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**China-Japan Rivalry**

－－How the Power Relations influence the East Asian Integration

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# Abstracts

Regionalization has become the trend of development of world economy. When other parts of the world are sharing the fruits of regional integration, the development of integration in East Asia is very slow. China and Japan are two main actors whose economies account for the majority of the whole East Asia. Both China and Japan are seeking to be the leader of East Asian development. The rise of China is already a matter of fact and has brought the systemic changes in the world system. In comparison, Japan’s power is declining. Besides, due to their special relations formed on the basis of long history, these two states seem to regard each other as potential adversary. Both of them feel insecure in the region and the relations between both states can be characterized as power relations. Although economic interdependence is deepening, politically they are two rivalries.

This paper argues that the intense relations of them have very negative effects on the integration process of East Asia due to the existence of security dilemma in the area. It aims to explain how such bilateral relations affect the East Asian Integration.

Keywords: East Asian Integration, China, Japan, Rivalry

# Introduction and Problem Formulation

Globalization has made the world an inseparable village, in which interdependence between villagers (countries) has been strengthened greatly. The world today as a whole has become a big system consists of different and separated blocs contributed to by regionalization and these units include regions which have close relations, such as EU---a unique economic and political partnership between 27 European countries that together cover much of the continent[[1]](#footnote-1) and NAFTA---an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States, creating a trilateral rules-based trade bloc in North America[[2]](#footnote-2). Regional integration has provided its members political and economic advantages over other countries that are not in the system, such as collective security and omission of tariff and so forth. However, look at the world map, it seems that only Asia is still a blank area which has not formed a regional organization in a real sense, although people in Asia has given it a shot in materializing the goal of integration. Generally speaking, East Asia integration initiated from the Asian financial crisis in 1997 which primarily in the form of ASEAN Plus Three[[3]](#footnote-3). The crisis gave Asian countries a heavy shock and also a lesson that “unity is strength”. People just realized they needed protect themselves from crisis as one because one single state can never resist the risk like 1997 crisis and one state’s crisis may have effects on other states.

In the past decades, East Asian integration has achieved great improvement starting from scratch, and the ASEAN is seen as a successful model in Asia[[4]](#footnote-4). Despite its success and synergy effect to East Asia, the integration process of East Asian still has no tremendous advancement, undergoing both challenges from non-Asian countries and difficulties within Asia itself. Among all these challenges and difficulties, the relationship between China and Japan is on the top of the list.

Nowadays, China is believed to be economically the second super power in the world following the United States and a potentially dominating power in East Asia. The past 30 years has witnessed China’s nearly sustained double-digit growth. In 2009, China’s per capita GDP was only about $3,600, compared with $46,000 in the United States[[5]](#footnote-5). We can say these numbers are strongly impressive because China has started from a very low base number due to years of wars, natural disasters as well as misleading political decisions. As the international trade grows faster and faster, region-wide production and distribution network has been set up by Japan in both Southeast Asia and China, so Japan has to maintain a closer relations with these countries and the fast growth in Asian countries, China in particular, has pressed Japan and made if feel insecure[[6]](#footnote-6).

China is expected to take more responsibility in dealing with Asian regional affairs. However, a rising China has made its neighbors uncomfortable, especially for its nearest neighbor Japan. The historically unhappy memory between these two countries hasn’t been removed by the notion of integration. For Japan, a more and more assertive and active China means a challenge to its regional position[[7]](#footnote-7). All in all, they are seemingly natural enemies.

As two Asian giants, rivalry exceeds much more than cooperation in their minds, so to make China act as the leading power in promoting regional integration is still full of challenges and lack of possibility. Japan cannot carry the burden by itself, either. The nature of the relations is both decisive and destructive because on the one hand, there are so many obstacles in front of them: disputes, misunderstandings, historical hatred…, which disabled the substantial development of integration towards fulfillment. On the other hand, interdependence between two states is increasing as the development of internationalization. Both economic entities account for the majority of East Asia. The most sensitive problem is who should be the leading power of the organization that both countries wouldn’t comprise with.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Therefore, the topic of this paper is about Eastern Asian integration and the role Sino-Japanese relations have to play from the Realist perspective, so the problem formulation is like this:

**How does the Sino-Japanese security dilemma influence the process of East Asia Integration?**

In order to answer this problem formulation, I will mainly analyze the factors influencing relations between China and Japan and try to find out the reasons contributing to the difficulties and obstacles in the integration process choose Sino-Japanese relations to analyze for two reasons:

First, because of the complexity of the issue, this paper will only focus on the major factors influencing or hindering the development of East Asian integration. China and Japan are two giant economies in East Asia. In 2012, the GDP of China and Japan were respectively $8.227 trillion and $5.961 trillion, with an annual growth rate of 7.7% and 2%, while the GDP of East Asia & Pacific (developing only) was $10.33 trillion 2012. The total number of China and Japan was even larger than that of East Asian and Pacific developing countries[[9]](#footnote-9). From these numbers we can see why China and Japan are called two giants in East Asia, and accordingly the influence of both countries must be very powerful, so naturally their relations is of great importance to Asian integration.

Second, both countries have a wide range of controversial issues, such as territorial disputes over Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands, the Japanese visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, whitewashed versions of history textbooks, and the Taiwan issue[[10]](#footnote-10). And the changing status of China and its proactive participation in world affairs, especially in promoting East Asian integration make Japan very anxious in losing its influence, thus Japan sees China as potential threat. These are the negative aspects of their relations that are long-lasting and destructive. Both sides hold quite strong stance in these issues[[11]](#footnote-11). If not dealt with carefully and properly, the outcome will be permanent rivalry between both countries.

Although the topic of the paper is Sino-Japanese relations and its influence on East Asian integration, the United States——Japan’s alliance, who has long-involved almost every issue in Asia, and also has the most leverage in international affairs, cannot be neglected, but will be analyzed indirectly.

# Methodology

Methodology provides the main approaches and methods that will be used in the analytical process. This thesis will involve both qualitative and quantitative methods. Also, the author will adopt a theoretical approach by using theories of international relations.

## 2.1 Motivation and Main Focus

My motivation for this paper is to investigate why it is so difficult for East Asia to form a state-driven regional integration now that the interdependence between states in this area is becoming closer and closer.

Therefore, the main focus of this paper will be to explore factors that hinder the successful progress of East Asian integration. I will opt for realist school in my analysis of this problem, considering that the alternative main schools of thought have limited applicability in this scenario for the following reasons:

Realism employs a practical approach regarding conflict, security issues and power balance in an anarchic world[[12]](#footnote-12). Although China and Japan are interdependent economically, politically and socially they are full of contradictions. Even in economic development, they are competitors in the region. Despite the amicable relationship over 2000 years ago and the slogan of peaceful co-existence today, prejudice and hostility remains in their society. Territorial disputes are still unsolved, and misunderstandings are still very deep and serious after the World War I, World War II, and the Cold War[[13]](#footnote-13). These negative aspects all indicate the mistrust and insecure feelings of both countries, and as a result, contributing to the barriers for their sincere cooperation and for the development of regional integration.

Thus, I believe that Realism preliminarily seems the most suitable theory to answer the question and it will be my theory of choice, largely due to its vast applicability in direct inter-state relations and balance of power issues[[14]](#footnote-14).

Having acknowledged the complexity of the regional issues but due to the limited scope and time of this paper, this paper will only analyze power relations of these two countries i.e. China and Japan on a realist basis primarily.

## 2.2 Research Approaches

As previously mentioned, in tackling the question of East Asian integration, I will rely on the Realist school as the main research tools of analysis to answer the question in the problem formulation. Realism can be employed to form hypotheses about the motivations of and incentives for states' policy making and the outcomes thereof, thus predicting patterns of states' behaviors. The theory will be applied to relations between these two countries to see if its predictions are accurate. If the theory matches the facts, the argument can be made that the theory explains the issue thoroughly; if not, I’ll try to uncover the special circumstances and the reasons for the deviation from the theory.

