforth.

Argument: Identity Distance and Security Cooperation

The conventional explanations of territorial disputes can be grouped into three: geo-political; geo-economic; and domestic politics. The geo-strategic explanation focuses on national security, a consistent theme in realism, and treats control over certain land areas and sea lanes as vital to the national security of the state (Morgenthau 1985, 128-30; Mandel 1980). The Soviet Union's concern with Poland is an example of such motivation. The assumption of zero-sum game is often central in this literature, and suggests that territorial and boundary disputes are more prone to degenerate into violent conflict (Goertz and Diehl 1992; Hensel 1999). Hence the greater the strategic value of territory, the more intense the dispute will be.

The second explanation has to do with the economic value of the disputed territory. The state that controls a given land, or sea boundaries, is entitled to exploit the resources that are contained therein (Koch et al. 1960). An expansion of market for the state's domestic production can also be accomplished through the acquisition of new land. Thus the greater the economic value the disputed territory carries, the higher the intensity of the dispute will be.

The third explanation focuses on domestic interest group politics (Moravcsik 1997). Particular domestic actors might derive benefits from the intensification and continuation of the disputes. Two such domestic actors can be unpopular leaders who want to rally public support by intensifying nationalism (DeRouen 2000; Smith 1996), or the defense ministry wanting to secure a greater budget, or fishing communities desiring to monopolize the right to fish in the area.

It must be noted that these explanations are better suited at explaining intensification of territorial disputes than their resolution. But even if these factors for intensification are absent, it does not necessarily follow that the parties will resolve the disputes.

The Annual Number of Newspaper Articles on Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute, 1972-2010

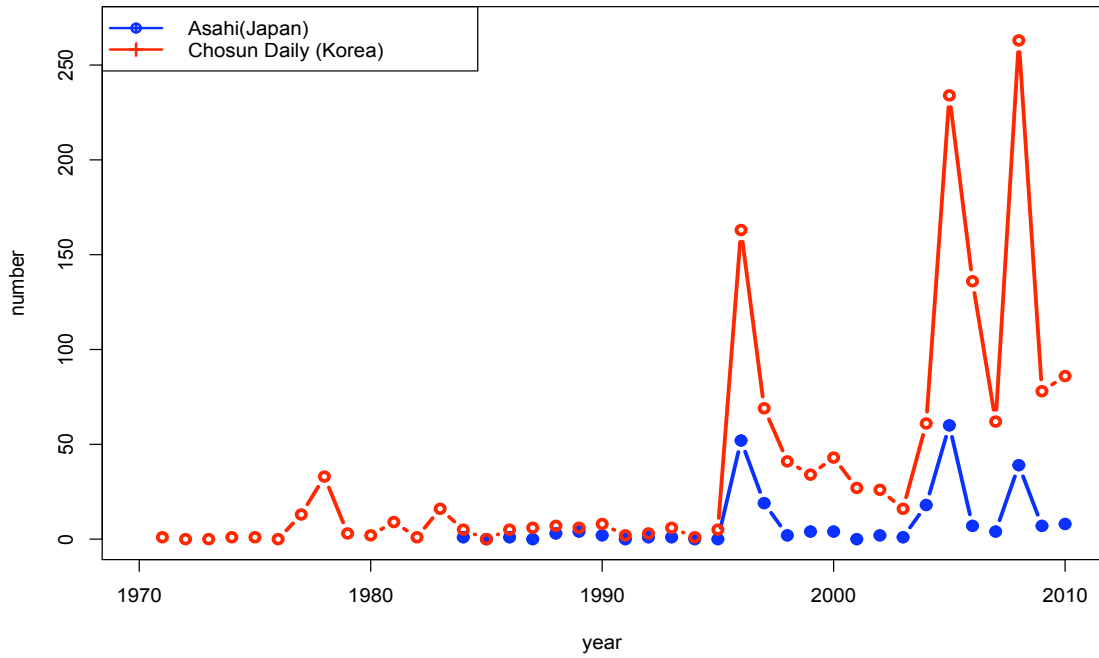


Figure 24. The Annual Number of Newspaper Articles on Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute 1972 – 2010
Source: Chosun Daily and Asahi Shimbun

The Annual Number of Newspaper Articles on Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute, 1972-2010

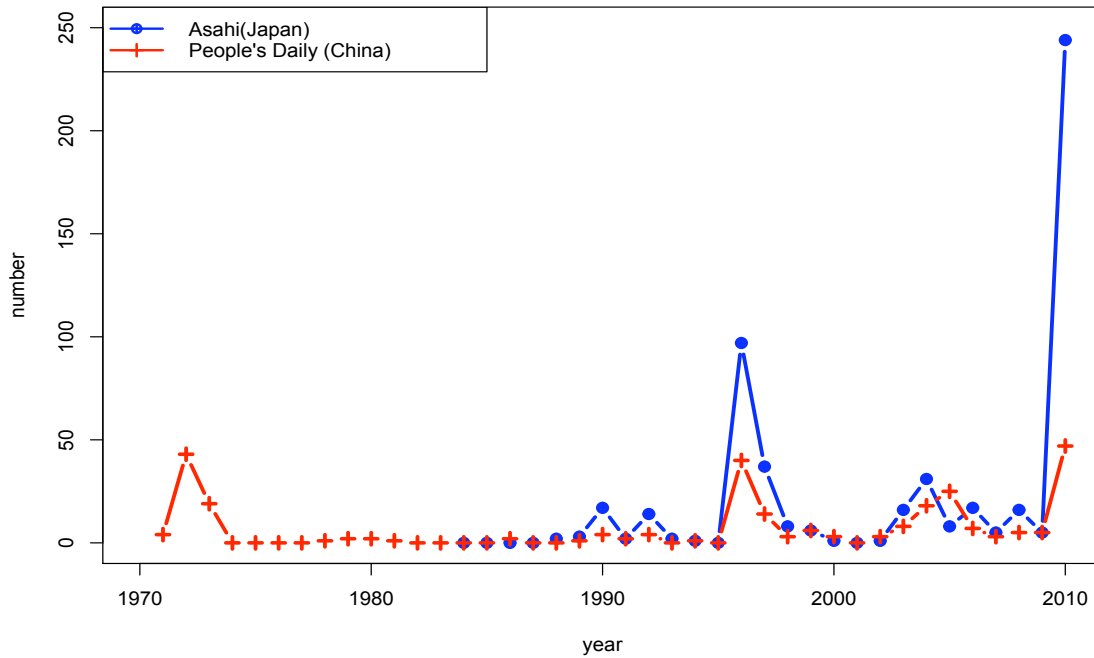


Figure 25. The Annual Number of Newspaper Articles on Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute 1972 – 2010
Source: Asahi Shimbun and People's Daily

