

Security in East Asia after the Cold War:
China's New Concept of Security and Japan's Response

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The rise of China in the late 20th century and the early 21st century is a significant phenomenon that surely will be recorded in the standard textbooks of world history. It is one of the most salient elements in the dynamics of the international society in the post-cold war era. In fact, China's rise was facilitated by the end of the cold war. Adding to the positive external factors such as the progress in globalisation, Chinese leaders that prevailed in the power struggle boldly promoted marketisation and opening-up of the economy believing that economic growth was necessary to avoid the collapse of the Communist rule that took place in Europe.

As far as their foreign policies are concerned, the Chinese leaders have striven to achieve and maintain a peaceful international environment ever since the late 1970s when they determined economic development as their prime goal and adopted reform and opening-up policies as the means to achieve it. At the same time, the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping emphasized repeatedly that economic development was primary and defence build-up was secondary. This set of policies looked fairly consistent in the eyes of the Chinese. Viewed from the neighbouring countries, however, it eventually turned out to contain a basic dilemma: China needed peace to achieve economic development, but once China developed, the awakening giant was perceived by its neighbours as a threat to their peace and development.

Partly in response to this dilemma, China made a significant shift in its foreign and security policies in the latter half of the 1990s. In their foreign policy, the Chinese switched from their traditional strategy to ‘befriend distant states while attacking those nearby’ (*yuanjiao jingong*), and started to deepen their friendly ties with their neighbours not only bilaterally but also in multilateral frameworks. On the other hand, they launched the so-called new concept of security. This in content

overlapped with cooperative security, as it consisted of elements such as mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation between nations, and the peaceful solution of conflicts through dialogue. The formation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the switch to a positive policy stance towards the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) were policies that were related to the advent of this new concept. The first aim of this paper is to analyse in detail the factors in the shift of China's foreign and security policies.

This paper aims secondly to investigate Japan's foreign policy and security policy in the post-cold war era. A particular focus will be set on her response towards the shift in China's approach. The *raison d'être* of Japan's alliance with the United States was questioned after the fall of the Soviet Union, and the alliance seemed 'drifting' in some people's eyes. Domestically, the domination of power by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ended and Japanese politics was in a state of flux, while the Japanese economy floundered about after the bursting of the 'bubble economy' in the early 1990s. It appeared that many Japanese people had lost their way and confidence in the overwhelming tide of globalisation.

In relation to their security policy, Japanese politicians and bureaucrats suffered a psychological blow in the early 1990s when their financial support in the Gulf War was not appreciated by a large part of the international society. At the same time, there emerged an argument for creating a multilateral security framework in response to the advent of a new security environment in the region. Japan was a strong promoter of such framework which eventually took the shape of ARF. Then in the mid-90s, Japan went along with the United States to reinforce their alliance. For sure, psychological dependence on the US remains strong even now especially in the face of the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. However, the rise of regionalism in East Asia, which became salient in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis, has had an undeniable impact on the Japanese thinking of regional security. Such is the context in which Japan faces the rise of China. In the second part of the paper, I shall look into some specific responses on the part of the Japanese towards the shift in China's diplomatic and security policies. I shall then conclude by discussing the possibility of coordinating the policies of Japan and China.

1 China's Pursuit of Military Prowess

China's economic rise in the 1990s was accompanied by a steady modernization of its military. Since liberation in 1949, the Chinese have always been serious in its pursuit of military might. This probably stems from a combination of factors. Geographically, China is a huge continental country that faces an ocean, with long national borders. Historically, China seems obsessed with its past,

determined not to repeat the humiliating experience of semi-colonization. In addition, the military has maintained a strong influence in politics, which stems partly from the fact that the Chinese Communist Party gained and has maintained its power through its own military forces, that is the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

In the late 1990s, the Chinese leaders acknowledged the importance of military power in the following formula: there was an increasingly severe competition of comprehensive power among nations, which consisted of economic power, military power, and the integrity of the nation.¹ China identifies itself as a regional, developing power moving on to become a global power (Zheng and Yang 2000: 186), and in this contest, it is determined to develop each of these elements of comprehensive power.