My research methodology will be primarily guided by a deductive approach. “Deductive reasoning works from the general to the more specific.[[15]](#footnote-15)” It is also called a "top-down" approach because it “begins with studying or attempting to apply a theory and then narrows it down into more specific hypotheses which are addressed by observations. This helps to verify the hypotheses with specific data - a confirmation (or not) of the applicability of the chosen theory”.[[16]](#footnote-16) So it is quite clear that the research reasoning process of deductive method is as follows:

Theory

Hypothesis

Empirical validation process

Reflective confirmation[[17]](#footnote-17)

From this flow chart, we can see that the analytical process starts from putting up with a theory that gives a generalized description of certain phenomenon, and then comes the hypothesis based on the chosen theory. And then one should do researches after knowing the assumptions of the theory (theories) in real world by collecting arguments so as to prove or disprove the previously mentioned theory. At last, a conclusion has to be made to reassure the accuracy of the hypothesis or a reflective confirmation can be included.

Similarly, in my paper, the approach of deductive reasoning centers around employing Realist school as the framework for understanding International Relations between the target countries, taking its main assumptions for granted for the purposes of this analysis and using the individual historical events or other related factors most significant to relations between Asian countries as observations with a view to uncovering a rational pattern of interactions between the observed states.

In this sense, this project will starts with the basic assumptions that the behavior of states in the survey can be explained by the assumption that the underlying interests of the involved actors (states) have not changed among nations because they primarily revolve around maximizing security and protecting their own interests. A realist focuses on the objective state interests of states[[18]](#footnote-18), therefore, the assumption can be made that interests of states is primarily on their own countries’ national interests and this principle is unchanged over time, but just taking various forms in practice. If this is true, it means that given an accurate analysis of the states’ interests in the very beginning of the relationship and the dynamics thereof and a good understanding of the extraordinary circumstances which have cropped up over time, one should be able to observe a pattern of foreign policy emerging for each of the involved actors. In other words, revealing the differences between the interests of the actors and their ability to fulfill these interests in the past should provide the readers with a decent explanation of how states’ relations work. Therefore, employing this model to analyze why the East Asia cannot succeed in developing regional organization like EU and why it’s hard for both China and Japan to lead the integration process and how the tense relationship between China and Japan impacts the process of regional integration in East Asia should be well-grounded. On the basis of realist ideas, the Sino-Japan relations will be analyzed, and then the actual nature behind certain behaviors of the countries in the region can be known by us.

The aim of my thesis is to uncover what effects Sino-Japan relations have on East Asian integration and how does it work in this process from a realist points of view. My supposition is the reason for the failure of East Asian integration is largely because the states in this area have different national interests and the power balancing between states is also a decisive element in the development of international relations. Among the complex and inter-tangled web of relations, the most remarkable relations influencing East Asian integration is Sino-Japanese relations. According to Realism, states see each other as potential enemy or contender of its security, let alone there are historically negative or unpleasant experiences between these two states, such as territorial disputes, historical mistrust and international competition. China and Japan are potential contenders since a very long time.

In the empirical validation process, first I will take the readers back to the past time of Sino-Japanese relations, and mainly describe the major events bringing transitional change to their relations. These events may include the prosperous time of China (was called the Celestial Empire) and the Tributary System, the Meiji Restoration that transformed Japan into modern state and the setting up of policy of militarist expansionist, and also, the major wars between Japan and China will be included in this part. Besides, I will emphasize the rise of China and the changes in the world system. Secondly, I will provide the readers with a review of the onset and development of Asian integration with the highlights of several important and iconic events related to China and Japan in a chronological order, starting from the introduction of international development of regional integration and stop at recent times. Then it will be followed by the analysis of inter-tangled relations between China and Japan and their particular behaviors and different foreign policies in different time that in return affects regional integration process. The analysis will revolve around these basic facts of international relations and will be supplemented by relevant explanations to these facts by utilizing proper theories (mainly Realism). The United States’ role in Asia will also be included because of its strong influencing power in international relations in the world. Then I will try to analyze and classify the reasons of the challenges in front of Sino-Japanese relations, and by doing this, to further illustrate the reasons of the difficulties in the East Asian integration based on the previously listed relations between China and Japan with a view to answering the problem formulation: How the tense relationship between China and Japan impacts the process of regional integration in East Asia.