Applied to the four cases under examination, all three factors are present and affect the outcome to some extent. The Senkaku/Diaoyu is considered to be critical for the safe passage of oil supplies to Japan, and hence the control over the territory can significantly affect Japan's national security. There have been several clashes between Korean and Japanese fishermen in the surrounding waters of Dokdo/Takeshima, and the fishing communities in the Shimane Prefecture are an important political voice at least in prefectural politics, and affect the intensification of the issue. In 1969, the UN report identified potential oil and gas reserves in the vicinity of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, raising economic gains at stake. It is commonly said that the catalyst for China's claim to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is the release of this UN report (Blanchard 2000; Lee 2002). But there is archival documentary evidence that the PRC government discussed the issue and insisted its sovereignty over the disputed area in the 1950s and 60s, well before the resource potential of the disputed area became known.⁹¹

There are two problems with these explanations, however. First, empirically, there is not much variation between NEA and SEA cases. Singapore, for instance, perceives the Pedra Branca island as crucial in securing its "way out" of the Strait of Singapore. With the control of the island transferred to Malaysia, one Singaporean policy maker opined, Singapore would have no way to exit.⁹² In terms of geographical proximity, the SEA islands are closer to the mainland territory, and hence parties are likely to be concerned more with potential security implications. Both colonial powers and Malaysia and Indonesia have

⁹¹ See the archival document by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC. "Policy Report on the Territorial Dispute during the Normalization Negotiation with Japan [dui ri heyue zhong guanyu lingtu bufen wenti yu zhuzhang tigang caoan] (对日和约中关于领土部分问题与主张提纲草案) 15 May 1950; and "Perspectives of Other States on the Territorial Dispute during Negotiation with Japan" [geguo guanyu dui ri heyue lingtu wenti de yijian] (各国关于对日和约领土问题的意见) 20 January 1951; *People's Daily* August 1 1957 and April 24 1964.

⁹² The author's interview with deputy permanent secretary in Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bilahari Kausikan.

explored natural resources in the surrounding waters of Sipadan and Ligitan, and tourism as well as fishing industries exist in both countries regarding Sipadan and Ligitan.

There are theoretical problems, too. If economic benefit were the main reason for fighting over territory, then utility-maximization calculation should lead to resolution for two reasons. First, the continuation of dispute generates its own economic and political costs. And second, natural resources explored today are worth more than those explored tomorrow. Thus if potential resources were the main reason for the dispute, then it would be puzzling why it would get so intense and hard to resolve, assuming the rationality of decision-makers. It would be more beneficial and less costly to resolve the issue and explore the resources to reap economic benefits sooner rather than later.

As for the geostrategic explanation, the perceived strategic value of territory should be a function of identity. If a state does not perceive a neighboring country as threat, then an island lying between the two will not be of any strategic value in a military sense. It only takes on strategic value once a certain assumption of identity is made. As Rousseau argues, the salience of relative gains—a key assumption underlying the geo-political explanation—depends on beliefs regarding the nature of the opponent, issue areas, and the actor itself (2002). This suggests that the strategic value of territory is a function of identity. In other words, depending upon how a state regards the other state in the dyad, its view of the strategic value of the dispute territory with that state may vary.

And finally, as for domestic explanation, it misses the gist of the disputes in NEA, which are much more widespread than what the interest group lobbying argument would suggest. The ‘Protect Senkaku’ (*senkaku o mamoru kai*), ‘Protect Diayo’ campaign (*baodiao yundong*) and ‘Dokdo Protectors’ (*dokdo sasudae*) in Japan, China and Korea are not fishermen. They do not have any obvious material benefit to derive from their activities. In fact, the

fishing communities generally prefer resolution to continued dispute, because it would allow them to fish in a more stable environment.⁹³

My argument focuses on identity distance as the main reason for the intensification of territorial disputes in NEA and resolution of similar disputes in SEA. While strategic value, natural resources, and domestic interest group politics all matter to some extent, they are of secondary importance. The critical reason has to do with identity and the meaning of the disputed territory. Territory not only contains economic resources and could be used for strategic purposes, but it also is a space within which one's way of life is created, disciplined, and protected from the "outside." In this sense, territory is "no longer a purely administrative concept employed to delineate spheres of state authority; instead, it is directly associated with the core values which link individuals to their larger community" (Kratochwil, 1985: 3).

As Toft argues, territory is simultaneously a divisible, quantifiable object and an indivisible and romantic subject (2003). If the indivisible and romantic aspect of territory is the meaning embodied in the dispute, then it is obvious that the dispute would be almost impossible to resolve. And this is the logic that unfolds in the territorial dispute in NEA. Of course, this is not to say that Southeast Asian nations do not have emotional attachment to their territories. Quite the contrary. They hold as strong territorial identity toward their disputed territories as do Northeast Asian countries. But the development of regionalism in SEA has made it less of national focus and hence provided room for strategic cooperation and resolution.

Given that security cooperation typically requires a higher level of mutual trust than international cooperation in other areas such as trade, science and technology, and culture,

⁹³ The author's interview with a local politician in the Shimane Prefecture.

identity distance would matter greatly for territorial disputes. For China and Korea, the disputed territory means more than just a piece of land that contains economic resources or carries strategic value. It is intimately connected with the history of Japanese aggression and colonialism. As such the territory becomes a symbol of their independence from Japan.

In 1996, for instance, in reaction to the building of a lighthouse on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands by a Japanese nationalist group, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued the following statement that linked the territorial dispute with the history problem:⁹⁴

All these [events] add up to giving a green light to these actions [building the lighthouse] and remarks of the Japanese right wing groups . . . Japan has failed to arrive at what is a right understanding of history. The Japanese government therefore should have a sober-minded perspective and clear understanding as regards this issue.

The importance of popular sentiments about the disputed territory stemming from the past history is seen by the fact that the leading source of friction in the dispute has been efforts by activists to land on the islands in order to support the sovereignty claims of their countries. In the 1990s, Japanese activists, especially a right-wing group known as the Japan Youth League, frequently visited the islands to maintain a lighthouse on the island that was first erected in 1978 (Suganuma 2000). In response, citizens from mainland China as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan attempted landing on the islands to support China's claims. In 1996, a Hong Kong activist, David Chan, drowned as he attempted to land and plant a national flag, leading to an outpouring of accusations from the Chinese side for the incident.