In the early 1990s, the Gulf War was studied carefully not only by those in uniform but also by Jiang Zemin, the Chairman of the Central Military Commission and heir to Deng Xiaoping. In early 1993, the new military strategy was established under Jiang's instructions. The new strategy included the defence of maritime rights and interests, and extended the area of defence from the mainland to air and especially the territorial and economic waters (Takahara 1994: 50). The new strategy was applied to the policy regarding military modernization. In a nutshell, Jiang ordered that the PLA should be transformed from a 'manpower intensive military' into a 'science and technology intensive military' (Jiang 1999: 2). The effect of the new strategy appeared in February 1995, when the Philippines announced that the Chinese had constructed a building on Mischief Reef, which the Philippines had claimed to be their territory.

The central focus of China's military build-up, however, has been a possibility of hostilities with Taiwan. Under the leadership of President Li Denghui, Taiwan pursued the path of democratisation and Taiwanization in the 1990s. Li revised the constitution of the Republic of China in 1991 and made it clear that the constitution only applied to the area that was then effectively under the rule of the Kuomintang government. This implied that the Nationalists admitted the Communists had the legitimacy to rule the mainland, which provided the basis for the 1999 statement by Li that the relationship between Taiwan and the mainland amounted to a special, state-to-state relationship (Takahara 2000: 44-6). Beijing regarded unification with Taiwan as one of the most important policy targets, and could not overlook such leadership of Li Denghui.

For China, the US loomed large behind the *de facto* independence of Taiwan. To this day, the largest

¹ Remark by Jiang Zemin, *People's Daily*, 5 June 1999. Later Jiang added another element to the formula, namely, science and technology.

threat to China's security is perceived to be the implementation of what they call the hegemonism and power politics of the United States, and particularly its possible intervention in the Taiwan issue. In the minds of the Chinese leaders, the US regards Taiwan as an important element in the geopolitics in East Asia and that the US is utilizing Taiwan to restrain China (Zheng and Yang 2000: 288).

The strengthening of the Japan-US alliance in the mid-1990s exacerbated the irritation of the Chinese, who suspected that the new arrangement prepared the ground for US and Japanese military intervention once the hostilities broke out across the Taiwan Strait. Not only did they protest vehemently to the US and Japan, but following Li's visit to the US in 1995, Beijing launched a series of military exercises aimed at the liberation of Taiwan, which were timed to intimidate the Taiwanese before their presidential election in spring 1996.

The adoption of hard line policies was related to the succession of power in China. The complete transfer of power from the so-called Second generation of leaders to the Third generation was officially announced in September 1994, and Jiang Zemin, the 'core of the Third generation of leaders', chose Taiwan as the first major policy area to assert his own style of leadership. His conciliatory eight-point proposal in February 1995, however, bore little fruit (Yamamoto 1999: 223-31). Critique of the dovish policies came not only from rival leaders, but a nationalistic sentiment among the public had grown as a result of the staggering, double-digit economic growth that started in 1992. The Chinese enhanced their national pride and the public started to express their wish to see their leaders 'say no' to the US and to Japan.² It was significant that public opinion emerged as a factor that cannot be ignored by the leaders in China's foreign policy making.

2 The Strategic Readjustment: China's Policy Shift in the late 1990s

The military build-up and the flexing of muscles by China, however, met protest and raised suspicion among its neighbouring nations. A month after the Philippines announced the Chinese occupation of Mischief Reef, the foreign ministers of ASEAN issued a joint statement urging the countries concerned to halt any action that would threaten the peace and security of the South China Sea. In the first half of the 1990s, in fact, some ASEAN countries had started to welcome the enhancement of the American military presence in the region (Cheng 2001: 438). The annual survey of public opinion conducted by the Japanese government in 1996, which was the year when the PLA

² *China Can Say No*, a book filled with animosity against Japan and particularly against the United States, became a bestseller in 1996. Books with similar titles and similar content followed suit.

fired missiles into the seas close to Taiwan, indicated that only 45.0 per cent felt an affinity for China, while 51.3 per cent did not. To date, these are the lowest and the highest points of affinity and lack of affinity, respectively, for China.³

Isolation was something that China could not afford particularly when the US and Japan were adjusting and reinforcing their alliance. The US had also come up with an idea in November 1995 to utilize APEC as a forum for security dialogue, and this was unacceptable to the Chinese since Taiwan was a member of APEC (Takagi 2001: 88). The prospect of isolation and alienation in the region urged the Chinese to change its receptive attitude towards the ARF. In 1996, China became a co-chair of the ARF Intersessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures together with the Philippines. In the following year, when the Chinese hosted the meeting of this Group, Chinese officials stressed that the ARF should play a central role in maintaining the stability of the region (Soeya 2000: 65).