## 2.3 Structure

This paper focuses on Sino-Japanese relations and the purpose of the paper is to explore how this kind of relations influences East Asia integration. Based on realist points of view, it will present a pattern of explaining the behaviors and foreign policies of these two states.

The paper is mainly divided into five parts. The first section provides an introduction to the topic, starting with the description of the general background of regionalization in the world and the contemporary state of the regionalization in East Asia. And to involve the objective of the paper, the roles of China and Japan in changing world will be presented and also their influence on the regionalization process in East Asia will be included. This general background information will ultimately lead up to the problem formulation and subordinate thesis questions: how the relationship between China and Japan impacts the process of regional integration in East Asia.

The methodology part gives a chance to explain to the readers the procedures of analysis used throughout the whole paper to answer the previously formulated problem and it helps readers grasp the way the author do research and the logical pattern. In this paper, I will divide the methodology into three parts, including my motivation and main focus, research approaches and structure of this paper so as to construct the logical frame work in mind before I start the analysis part.

The theory section provides the necessary framework and tool of analysis for tackling the aforementioned problem. It also provides the hypotheses whose applicability will be put to a trial. Ahead of the analysis part, a theoretical review will be included. In this paper, Realism will be adopted solely because it has most applicability when explaining conflict, disputes or disagreement, etc. And it also helps form the hypothesis of the paper, which is the necessary part of a deductive reasoning.

The analytical part consists of a historical account of major events in Sino-Japanese relations and an introduction to the involvement and interaction between China and Japan in developing East Asian integration. These events may include the prosperous time of China in the early time (was called the Celestial Empire) and the Tributary System, the Meiji Restoration that transformed Japan into modern state and drove Japan onto the road of militarist expansionist, and also, the major wars between Japan and China will be included in this part. Besides, I will emphasize the rise of China and the changes it brings into the world system. Apart from these, inter-state relations will be described and analyzed from a realist’s point of view so as to get closer to solve the formulated problem. That is to say, these events will be accompanied by theoretically analytical contributions and just as the chain of events portrays a story of the relations between the countries, and the analysis thereof should provide a rational pattern for the interests and incentives behind the states’ interactions.

The conclusion revisits the problem formulation in a hope to provide as reliable an answer as possible based on the analysis which was conducted with support of the aforementioned theory and methodology. At the end of this paper, I will have to answer the problem: how the intense Sino-Japanese relationship affects East Asian integration.

# Theories

In the theoretical review part, realism school and especially Neo-realism and Neo-Classical realism will be presented in my paper. The reason why I choose realism as the theoretical tool is not only because its popularity and applicability in explaining inter-state relations, but also because I believe realism can fit the objective of my thesis very well, that is, to answer the problem formulation and also is the most suitable theory in explaining Sino-Japanese relations.

Contemporary realism consists of two parts: Neo-realism and Neo-classical realism[[19]](#footnote-19). Neo-realism is the theory about international politics explaining international outcomes, while Neo-classical realism focuses on foreign policy to explain individual state’s policies and strategies. These two branches of realism are complementary. Each can explain things that the other cannot[[20]](#footnote-20). Therefore, when talking about international relations from a realist’s view, these two theories can be used together, avoiding loopholes or deficiency in either theory.

As we can see that Neo-realism mainly centers on several main concepts such as power, national interest, balance of power, state, security. These key words make up the pillars of the theory and also the theory guides this paper. In the pages to come, I will give a review of the basic knowledge of Realism for the purpose of: first, to give the reader a chance to acknowledge the contents in this long-standing theory, with a focus on chosen subjects; second, to set up the foundation for the analytical part.