Both governments try to manage the dispute. Since 1992 when the Japanese government entered into a lease agreement with the Japanese private citizen who owned three of the five islands in the disputed area, it has been able to prevent Japanese activists from going to the islands for the purpose of maintenance of the lighthouse. Similarly, the

⁹⁴ "China Accuses Japan of Promoting Right-Wing Revival," *Associated Press*, August 29, 1996.

PRC government has also sought to restrict the actions of Chinese activists. In 2003, a mainland-based group, the China Federation for Defending the Diaoyu Islands, began preparations for a voyage to the islands, and successfully landed several members on the island in 2004, which led to a bilateral tension, especially after the members became detailed by the Japanese Coast Guard. After the incident, however, the Chinese government has sought to prevent them from attempting to do the same. In 2005, the Chinese government raided the federation's offices in Beijing (South China Morning Post 27 April 2005), and in 2007, four members of the federation who had attempted to land on the islands were put under house arrest when they returned to China (Kyodo World Service 31 October 2007).

However, once an incident breaks out, the government is compelled to respond strongly and claim in no uncertain terms that the territory is theirs and actions done by activists by the other country breach its state sovereignty. The risks and ensuing costs of punishment from the domestic audience are simply too high for the government to ignore. In 2004, a group of Chinese activists based in Hong Kong and Taiwan tried to land on an island in Southeast China sea. They were then arrested and taken to Okinawa Prefecture for prosecution. The Chinese foreign ministry strongly protested the Japanese action, announcing "Japan illegally detained seven Chinese citizens who landed on China's own Diaoyu Islands. Such an act seriously infringed on the territorial sovereignty of China."⁹⁵ The People's Daily of China contains numerous articles containing claims of the Chinese sovereignty over the island, as well as accusations of violation of Chinese sovereignty by the Japanese Coast Guard. An example is given below:

The one-sided actions [patrol by the Japanese Coastal Guard] by the Japanese side are serious violation of China's territorial sovereignty and are illegal and ineffective. We absolutely oppose and cannot tolerate such actions.⁹⁶ [my translation]

⁹⁵ "China Demands Japan Unconditionally Release Island Activists," Xinhua News Agency, March 25, 2004.

⁹⁶ 25 March 2005, *The People's Daily*.

Japan, which *de facto* controls the disputed island turns a blind eye to China's sovereignty claim. However, when it comes to the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, it seeks to raise the awareness of the issue. Since 2004, the Defense Ministry of Japan has started to include mention of Takeshima as part of Japan's territory in its annual white paper. The latest 2009 White Paper states that "Japan confronts unresolved territorial disputes over the Northern Territories and Takeshima, both of which are integral parts of Japanese territory."⁹⁷ Japan's renewed assertion of its sovereignty over Dokdo/Takeshima coincides with its desire to become a normal country and a rise of conservative nationalism in Japanese domestic politics. Interestingly, the 'Sea Day' (*umi no hi*) in Japan was declared as a national holiday in 1995 in an act of re-imagining Japan as a maritime nation.

The issue, along with the Yasukuni shrine visits by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, proved to be the critical factor that worsened the bilateral relations. In 2006, then President of South Korea Roh Moo-hyun declared "diplomacy war" (*waegyo jeonjaeng*) against Japan in his highly public speech that was televised throughout the country. The special presidential speech captures the symbolism of the island for the Koreans, and connects the issue with past Japanese colonialism, as he stated:⁹⁸

It [Dokdo/Takeshima] is not merely a piece of our land but one that carries historic significance as a clear testament to our forty years of affliction. For Koreans, Dokdo is a symbol of the complete recovery of sovereignty. Along with visits by Japanese leaders to the Yaskuni Shrine and Japanese history textbooks, Dokdo is a touchstone of the extent to which Japan recognizes its past history as well as of its commitment to the future of Korea-Japan relations and peace in East Asia.

In both Chinese and Korean statements it is common to hear that their territory was "stolen away" (*bei tou*) by Japan, and how it was illegitimate and unjust. The disputed

⁹⁷ The 2009 White Paper by the Ministry of Defense of Japan available at http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/2009.html.

⁹⁸ Roh Moo-hyun, 25 April 2006. The full text of the speech is available at http://www.korea.net/News/News/newsView.asp?serial_no=20060425013.

territory is unthinkable separately from the issue of Japanese colonialism and aggression for both China and Korea. As a result, when the rise of the 'history problem' combines with Japan's claims to what the Chinese and Koreans believe is their territory, the end result is fervent nationalism directed against Japan and the intensification of dispute over the territory in question.

In contrast to the NEA disputes, the SEA disputes have been resolved through third-party arbitration, namely, ICJ. The Malaysian policy maker, who represented Malaysia in the ICJ, connects the decision to resolve the dispute with regional norms and integration. Tan Sri Abdul Kadir Mohamad said that with the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in place and various efforts at regional integration, Malaysia believed that it would be better to resolve the dispute with neighboring countries.⁹⁹ Although unhappy about losing the case to Malaysia, one Indonesian official in the ministry of foreign affairs also opined that it was better to resolve the dispute than continue it when ASEAN was moving toward creating a regional community.¹⁰⁰ Another official said that Indonesia-Malaysia relations today are not what they used to be in the 1960s. Both states do not fear each other, and would like to expand areas of cooperation.

Some argue that the fact that the SEA nations did not send their disputes to ASEAN's own regional conflict resolution mechanism—the High Council—is the vindication of the lack of mutual trust. Indeed the manner in which the SEA nations decided to resolve their disputes is a noteworthy point, since the typical means of resolution of territorial disputes is bilateral negotiation. Bilateral negotiation has many advantages over third-party arbitration from utility-maximization point of view, since it gives the parties more

⁹⁹ The author's interview with Tan Sri Kadir.

¹⁰⁰ The author's interview with directors of the ASEAN division and the legal divisions in Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

control over the process of negotiation as well as enables them to link issues, so that they could gain concessions in other areas even if they lose on the territorial issue. The decision to refer the disputes to the ICJ becomes even more surprising, when one considers of the high sensitivity that the ASEAN nations exhibit to the norms of state sovereignty and non-interference.