It was in the few years between 1996 and 1999 that China's new concept of security gradually took shape (Asano 2003: 18-23). The new concept was based on the two joint declarations of China and Russia issued in April 1996 and April 1997, when Yeltsin and Jiang mutually visited the capitals of the two countries. Since then Jiang has repeatedly stated that, unlike the old concept that is based on military alliances and the solution of conflicts by military means, the core of the new security concept is mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation (Jiang 2002: 540-1). Then the outbreak of the Asian Financial Crisis added another factor to the concept, that is comprehensive security, and among others, economic security (Takahara 2003: 99-100). Thus, the new security concept provided the basis for promoting the multilateral frameworks for dialogue in non-traditional as well as traditional areas of security, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation for Central Asia, and the ARF, ASEAN + 3, and the Japan-Korea-China trilateral talks in East Asia.

The relationship with the US constituted another factor in China's policy shift. While China steadily built its military capabilities in case of need, it did not want confrontation on any front with the United States too soon. Knowing that there is a huge gap in the comprehensive state power of the two nations, China's policy towards the US has always been a conciliatory one. When they first met in 1993 at the occasion of the APEC summit in Seattle, Jiang Zemin told Clinton that the principles of the China-US relationship should be increasing trust, decreasing trouble, developing cooperation, and no confrontation. Along with the rise of confidence and nationalism among the public in the mid-1990s, Jiang sought for an equal partnership with the US to enhance his prestige and power at

³ The survey results for the years from 1988 to 2002 are available online at: <http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h14/h14-gaikou/images/zu05.gif>, visited on 21 July 2003.

home. This effort was rewarded by his state visit to the US in 1997, and the reciprocal state visit by Clinton the following year.

However, a series of events in the first half of 1999 shattered China's hopes for establishing a strategic partnership with the US. NATO decided on its new strategic concept that justified their bombing of Yugoslavia, which actually started during Jiang's visit to Europe in March. The Chinese leaders levelled severe criticism against this new concept because they were also accused of 'human rights violations' in Tibet and Xinjiang, and was confronting a democratised Taiwan. In April, Premier Zhu Rongji failed to conclude the tough negotiation with the US for China's admission to the WTO during his visit to the US, and was severely criticized for it at home. And in May, the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was bombed, after which the Chinese leaders had no illusions about the unstable nature of its relationship with the US.

Since the summer of 1999, the Chinese leadership has seriously sought to improve the bilateral relations with its neighbours and promote the formation of multilateral frameworks in the region. Jiang told Prime Minister Mori Yoshirô at the United Nations Millenium Summit in September 2000 that the rise of Asia was only possible with the friendship and cooperation between Japan and China, and that the leaders of the two countries must take a long and broad view of the bilateral relations. When Prime Minister Zhu Rongji visited Japan in the following month, he raised regional economic cooperation as one of the three target areas of joint cooperation, and stressed that he looked forward to strengthening the coordination with the Japanese side within the framework of cooperation in East Asia.⁴ During Zhu's visit, China agreed on the friendly exchange of naval vessels, which Japan had been proposing for some time.

Thus, while China is making a serious effort to enhance its comprehensive state power, it has been promoting the idea of comprehensive and cooperative security since the latter half of the 1990s. Specific measures included the conciliatory approach in handling the bilateral relations with its neighbouring nations, and the formation of, and cooperation in, regional, multilateral forums. The factors that urged this change included the fear of isolation in the post-cold war strategic environment and increased self-confidence in engaging in multilateral forums. The rise of China and her deepening involvement in the regional economy constituted the basis of these factors. In addition, China had to live with an unstable relationship with the sole superpower, the United States, which was increasing its tendency for what the Chinese called hegemonism and power politics.

⁴ The remarks by Jiang and Zhu are available on line at: <http://www.china-embassy.or.jp>, visited on 5 May 2002.