## Neo-Realism and Its Main Concepts

Neo-Realism sees the world as a system, in which countries (units) compete with each other in an extremely cruel manner and members in the system are all selfish and only think about their own interests, pursuing relative gains. According to Liu Yongtao, there are several basic characteristics of Neo-Realism: first, national sovereignty is believed to be in the highest position for a state, and apart from that, there is no higher political culture and authority. The world system is anarchic. Second, the major actor in the world system is state. Third, world order in an anarchic system is determined by the power of states dwelled in it. The structure of the world system is based on power distribution.[[21]](#footnote-21)All these characteristics described by the theory have shown interests of state and consequently will influence states’ behavior. The behavior of state can reversely reflect the basic assumptions of the realist school.

Neo-realists believe that states’ behavior tends to be relatively stable if the world system remains unchanged because states, no matter large or small, are constrained by the external environment and they will respond to the changes in the world system. The ultimate purpose of a state is safety and survival. Self-interest is the driving power of motivation of states’ behavior[[22]](#footnote-22). So based on this idea, states will only focus on their own interests and the ultimate goal of behaviors of states is searching for power, security and national wealth, taking no other states’ interests into considerations.

Also, the pessimistic theory holds that states will take others as potential threat because no one can make sure the real intention behind another state’s behavior. As a result, states do not trust each other and when they are faced with other states, they are always cautious and full of doubts and suspicion[[23]](#footnote-23). Every country wants to keep itself safe and stable, so the only choice they have is to make them strong and have enough power to compete with their potential enemies or competitors. Then the world system becomes a dangerously bifurcated world in which every state struggles to survive with their own ways of doing things. But the good thing is, the states are rational actors according to neo-realists. When every state makes efforts to gain power and security and wealth, a counterbalancing power will contribute to the balance of power so that the world will be stable[[24]](#footnote-24). The world is seen as system of powers and the power-balancing can keep the world stable while on the contrary, the uneven distribution caused by structural variables will influence the stability of world system.

Neo-realism seeks to explain the international outcomes which are the results of interactions between actors, such as, in order to guarantee their own safety and interests, countries with the same ideology or way of thinking sometimes may align with others to collectively confront with their common enemies or competitors[[25]](#footnote-25).

Robert Gilpin had outlined the theoretical framework for understanding war and change argues that states make decisions by predicting the possibility of conflict; the interaction between states mainly involves material power. States will assess the probability of threats for their reference of making strategies. As is concluded by William C. Wohlforth:

In Gilpin’s probabilistic world, however, states may well choose a wide variety of strategies depending on their assessment of the probability and severity of security threats. They may choose to pursue economic gain instead of security if the probability of conflict is low, or they may choose to pursue power and prestige in the near term in order to be more secure in the long term. Thus, for Gilpin, states do not always ‘maximize security’ at all times and under all conditions, as Waltz held. Theories that ‘assume that one can speak of a hierarchy of state objectives…[[26]](#footnote-26)

We can see that security is important to states, but is not always the decisive factor for the decision-making, so there being a hierarchy of concerns and objectives in states’ calculation when they choose what kind of foreign policies they should adopt. This point is quite different from the traditional ideas of neo-realism. But the ultimate purpose of these strategies is to keep their power and national interests.

Kenneth Waltz is the representative of Neo-realism. He has paved the way for the international relations theory. He holds that states have to prepare to use force or live under the protection of militarily stronger state, and for him, “among states, the state of nature is a state of war”[[27]](#footnote-27). According to his words, states all live in an insecure environment. The world is an anarchic system where states units dwell. In order to survive under such circumstance, units have to be specialized, but the extent of specialization can be different and relative, and this will enhance competition among units and units’ incentives for resultant interdependence. As a result, some units become more and more closely related, while others keep wary. The anarchic nature of the system make states (units) pursue relative gains, and then the uneven distribution of products may have adverse effects on international division of labors. States will always worry about if there are enough gains for themselves[[28]](#footnote-28).He also argues that anarchy is not only about lack of government, but also caused by chaos and disorder[[29]](#footnote-29), which affects the likelihood of cooperation. In anarchy, balance of power is not the first choice, but a means of achieving the goal of survival.