My interviews with several foreign ministry officials in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore suggest a rather different reason why they opted for ICJ rather than the High Council. They argue that not only does the existence of overlapping sovereignty claims over Spratlys and Paracels islands—the major regional territorial disputes involving multiple claimants from ASEAN—raise the issue of neutrality and impartiality, but the ASEAN as a whole frankly lacks necessary expertise to judge the cases. They also suggest that referring the disputes to the High Council would unnecessarily ‘rock the boat’ in ASEAN, since all ASEAN states are members of one community and have personal relations with one another.

Recently, Malaysia and Singapore have also resolved the contentious bilateral dispute over the Malaysia Railway land in Singapore. Both Singapore and Malaysia claimed sovereignty over the land, which is physically located in Singapore. In May 2010 the leaders of both countries signed a landmark agreement on the exchange and development of the land, where Malaysia accepts Singapore’s sovereignty over the railway land while Singapore acknowledges Malaysia’s entitlement to some economic value for the railway land and stations (RSIS Commentaries 18 June 2010), ending the dispute that had lasted for four decades.

The Analysis of Political Elite Surveys

In this section I present the analysis of an original survey of the political elite in five East Asian countries: Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore). China was excluded

from the survey due to the infeasibility of conducting such survey. The analysis reveals that the two regions are quite different in terms of the level of mutual threat perception and willingness to cooperate on security matters. Identity distance is correlated with both threat perception and security cooperation, providing empirical support for my argument.

Data Collection and Methods: The survey instrument was drawn up in multiple languages (English, Korean, Japanese, and Indonesian) containing approximately 20 questions designed to tap into identity distance between the respondent's own country and other countries in the region, and national and regional identity as well as key variables that would affect interstate conflict such as threat perception, the view of the regional strategic environment, the preference for regional security cooperation, and the desire to settle disputes with neighboring countries.

Table 12. Response Rates of the Surveys by Country

Country	Category	Actual number of responses	Total number of legislators	Response rate
Indonesia		111	550	20%
Malaysia		64	292	22%
Singapore		14	94	15%
South Korea		81	299	27%
Japan		136	720	19%
Total		406	1955	21%

Before distributing the questionnaire to the politicians, I held a pilot test with three Diet members in Japan. Based on their feedback, I revised the wording of the questionnaire or altered some questions. The survey instrument was then distributed to almost all national-level legislators in the five countries through various means: postal mail; fax; and

email. A special website was also set up for the respondent to complete the survey in complete anonymity. The response rates for the five countries are summarized in Table 12.

I decided to survey the national-level legislators for both substantive and practical reasons. Substantively, the legislators are far more likely to interact with counterparts from neighboring countries than ordinary citizens, and hence provide an opportunity to test identity distance theory. They also influence policy making through their participation in various foreign policy committees and sub-committees as well as their interactions with foreign ministry officials. Hence their views and beliefs carry more weight when it comes to policy making. Practically, they are easily identifiable, and their contact information readily available on the internet. They are also far more willing to respond to a survey of this nature than bureaucrats, who are more concerned with potential trouble answering the survey might bring to them.

Measuring the Variables: Ideational variables are notoriously difficult to measure, and identity is no exception. It is particularly so in surveying the political elite, because often-used questions such as “do you agree or disagree that most of [ethnic group] are dirty/selfish/slackers?” appear to be too crude and rude. The pilot study suggested that concerned with potential leakage of their names and views, politicians are unlikely to answer these “inappropriate” questions. The questions used to measure identity are adapted from the ones used by Sniderman et. al (2004). I use two questions to measure identity distance.

- “How would you assess the level of trustworthiness of the following [ingroup/outgroup] countries?” (1-7 scale, where 1 denotes very low, 7 very high)
- “How would you assess the level of nationalism in the following [ingroup/outgroup] countries” (1-7 scale, where 1 denotes very low, 7 very high)

Identity distance is then calculated as the weighed average of the scores on these two questions. In other words:

$$I.D.[i] = (Score1[i,j] + Score2[i,j]) / 2$$

Three other questions were used as a different measure of national and regional identity.

- “If someone said something bad about my country, I feel almost as if they said something bad about me.” (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)
- “The destiny of my country is tied to the destiny of other [NEA/SEA] countries” (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)
- “The nations of [Northeast/Southeast] Asia are a distinctive group, with practices and values which distinguish them from other regions of the world (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)

There are four dependent variables. They are threat perception of neighboring countries, the likelihood of war among regional countries, regional security cooperation, and the willingness to settle disputes. The questions were:

- “[Ingroup] does not view the neighboring countries as the nations’ primary security threat” (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)
- “The national security of [my country] is better served by security cooperation with neighboring countries than with external great powers” (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)
- “Maximizing broader [NEA/SEA] regional interests is more important than maximizing [my country’s] national interests only” (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)
- “For the foreseeable future there is almost no probability of war among [NEA/SEA] countries” (1 denotes strongly agree, 7 strongly disagree)
- “Do you believe that [your country] should use the International Court of Justice to settle disputes with neighboring countries?” (1 : yes 0 : no)

Regional Differences Between NEA and SEA: There are several important regional differences concerning threat perception, assessment of the regional strategic environment, and willingness to cooperate on security matters. The three box-graphs present visualization of the regional differences in the three major areas.

Figure 26 shows that median value for SEA is lower than that for NEA. The difference of the two means is statistically significant, with the mean difference 1.75 and the 95% confidence interval of (1.45, 2.05). What this means is that the mean for SEA on

perceived threat level is 1.75 points lower than that for SEA on a 7-point scale, and ranges between 1.45 and 2.04 with 95% confidence.

The second boxplot in Figure 26 showing the individual countries suggests that the difference between the two regions is not due to any one country with extreme views. All three SEA nations rank consistently lower than the two NEA counterparts on the perceived threat level.

Figure 27 presents a summary of responses for regional security cooperation and shows regional differences between NEA and SEA as well. The SEA nations regard security cooperation with regional countries is more important for their national security than cooperation with great powers outside the region, than the NEA counterparts. The difference of the means of the two regions is estimated to be 2.09, with a 95% confidence interval of (1.80, 2.38). In other words, on average, the SEA countries' belief that their national security is better achieved by security cooperation with neighboring countries than external great powers is approximately 2 points higher than the belief of the NEA countries on a 7-point scale. Once again the individual country boxplot suggests that this regional difference is not due to a particular country in the region. Rather, overall, the individual SEA nations are lower than the NEA counterparts.