3 Japan's Response to China's Rise and Policy Shift

In the wake of '4 June' in 1989, Japan's distinct policy was not to isolate China from the world. This was the case despite the dramatic deterioration in people's perception of China as a result of the incident. The Japanese government held on to its policy of engaging China, and she was the first among the industrialised countries to end the sanctions and resume economic assistance. Despite the newly introduced ODA policy to take into account such factors as the development of weapons of mass destruction and arms exports by the recipient country, these principles were not strictly applied to China. This was because China's stable development was regarded as vital to the interests of Japan and the region. It was in the same spirit that Japan was consistently supportive of China's joining the GATT and later the WTO.

In terms of bilateral relations, Japan responded positively to China's strong request for a visit by the Emperor to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the normalisation of relations in 1992. This took place despite opposition from some members of the Liberal Democratic Party saying that the Emperor's visit should not be used politically (Tanaka 1994: 145). In his banquet speech in Beijing, the Emperor acknowledged that there was a period when Japan brought about great hardship to the Chinese people, and remarked that this caused deep sorrow in his mind. He continued that, based on deep remorse, the Japanese had firmly resolved that they should never repeat such a war and reconstruct the country as a peaceful nation (*Nittyû Kankei Kihon Shiryôshû*: 794-5). In the following year, Prime Minister Hosokawa, who led the first coalition government in almost 40 years, expressed deep remorse and apology to those who suffered from Japanese invasion and colonial rule in his speech to the Diet (*Nittyû Kankei Kihon Shiryôshû*: 802).

During this period, there was a significant move in terms of regional security. The ARF met for the first time in 1994. It took the shape of a forum of ASEAN, but a good part of the original initiative stemmed from Japan (Takagi 1999: 25-6). From the viewpoint of the Japanese, they would rather play the role of a shadow actor (*kuroko*), since they thought Japan's initiative in forming a regional framework was not yet welcomed by the nations that suffered from Japanese aggression in WW2. One of the important aims of ARF was to obtain the participation of China. Co-opting a big neighbour in this manner was called the Gulliver approach, which had been adopted earlier by the Southeast Asian countries when they established ASEAN to engage Indonesia (Okabe 1996: 155-6). The advisory group on defence issues that was formed under Prime Minister Hosokawa presented its report to the successor, Prime Minister Murayama in July 1994, advising that Japan should seek for a

multilateral security forum in the region while maintaining the alliance with the United States.⁵

The reconfirmation of the Japan-US alliance proved to be the largest issue in the Japan-China relations in the 1990s. For the Japanese policy makers, what mattered most was perhaps the political significance of the alliance with the United States. They had to explain to the public what the alliance meant after the cold war. They feared that economic friction with the US and the problems that arose from the US bases in Japan and especially those in Okinawa could lead to stronger anti-US feelings and questioning of the alliance. Since they regarded that cancelling the alliance would fundamentally change the status quo in Japan and in the region, with which they and most of the other countries had been rather comfortable, they willingly cooperated with concerned members of the US government to adjust the alliance to the new situation.⁶

There is small doubt that when the Japanese and the US governments talked about possible 'circumstances surrounding Japan' in the new guideline for defence cooperation, they were mainly alluding to a war in the Korean Peninsula, where a crisis had just been overcome in 1994. As regards China, the April 1996 Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security referred to her in the following way:

They [Hashimoto and Clinton] emphasised that it is extremely important for the stability and prosperity of the region that China play a positive and constructive role, and, in this context, stressed the interest of both countries in furthering cooperation with China.⁷

Certainly it was with great sensitivity that the two sides composed this sentence, since it had turned out that the declaration was to be signed only a month after China launched their missiles off the coasts of Taiwan and the US sent two aircraft carriers in the area. Neither Japan nor the US wished to promote the 'China threat theory' by their joint declaration.

Not only the Americans, however, but also the Japanese were generally increasing their concern about China's future in the mid-1990s. What caused this concern included the frictions arising from China's nuclear testing, over which Japan held back its grant aid to China, and the intensive anti-Japanese, patriotic propaganda to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of WW2. No matter what the intention of the patriotic education was, it effectively imprinted a very negative

⁵ The report is available on line at:
<http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPSC/19940812.O1J.html>,
visited on 22 July 2003.

⁶ See Funabashi (1997).