## Neo-Classical Realism and Its Key Assumptions

Neo-classical realism seeks to combine both structural and domestic variables to explain state behaviors and focuses on making predictions about states’ response to the variables in the system, such as certain strategies one state applies and will apply at different times[[30]](#footnote-30), which has complemented the Neo-realism in predicting policies, but it cannot predict consequences of these policies. Neo-classical realists believed that a state’s relative material capability and international position will influence its foreign policy[[31]](#footnote-31). So Neo-Classical Realism can be used to analyze and explain foreign policies, the relations between foreign policies and state’s material capabilities. The main assumptions of Neo-Classical Realism will be presented in the coming paragraphs.

1. **Variables and International Structure**

Neo-classical realists argue that state actions are the variables in the international system, and one state’s behavior has effects on the system and on the opposite side, the system can also influence states by providing general background and conditions, pressuring on them[[32]](#footnote-32). When talking about state variables, they refer to several different factors that may affect states’ foreign policy. At the same time, they divide these factors into several groups, such as cognitive variables, distribution of power capabilities, domestic variables[[33]](#footnote-33).

Distribution of power is changing and sometimes uneven, so it is seen as one of the variables. Cognitive variable means the judgment of a state on the outside world, including systemic changes and the intention and potential threat of other states. Other variables like domestic variables are composed of state institutions, elites, and societal actors within society, as well as leader’s own perceptions, all the factors that can influence foreign policy[[34]](#footnote-34).

Apart from the above mentioned theoretical assumptions, neo-realists also agree on the concept of balance of power with neo-realists. But they hold that the imbalance in the international system, power transitions and possibility of wars can be caused by mistrust between states and the wrong judgment of another state’s power and policy propensity as well as the inability of leaders, and so forth[[35]](#footnote-35). Therefore, to realize the goal of balancing, states need to achieve certain standards and to counterbalance other states according to its own capability. Counterbalancing will always have to pay its price. Some famous terms in Realism have become very outstanding in explaining international relations. In the next parts, I will select several important key words to illustrate, and also, these terms will appear in the analytical part. It is essential that to clarify theories and the key assumptions before doing analysis since analysis need to be based on solid theoretical foundation.

## Security Dilemma

The security dilemma theory argues that mistrust between states in an anarchic and unstable system will lead to precautionary and defensive measures of the actors within the system[[36]](#footnote-36). It is a structural notion in which the self-help attempts impel states to look after their own security and take counterbalancing measures with or without intentions to increase their own security and see others’ insecurity measures as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others potentially threatening.’[[37]](#footnote-37) Sørensen has concluded that

Security can be seen as another and more concrete way of describing the main tasks involved in the state’s overall function of persistence and cohesion. In that sense, the security concept points to the many elements that have to be taken into consideration in taking care of the overall function, including the special importance of domestic threats to the very weak states. When focus is on external threats, it contributes to explaining that one single aspect of security (e.g. Military security) can only be pursued within the constraints set by other aspects and that priorities of security can change.[[38]](#footnote-38)

This principle is extremely significant to understand the interactions of China and Japan on the issue of East Asian integration because ordinary defensive and offensive capabilities are perfectly interchangeable and a general mistrust and aggressive competition since the very inception of the two world wars have allowed the security dilemma to thrive. It is also extremely significant to make a distinction between real and perceived threats. Nuclear Weapon, a controversially destructive weapon, has been used as a means of showing power to protect one state from the danger of war. For one state, it is a kind of defensive arm used for protection and deterrence, but for another one, especially who don’t have access to it, it means a real existential threats.

As I have mentioned in the previous parts, national security is the ultimately most important driver in states’ foreign policy making in the Realist paradigm. The pursuit of power will lead to counterbalancing measures and competition, thus the world will become a system of power distribution, further the uneven distribution of power will result in conflicts, confrontation and even wars. If the theory is applied to the situation of East Asia, then the area is likely to be trapped in this security dilemma. And the theory suggests that attaining security relies primarily on individual state power rather than cooperation in the international community. This also decreases the possibility of cooperation and adds more risks of conflict. Only by the means of achieving balance of power, then the security may be guaranteed.