The figures provide evidence that the two regions are systematically different in their perceptions, views, and preferences for threat perception, regional strategic environment, and regional security cooperation, and that these differences are not due to a particular country with extreme values. Next we investigate the relationship between identity distance and the same outcome variables more systematically using regression methods. I run a series of regressions to see if identity affects two critical factors that would affect the likelihood of interstate conflict: threat perception and regional security cooperation.

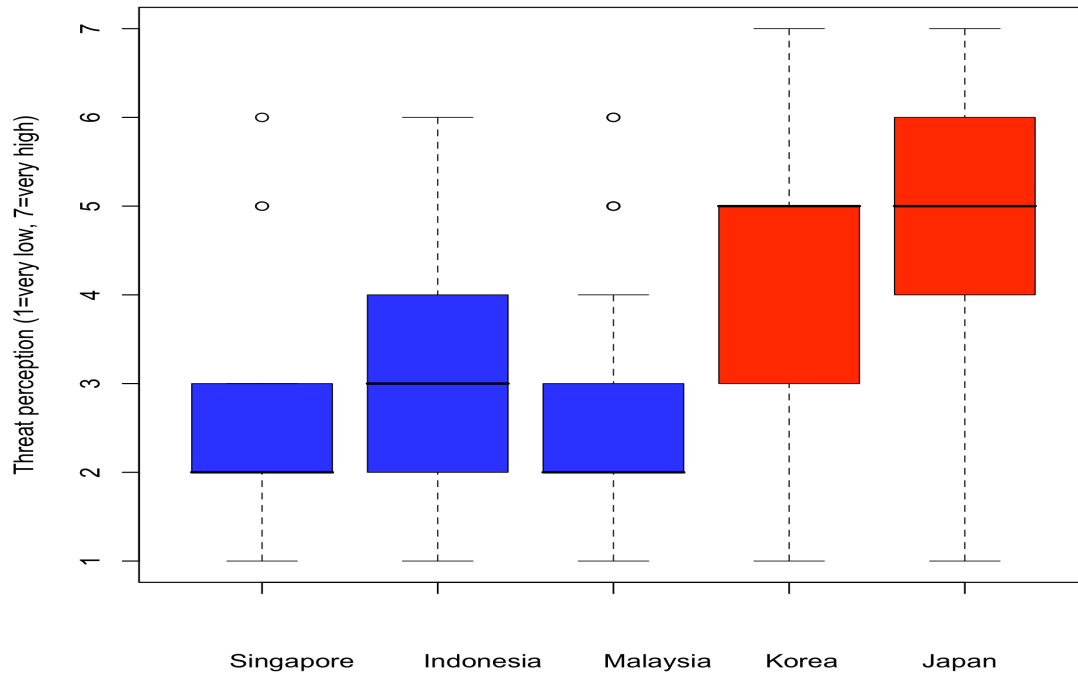
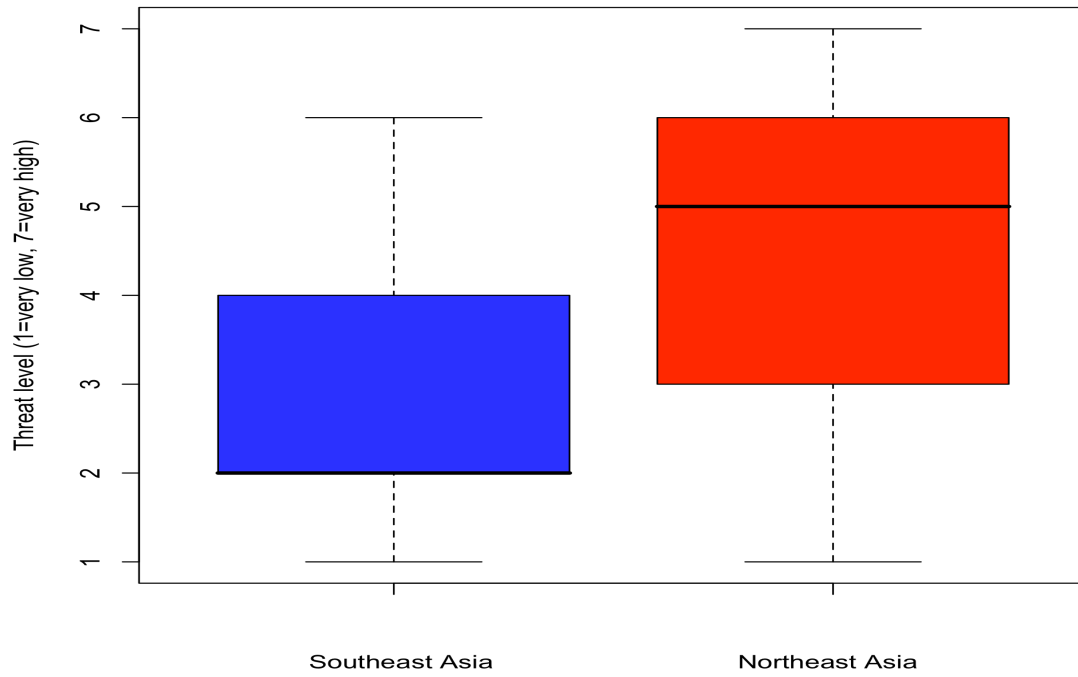


Figure 26. Perceived Threat Level of Neighboring Countries in East Asia

Note: The question asked was

“Do you consider your neighboring countries as threat to your national security?”

Note: the plots show the range, upper and lower quantiles, and the median response to the question.