⁷ http://www.jda.go.jp/e/policy/f_work/sengen_.htm.

image of Japan and the Japanese on the minds of the Chinese, including the children.⁸

The backdrop to Japan's uneasiness about China at the time was the impressive economic growth of China, which was generally welcomed by the Japanese but ironically stood in stark contrast to the quagmire that the Japanese economy had fallen in. The Chinese missile tests, aimed to intimidate Taiwan, took place just next to Yonakuni Island, the western tip of Japanese territory. This, together with the nuclear tests, enhanced the militaristic image of China in the minds of the Japanese.

Once the reconfirmation of the Japan-US alliance was all but a *fait accompli*, Japan and China moved towards reconciliation and entered a new period in their relationship. The Japanese Prime Minister at the time was Ryūtarō Hashimoto. When Hashimoto met Jiang Zemin in Manila in November 1996, Hashimoto told Jiang that he attached as much importance to Japan-China relations as he did to Japan-US relations. He also stated that his cabinet shared the understanding of history with the Murayama cabinet, which had expressed deepest remorse and sincere apologies for Japan's colonial rule and invasion in the past. Hashimoto's China policies were articulated in his speeches that were made just before and during his visit to China in September 1997. He pointed out that Asian countries, and among others Japan and China, should be doing four things: to understand the variety of polity, economy, history, religion and culture that exist in Asia; to increase the opportunities for dialogues; to promote cooperation and mutual learning; and to create a common order. Based on this framework, he proposed a regular annual summit meeting and the strengthening of the security dialogue between Japan and China. In addition to the dialogue and cooperation on bilateral issues, he argued that the two countries should discuss regional and global issues and tackle them jointly and constructively.

The backdrop to this idea was the on-going globalisation and the growing drive for regional integration as a result of the former. Perhaps the Chinese were still cautious when they responded negatively to the Japanese proposal to establish an Asian Monetary Fund not long after the eruption of the Asian financial crisis in July 1997. But the Chinese soon came to accept the spirit of regional cooperation, changed their minds about the Asian Monetary Fund, and eventually agreed on the extensive list of mutual cooperation which was announced at the time of Jiang's visit to Japan in November 1998.

As is well known, however, Jiang Zemin's visit to Japan turned out to be a bumpy ride. He was

⁸ I often encounter Chinese youths who reveal that the Japanese they have met are actually much 'nicer' than the image that they had learnt about and had seen in the Chinese media. They may be mistaken, of course, but the point on education still holds.

angry that the Japanese did not agree to include the word, 'apology', in the Joint Declaration on Building a Friendship and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Development, and that the then Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi only apologised orally during the official summit meeting. While in Tokyo, the President repeatedly reminded the Japanese about their wartime deeds and the need to contain militarism, which was regarded by many Japanese as unnecessary, impolite and irritating. Jiang was angry especially because Obuchi had apologised in writing when President Kim Dae Jung visited Japan a month earlier.

From the viewpoint of the Japanese, Japan had expressed its apologies to China in many occasions, including the Emperor's visit to Beijing, while these had not been done to the Koreans. Even when the word, 'apology', was not uttered, the spirit had been clear and was accepted by the Chinese leadership of the times. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to normalise the relations and sign the Peace and Friendship Treaty. The 1972 Japan-China Joint Communiqué reads, 'The Japanese side realises keenly its responsibility as to the serious damage it inflicted on the Chinese people through the war, and feels deep remorse' (*Nittyû Kankei Kihon Shiryôshû*: 428). It is well known that Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai then decided to give up their claim for reparations, which was a great relief to the Japanese side. When Deng Xiaoping came to Japan and met the Emperor Showa in 1978, he said, let bygones be bygones and from now on we should look forward and construct the peaceful relationship between the two countries (*Nittyû Kankei Kihon Shiryôshû*: 518-9). Many Japanese were greatly moved by the magnanimity of these great leaders, but, in contrast, they were much disappointed with Jiang Zemin's tenacity. In addition, Kim Dae Jung had made it clear that the Koreans would not take up the history issue in the future, while Jiang was apparently unwilling to make this promise.