## The Balance of Power

Balance of power is primarily treated as a metaphor, a structural conception of power in the IR literature. It was largely liked and cherished by International Relations (IR) scholars and foreign policy practitioners and also is one of the most important perceptions in realism[[39]](#footnote-39). No matter Neo-realists or Neo-Classical realists, they all see the world as a system and the balance of power provides the mechanism that a state can secure its safety[[40]](#footnote-40).

The Realists stipulate that to attain security in the international system relies largely on the balance of power between the states, and then the balance needs to be achieved by material capability, besides, the balance of power will also lead to polarity[[41]](#footnote-41), which means that the number of influential states exerting power in the international system[[42]](#footnote-42). For example, in the world after Cold War, there is only one polar which is the United States, and the system was characterized as uni-polarity. At the time before the dissolution of the USSR, there are two polars, the USSR and the United States which is called bipolarity. In the today’s world system, it poises as multi-polarity, which means several strong powers exist simultaneously in a world system[[43]](#footnote-43).

Realism also explains why one state’s gains mean the losses of other states or say, why a state’s efforts to increase its own safety will make other states feel insecure. Charles Glaser has concluded three kinds of behavior that will make the adversaries of one state feel the potential threats. The first is the security-seeking policies of performing military missions. The second is because of the self-help nature of the world system, states may deem its expansion as self-defense and deterrence becomes harder to realize. The third is the military buildup and alliance with others will make adversaries feel insecure because their belief may tell them that this can be more dangerous[[44]](#footnote-44).

Power transition will lead to the changes of system and will bring uncertainty and problems[[45]](#footnote-45). Therefore, if some variables occur in the system, it will bring possibility of competition and conflicts.

One of the features world systems have in common is a recurrent imbalance in power between individual states. States are constantly pursuing their own interests and some states will pursue their interests more effectively and actively than others, consequently, they will obtain a disproportionate amount of power. And, once a state gets certain amount of power, they will pursue more power, and as power breeds power, the realists believes that the superpower (s) will try their best to take advantage of their strength to get maximized power and also will attempt to project their influence and power onto other weaker states. The weaker states, in turn, wills likely prepare to take defensive measures and sometimes form coalitions with other states with a view to providing security against the aggressor by offsetting their power to attack them[[46]](#footnote-46). Thus the system will experience power transitions at all time. And the superpowers will have to balance each other out to make sure their own interests and security.

However, the methods of balance of power may be in different forms. The world’s superpowers do not always involve themselves in open conflicts for power and can occasionally achieve a relatively balanced distribution of power. Conflicts may reflect on different foreign policies. In this scenario, the theory suggests that the weaker states will attempt to choose a superpower patron with whom they can trade various incentives in return for security assurances[[47]](#footnote-47).

In summary, the aforementioned theory insists that the state is the actor in the world system and security has top priority in states’ calculation of national foreign policy. Referring to Realism, we will firstly assume that the primary actor in the anarchic world system is state, and the main interest of state is its own security. In order to achieve maximum of security, states have to rely on material capability which can be transformed into power. Power distribution in the world system can be disproportioned due to the differentiated ability to have access to power. Once a state gain power, what she will do is to keep power and enlarge its power as big as possible. These assumptions have provided patterns for analyzing the motives and goals of behaviors of the main actors and patterns of interaction of interstate relations. Therefore, the assumptions will be the foundation of my research throughout the whole paper on demonstrating how the relations between China and Japan evolve and how the negative sides in their relations affect the East Asian integration and how to some extent their relations is decisive to the smooth development of the integration process.

# Analysis

In the analysis part, I will try to examine my assumption: the intense relationship between China and Japan has the most influence on the development of East Asian integration, and the negative side of the turbulent relationship is destructive to regional cooperation. The current situation of regional integration in East Asia is shaped by conflict-laden issues and a complex combination of internal and external factors[[48]](#footnote-48), however, I believe that the internal factors are decisive, and within all the internal factors, the relationship between China and Japan is the most essential one.