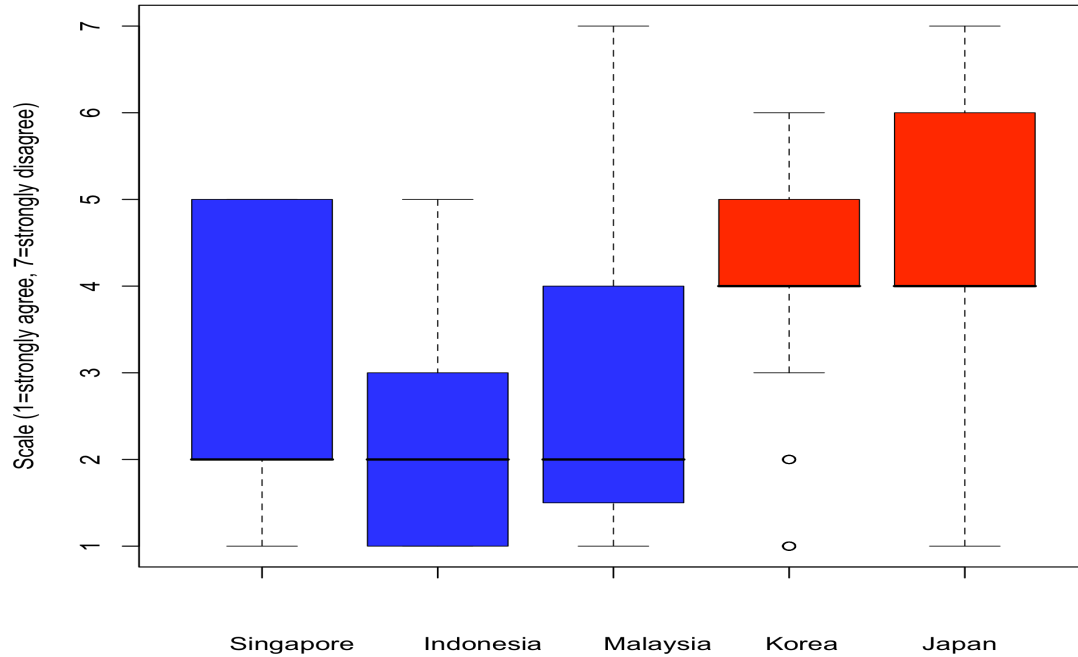
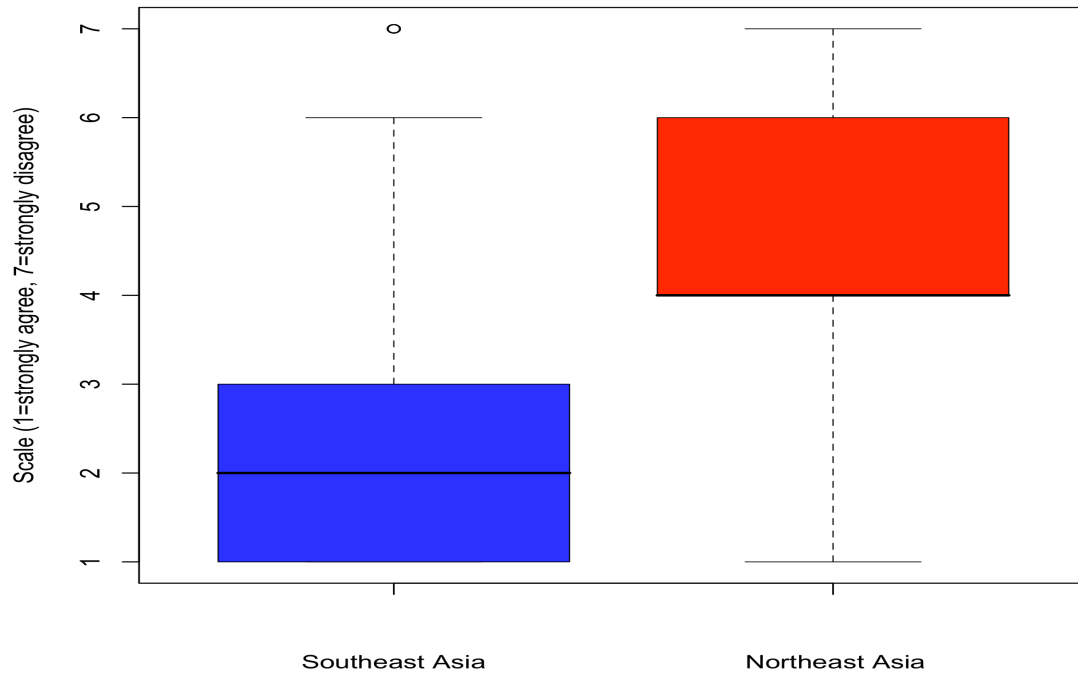


Figure 27. Importance Attached to Security Cooperate with Neighboring Countries
 Note: the question asked was: “The national security of your country is better served by security cooperation with neighboring countries than with external great powers?”

The plots show the range, upper and lower quantiles, and the median response to the question.

Identity Distance and Threat Perception: One key reason why states engage in conflict with one another is because of actual and perceived threat to their national security from other states (Vasquez 1993). Stephen Walt, who argues that states tend to balance against or bandwagon with the foreign power that poses the greatest threat, suggests that threat perception is a function of four factors: aggregate power; geographical proximity; offensive power; and aggressive intentions (1987: 21-22). But threat perception is an ideational variable, and hence is likely to be influenced by identity-distance vis-à-vis the external state. The objective aggregate power, geographical proximity, and offensive power are going to be interpreted differently depending on the nature of the external state and its relationship to one's own state. In fact, Walt himself introduces an ideational factor in his threat perception equation, namely, aggressive intention, which is likely to be a function of identity.

It is hypothesized that if identity distance narrows (i.e. decreases), then it is less likely the respondent perceives threat from neighboring countries. But, if identity distance widens (i.e. increases), then the respondent is likely to perceive greater threat from neighboring countries. The following table presents the regression results.

Table 13. Results of Ordered Logit Regression (Threat Perception)

	Estimate	Std. Error	Pr(> t)
(Intercept)	5.73	0.52	< 2e-16 ***
Region	-1.72	0.15	< 2e-16 ***
Identity distance	0.26	0.08	0.001 **
Age	-0.04	0.01	2.90e-07 ***
Edu	0.10	0.15	0.49
Ideology	0.05	0.06	0.36
Years in Parl	0.01	0.01	0.49

There are three findings. The regional difference shown in the box-plot graph is still significant. SEA (Region = 1) has a substantially lower threat perception than NEA (Region

= 0). The main variable of interest, identity distance, is also statistically significant. Identity distance is positively correlated with threat perception. Interestingly, age is also significant, although the magnitude of the coefficient is rather small. An increase in age reduced threat perception.

Identity distance and regional security cooperation: Can identity distance also influence the desire for regional security cooperation? Here the dependent variable is the importance attached to regional security cooperation measured from 1-7, with 7 denoting highest importance.

Once again, regional difference comes out significant. SEA nations attach greater importance to regional security cooperation than NEA counterpart. However, the results cannot tell us whether that is due to mutual identification or because as small powers SEA nations have a greater incentive to band together. Identity distance is also significant. Increasing identity distance correlates with decreasing importance of regional security cooperation.