Obuchi was also under pressure from within the LDP not to give in to China this time. With China's accelerated growth in the 1990s Japanese, like people elsewhere, could imagine the emergence of China as a major global power. Many Japanese felt the historical issues were sometimes used in China to strengthen Chinese nationalism, and to pressure Japanese for economic concessions.⁹ As China grew stronger, Japanese could imagine further political pressure and economic competition from China, creating doubts about the wisdom of a continued low posture towards China. The new perspective was strengthened as the proportion of Japanese who were adults in World War II declined and the proportion of children born after the war who felt they were not responsible for the

⁹ One precedent had taken place in 1987, when Deng Xiaoping brought up China's abandonment of reparations in demanding greater assistance from the Japanese during a conversation with Junichiro Yano, the then leader of the Komei Party (*Nittyû Kankei Kihon Shiryôshû*: 707).

war grew.

The irritation among some Japanese had also stemmed from what seemed to be China's tactic to belittle Japan and befriend the United States. This took place as if it was a means to beef up the image and authority of Jiang Zemin after his re-election as Party General-Secretary in September 1997, seven months after the death of Deng Xiaoping. In the following month, Jiang made a stopover in Hawaii on his way to meet Clinton and visited Pearl Harbour, the implication of which was rather obvious. After the Asian financial crisis, the Chinese media repeatedly reprimanded Japan for its irresponsibility in letting the exchange rate of the yen fall. When Clinton reciprocated the Jiang visit the following year, he bought this argument and praised the Chinese for maintaining the value of RMB, and accused the Japanese for inaction (Takahara 1999: 58-9).

Such irritation on the part of the Japanese was one factor in the discussion over the reviewing of ODA to China. Some members of the LDP complained vociferously that it was no use providing ODA to the Chinese who took it for granted and were never grateful. Some ignored the earlier discussions on the application of ODA principles to China and insisted that ODA should not be provided in the light of China's military build-up and arms exports. Negative reports in the right-wing Sankei Shimbun about the Chinese using the ODA for military purposes fuelled the indignation. In fact, considering the rapid growth, huge savings and the foreign exchange reserves of China, and Japan's economic stagnation and huge budget deficits, the economic rationale for aiding China looked rather thin. Nevertheless, the wise men's group, convened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to review the ODA to China, concluded in early 2001 that the ODA should be continued for the stability and prosperity of China and of the region. At the same time, the group recommended that the foci of the ODA should be shifted to environmental conservation and social development, and that its amount should be adjusted in accordance with the fiscal conditions of Japan.

During this period, however, Japan's inclination towards regional cooperation continued, and the good news for Japan was that China turned herself into an active participant in regional forums. At the occasion of the ASEAN+3 meeting in Manila in November 1999, China agreed for the first time to attend the Japan-Korea-China triangle summit meeting. At the same meeting the following year in Singapore, it was agreed by the three parties that this meeting should be made a regular, annual event, and that the year 2002 be made a year of exchange among the three countries. The significance of this year was threefold: Japan and Korea jointly would host the World Cup Football Games; Japan and China would celebrate the 30th anniversary of the normalisation of relations; and Korea and China would celebrate the 10th anniversary of normalisation. China, in its meeting with ASEAN, proposed that they should aim for a free trade treaty, while ASEAN came up with a responding

proposal to include Japan and Korea as well in forming an East Asian free trade area. After all, both Japan and China understood that regional cooperation was the trend of the times.

Since 1999, despite the hiccups that occurred now and then, such as the irregular remarks on history by some Japanese politicians and the great publicity given to them by China, which helped to inflame the issue, or China's strong protest against the Japanese-American joint research of TMD, or Japan's strong protest against Chinese naval and research vessels intruding into Japanese waters, both governments have basically maintained a conciliatory approach towards each other. There is a growing concern, however, about the vicious circle of frictions and distrust between the two nations at the level of the general public. This should be associated with the rise in nationalism in the two countries, which in turn could be attributed to the shared sense of uncertainty in the face of drastic systemic restructuring required by globalisation. Not only Japan's but also China's policy makers could no longer ignore public opinion, and they had to think quickly of ways to foster mutual understanding and trust if they wanted to expand their room for manoeuvre.

In addition to the nationalistic sentiments of the public, there seems to be at least two reasons why the efforts of the two sides have apparently not synchronized fully. First, despite Koizumi's statement about the general target of economic integration, there is a powerful lobby in Japan to protect the interests of the farmers, who have strongly argued against the liberalization of trade in agricultural products. Quite ignorant of China's tenacious attempt at talking ASEAN into negotiating a free trade area, Japan introduced tentative safeguard measures on three agricultural items, against which China retaliated by lifting the tariffs for Japanese industrial products such as cars and mobile phones. During his visit to Singapore in January 2002, Koizumi proposed what he called an initiative for a Japan-ASEAN comprehensive economic partnership, to which he said the Japan-Singapore economic agreement just signed would be an example. It was not so difficult with Singapore since it hardly has any agriculture, and the path to an agreement with ASEAN as a whole will be tough and winding. Thus, objection from the agricultural sector has now become the strongest constraint on Japan's pursuit of regional integration. This is not the case with China, since the political system is such that the authorities need not pay too much attention to the farmers, whose interests are in fact seriously underrepresented.

Second, the Japanese are still uncertain about the desirable security arrangement in the region. Japan faces an enigmatic North Korea, and it cannot be denied that many Japanese are increasingly worried about a stronger China. Some regard that reconfirming the alliance with the US was essential in maintaining the power balance in the region. At the same time, there is an increasing number of people who believe that Japan should promote the formulation of a multilateral security framework

in East Asia. Such people include scholars and politicians,¹⁰ among others the former Director of the Japan Defence Agency (Nakatani 2002: 17). The development of such thinking is certainly helped by China's conciliatory approach towards regional issues of security and bilateral issues of history.

Conclusion

China made a significant turnabout in its diplomatic and security policies in the latter half of the 1990s and started to present itself as the champion of cooperative security in East Asia. This was aimed partly at containing the China threat theory, which had arisen in the 1990s as a result of China's impressive success in economic growth. Because of its size, history and the belief in the value of might, China's success posed a threat to its neighbours and disrupted the peaceful environment that China had needed in achieving its primary goal of economic development.

On the other hand, Japan and the United States also faced a basic dilemma on their part. In terms of security concerns, they do not like to see China develop its military might to challenge the *status quo* in the region. On the other hand, Japan and the US are willing to strengthen their economic ties with China. This will contribute to China's economic development, which inevitably will lead to the expansion and modernisation of the Chinese military. The US may be able to bear this dilemma longer because of its wide lead in military capabilities and her geographical distance from China. Japan, however, lacks these conditions and will not be able to put up with the pressure for long.

Logically, there is only one way to solve this dilemma of strategic confrontation and economic engagement: that is to establish a multilateral security framework in the Asia-Pacific on top of the existing bilateral alliances. In this way, Japan will neither confront China strategically by depending exclusively on the United States, nor confront the United States by strengthening ties with China and the other countries of East Asia. Japan, together with China and the US, should take the initiative in implementing such an arrangement.

In order to materialise this idea, at least two things need to be done. First, it is imperative that the vicious circle of friction and distrust be reversed between the Japanese and the Chinese. It seems to me that there is a basic psychological problem to be solved: the Japanese feel superior to the Chinese in terms of their economic and social development, while they feel inferior about culture, civilisation and the status and role in international politics; the situation is the opposite with the Chinese, who feel superior to the Japanese in terms of tradition and civilisation and their influence in international

¹⁰ For instance, see Asahi Shimbun (2000), Takahara, Fujiwara and Lee (2003), and Tanaka *et al.* (2002).

politics, but feel inferior about the level of economic and social development. Both sides get much worried when they perceive that their superiority is being undermined.

It would take time to alter these mind-sets, but the only solution here is to engage at all levels, actively promote dialogue and boldly question any seed of misunderstanding. An example is the mistaken statement that the Japanese do not admit there was a massacre in Nanjing in 1937. How many Japanese actually deny the massacre? Extremely few, must be the answer. No doubt, the Japanese should not forget the history of the war with China, and deepen their understanding about the cause of the folly. The Chinese, on their part, should not forget the recent 50-odd years of Japanese peace and contribution to the region, and should see history as a trend and take the post-war years as an important reference in judging Japan.

Second, both sides must keep on pursuing their programme of regional cooperation. It cannot be denied that there is an element of rivalry in the relationship between Japan and China. On that basis, the development of regionalism is expected to overcome chauvinism and promote the positive interaction between multilateralism and bilateral relations. It would also help if the two nations could embark on exciting joint projects, such as the establishment of the Asian Monetary Fund and the training facilities for the UN Peace Keeping Operations. There is also a possibility that their cooperation in solving the nuclear crisis in the Korean Peninsula through multi-party dialogue will serve as a catalyst for establishing a permanent framework for cooperative security in East Asia.

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