Table 14. Results of Ordered Logit Regression (Security Cooperation)

	Estimate	Std. Error	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)	3.00	0.48	1.20e-09	***
Region	2.03	0.14	< 2e-16	***
I.D.	-0.55	0.07	5.69e-13	***
Age	-0.02	0.01	0.03	*
Edu	0.06	0.14	0.67	
Ideology	0.17	0.05	0.001	**
Yr in Parl	0.04	0.01	0.001	**

Three other variables are significant: age, ideology, and years in parliament. Age has a negative effect for regional security cooperation, while more conservative ideology is correlated with greater importance of regional security cooperation. The years spent in parliament also have a positive effect on regional security cooperation. One possible

interpretation of this finding is that legislators who spend longer years in parliament have more opportunity for regional socialization and mutual identification with counterparts from other ASEAN nations, thereby positively influencing their view of regional security cooperation.

Identity distance and willingness to settle disputes: The final regression analysis relates to the willingness to settle disputes with neighboring countries. Here the dependent variable is a binary variable (settle vs dispute), and hence I run logit regression. It should have a direct bearing on the territorial disputes cases discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter.

Once again, the Region, Identity Distance and Age variables are statistically significant and of the expected sign. The NEA nations are less willing to settle disputes with neighboring countries than the SEA nations. Also, a widening identity distance has a negative effect on the willingness to settle disputes with neighboring countries, while age has a negative effect on the willingness to settle disputes.

Table 15. Results of Logit Regression (Dispute Settlement)

	Estimate	Std. Error	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	0.42	0.79	0.60
Region	1.09	0.24	7.32e-06 ***
I.D.	-0.19	0.09	0.05 *
Age	-0.02	0.01	0.05 *
Edu	-0.31	0.21	0.15
Ideology	-0.001	0.08	0.98
Yr in Parl	0.02	0.02	0.32

The findings from the regression analyses provide supporting evidence that identity distance is an significant variable affecting critical factors that would influence the likelihood of interstate conflict: threat perception, security cooperation, and dispute settlement. The findings are consistent with the expectations of my argument. The widening identity

distance between NEA nations due to the rise of the ‘history problem’ is likely to have led to the intensification of their bilateral territorial disputes, while the narrowing identity distance between SEA nations due to the conscientious effort to build a regional identity and community is likely to have positively influenced their decision to resolve their bilateral territorial disputes.

Implications

Although not discussed in detail, there are other territorial disputes both in NEA and SEA that show contrasting approaches. In NEA, a less-known territorial dispute exists between China and Korea concerning the sovereignty over the Socotra Rock (called E’o-do in Korean or Suyanjiao in Chinese). In December 2007, the China Oceanic Information Network (*Zhongguohaiyangxinxiwang*) under the State Oceanic Administration (*GuojiaHaiyangju*) announced, “Suyanjiao is located within the 200 mile EEZ of Chinese maritime boundaries, and hence is part of Chinese territory.”¹⁰¹ Following the Korean government’s formal complaint,¹⁰² both sides agreed to put the issue aside. The Korean government rejects the Chinese claim and argues that there is no dispute. It will provide an interesting case study as to whether or not and how the identity distance between China and Korea will affect the territorial dispute in the future.

China’s behavior is also interesting. While China has resolved many of its territorial disputes with neighboring countries, taking less than 50% of the territory in most cases (Fravel 2008), it has not shown any willingness what so ever to resolve the dispute with either Japan or Korea. I have argued that identity distance is a key factor vis-à-vis Japan, and it could also be a factor vis-à-vis Korea.

¹⁰¹ “离於岛(位于200海里专属经济区(EEZ)内的中国领海, 是中国领土”

¹⁰² Chosun Ilbo 15 August 2008.

In SEA, perhaps the most important territorial dispute is over the Spratly and Parcel Islands located in South China Sea. There have been occasional naval clashes between the claimants over the islands. In 1988, China and Vietnam clashed at sea over the possession of Johnson Reef in the Spratlys, and the Chinese gunboats sank Vietnamese ships. In 1995, China and the Philippines clashed over the Mischief Reef. Following the 1995 incident, however, an ASEAN-brokered agreement was reached between China and ASEAN member states whereby one country would inform the other of any military movement within the disputed territory. Since then all parties also engaged in talks to create a code of conduct aimed at easing tensions in the disputed islands. In November 2002, a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea was signed, and all parties pledged to resolve their sovereignty disputes in a peaceful manner without resorting to the use of force.¹⁰³ Although the dispute over Spratly and Paracels Islands is unlikely to be referred to ICJ for adjudication, the Declaration suggests that the parties strive to manage the dispute in a peaceful manner.

¹⁰³ “Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea” available at <http://www.aseansec.org/13163.htm>

PART IV. Conclusions

Chapter 9. Taking Identity Seriously

We are social beings. We live in a world that we have created, and our social environment makes us who we are. This view contrasts sharply with the prevailing ‘rationalist’ view in the discipline of political science, including international relations. The rationalists assume that human beings are atomic individuals, their behavior is driven by the desire to maximize one’s utility or interests, and the environment constrains our behavior.

While the rationalist approach has generated much insight on human conduct and thus is a valuable approach in the study of interstate relations, it has its own vices, one of which is it neglects the examination of what can be regarded as “deeper” issues such as identity change, preference formation, and changes of the properties of the international system, to name but a few. The rationalist approach takes these as givens, and focuses on the strategic interactions among utility-maximizing actors under constraints.

With such focus, rationalist theories do not allow for better understandings of change in both agents and structures because their conception of change is limited to the dimension of behavior and not those of preference and identity. As Katzenstein notes, “Cultural-institutional contexts do not merely constrain actors by changing the incentives that shape their behavior. They do not simply regulate behavior. They also help to constitute the very actors whose conduct they seek to regulate.” (1996: 22).

This book was an attempt to illustrate the utility of taking a non-rationalist approach in analyzing and understanding important international phenomena. I have developed identity distance theory and utilized it to analyze a set of important and puzzling phenomena in East Asia, covering topics such as mutual threat perception in Sino-Japanese relations, worsening political relations between Korea and Japan, the development of human rights in

ASEAN, and territorial disputes in the region. In all these issues, identity distance is a critical factor affecting the outcome.

In the case of mutual threat perception, the rise of the 'history problem' altered the Chinese assessment of Japan's aggressive intentions, leading to the former's greater threat perception of the latter. To be sure, power dynamics also matter in this process. Even then, however, identity contributes to the effect of power dynamics. Furthermore, the relationship between intention and power in the determination of threat perception is more complicated than the simple uni-directional picture suggested by realists. I have argued that intentions matter for both countries when power asymmetry is low. But when power asymmetry is high, then only the intention of the more powerful state matters to the weaker state, and its importance will dominate the determination of threat perception.

As for the Korea-Japan relations, the puzzle was why the bilateral political relations became worse and more intense after Korea became a democratic country in the latter half of the 1980s. Once again the rise of the 'history problem' turned on deep-rooted anti-Japanese sentiments that had been dormant. When the democratic political system provided a channel for the popular feelings to be reflected in official policies. The leadership could no longer ignore or suppress public sentiments and was compelled to take them into account when formulating policies. Here identity interacts with regime type, and produce an outcome that deviates from major theories of IR.

In contrast, in Southeast Asia, the development of a regional identity and mutual identification has produced some remarkable achievements in the positive. Once oppressors of human rights, ASEAN countries were not interested in the promotion of human rights. But in the 2000s, they began discussions on the matter, and in 2009 established a regional human rights mechanism known as AICHR, the first of its kind. The ASEAN Community-

building project based on the consolidation of a regional identity has been the critical factor for the evolution of ASEAN's human rights institutions. Creating a regional community requires shared visions and purposes, and the promotion of human rights reflects this process.

Finally, the settlement of territorial disputes through the ICJ shows that SEA has increasingly become a region of peace not just in a negative sense (absence of conflict) but also in a positive sense (active resolution of disputes). As part of imagining 'one identity, one vision, one community', three regional countries have decided to resolve their disputes. This development contrasts sharply with the intensification of territorial disputes in NEA. The analysis of a survey of the political elite in SEA and NEA countries reveals that the SEA elites are more willing to cooperate on security matters and to settle their disputes than the NEA counterparts. They also have lower threat perception of neighboring countries than NEA countries.

Other factors such as power dynamics and regime type matter in affecting the outcome in all these cases. But identity is also a critical factor, and without adequate understanding of identity issues involved, we cannot achieve a satisfactory understanding of the issues and their varied outcomes. The findings of the book—and the approach taken in the book—have important implications for our theoretical as well as practical understanding.

Enduring relationships of amity and enmity are likely to be an outcome of social interactions rather than the structural factors such as distribution of power, economic interdependence, etc. They are constructed, sustained, and remade or unmade by social interactions among actors, who have agency to effect changes in the world. No doubt, this conclusion is unsatisfactory to those who seek more deterministic or solid probabilistic

statements of events in the world. But I see human will and action as the most important variable in social affairs and outcomes, making prediction rather tricky.

As for practical implications, without a resolution of the 'history problem', 'deep' cooperation will be extremely hard to take place between NEA countries, barring major changes in the international strategic environment. Functional cooperation will progress, since the proliferation of groupings based on region or some other identity will create pressure on NEA nations to cooperate among themselves. But military or political cooperation will be much harder, and no supranational entity encompassing only the NEA countries will be likely to form.

In addition, the 'history problem' carries much greater potential for regional conflict than what is recognized. This is because the political elite and leaders in NEA countries have largely refrained from exploiting the issue thus far. But this situation may not last long. There are two factors that might make the leadership in China, Korea, and Japan to exploit the issue for their political advantages.

One is national unification in China and Korea. The 'history problem' and ensuing anti-Japanese sentiments are an incredibly powerful unifying tool that can be used to consolidate the newly unified nation. As far as the history problem is concerned, both Taiwan and North Korea are firmly with China and South Korea. In addition, anti-Japanese sentiments are part and parcel of the founding of these two nations, and the sentiments are widely shared among the public in both countries. Hence the history problem could become an extremely useful tool to consolidate the unified nation.

The other is the utility of the issue for diversionary purposes. Once again, the elite in both China and Korea have largely refrained from using the 'history problem' for this

purpose, but if political, social, and economic problems arise, there is that potential. This is even more likely in China where regime legitimacy is weak and social problems are plenty.

In SEA, while the regional countries have made a great deal of progress in terms of creating and consolidating a political and social identity of the region through various regionalist projects such as the ASEAN Community project, it is still in the initial stage, and they have a long way to go toward the realization of a true community where personal identity is more equated with regional rather than national or sub-national identity. This is no easy task, and becomes more difficult when there are divisions within ASEAN.

One such division is the difference between the original founding five nations (maritime SEA) and the late comers (continental SEA). The latter tends to see ASEAN as a means for their domestic socioeconomic development, while the former is genuinely interested in moving regionalism forward and anxious about the slow pace of ASEAN's development. The task for ASEAN is how to socialize the countries of Indochina into ASEAN quickly enough not to disappoint the original members with a slow progress, but not fast enough to alarm the Indochinese nations that being part of ASEAN might mean political interference and instability.

Another challenge for ASEAN is how to "enmesh" great powers, especially the US and China, and achieve a right balance among them. The situation that ASEAN wants to avoid is both great power rivalry in the region and great power disengagement from the region. The former will likely pit regional countries against one another, while the latter makes the region vulnerable to a dominant regional power such as China. All along, ASEAN must keep itself relevant and be in the driver's seat of regional affairs, a delegate task that it has managed with some success thus far, but about which there is no guarantee it will succeed in the future.

Appendix

Threat perception score is measured by the frequency of keyword appearance in the *People's Daily* per annum. Some of the keywords counted were: threat (*weixie*); intervene (*ganshe*); worried (*danyou*). Based on the total number of appearance of the keywords, each article is given a score of 1 to 5, with 1 being a low degree of threat perception and 5 being the highest degree of threat perception. For instance, if there was no mention of any of the keywords, 0 is assigned to such article. An article with one or two mentions of the keywords received a score of 2; three or four mentions a score of 3; five or six mentions a score of 4; and six or more mentions a score of 5. Additionally, if the word *weixie* was mentioned, such article was given a score of 4 or above. If the word was mentioned only once or twice, 4 was assigned. If the word appeared more than twice or along with other keywords, I assigned a score of 5.

The articles from which threat perception scores were calculated were selected from the *People's Daily* based on the appearance of the word 'Japan' in the title of the article. There were more than 15,000 articles in total from 1972 to 2010, and at least 200 articles for every year. The annual threat perception score is the average of all threat perception scores for the articles in the given year.

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