The analysis part will start with a brief introduction to history of Sino-Japanese relations because no matter what condition their relations is like now, it always has its origin, that is to say, the actors always use the historical background as the mirror for judging and predicting states’ intention and behavior. Historical relations will influence the current relations between states and policies will come out of from their perception according to history[[49]](#footnote-49). This background information will also include the international constraints states have to deal with because the states are parts of the world system and they have a kind of interactive relationship. The paper will also emphasize the balance of power in the world system as a main way of achieving security and this model will be applied to analyze how the Sino-Japanese relationship is shaped and the reason why their performance is so important in the Asian regional issue. Here I will only focus on the impact of Sino-Japanese relationship on the East Asian integration, and other influential factors will be regarded as static so as to facilitate my research.

## A Quick Glance at the History of Sino-Japanese Relations

The relationship between China and Japan has undergone ups and downs along the river of history and since very early time they have already began to contact with each other. In this part, I will firstly give a brief introduction to the dynamics of Sino-Japanese relationship evolving along the history and how their development changed the East Asia geo-political landscape. I will not give a very detailed description of all the issues therein, but only choose the major events that have influenced on the direction of history.

### The Celestial Empire and the Tributary System

John King Fairbank believed that imperial China had set up superior-inferior external relations with its neighboring countries. Its neighbors were all included into a system called tributary system that lasted for a very long time in the China-dominated Asia before the break in of the Western intruders[[50]](#footnote-50). China was strong and rich under the governance of emperor of [feudal](app:ds:feudal) [society](app:ds:society). The emperor called himself “the son of Heaven” and China was believed to be superior to the neighboring countries. The governance of China was respected by its neighbors and the purpose of tributary system is to set up beneficial relations. As long as the countries respected China and gave diplomatic recognition on the legitimacy of Chinese Empire, the rulers of these countries would be conferred official titles and ranks. The obedient countries will get the tribute from China and the tribute was important for the countries to develop their own countries. Besides, they can also get assistance from China in case of any intervention from other countries[[51]](#footnote-51).

At that time, Japan was one of its members and also enjoyed the resources from China and was under the protection of China. During this period, both nations maintained amicable relations, but China then was still much stronger than Japan[[52]](#footnote-52).

Although the centrality of Chinese tributary system is undeniable, other scholars have different opinions. They say that:

…the tributary system, which was more than a device for the regulation of trade, it served as the framework guiding the conduct of diplomatic relations and signifying the political influence and relative status of individual states. China's neighbors, who knew how the system worked, also knew how to use it to their advantage[[53]](#footnote-53).

From their description, we can see that both China and its neighboring countries had their own calculations. They believe that countries see the system in a relatively realist way[[54]](#footnote-54). The system is not as peaceful as what John King Fairbank described. People all have their own purposes when they communicate with others. China was not that benevolent and other countries in the system were not so obedient. This is also consistent with what Realism predicts. Self-interest is their ultimate goal and survival is the most important for them.

### Meiji Restoration and the Rise of Japan

Not until the Meiji Restoration did Japan begin to gain the momentum of economic growth and fast growth of national power. At a time, Japan surpassed China and became the number one superpower in East Asia. While, China at the time began to slide down like a lion falling asleep and once became the victim of Japanese militarism. Sino-Japanese War, World War I and World War II

The Meiji Restoration initiated in 1868 and had made Japan turn into a new type of westernized and modernized nation state. Before the reform, Japan was a militarily weak country controlled by feudal lords, was primarily an agricultural state, and had little technological development. Western powers had forced Japan to sign unequal treaties that increase their rights and benefits in Japan at the expense of Japanese people[[55]](#footnote-55), which was unpleasant memory in Japanese involvement to the outside world.

Led mostly by young samurai from feudal domains (Mutsuhito, 1852–1912)[[56]](#footnote-56), the revolutionary measures covered all sides of Japanese society, bringing about political, economic and social changes. After the Restoration, Japan had created a totally new national system.

Until 1912, when the emperor died, it meant the end of the reform and at that time Japan had already set up:

* a highly centralized, bureaucratic government;
* a constitution establishing an elected parliament;
* a well-developed transport and communication system;
* a highly educated population free of feudal class restrictions;
* an established and rapidly growing industrial sector based on the latest technology; and
* a powerful army and navy[[57]](#footnote-57)

It is generally believed that Meiji Restoration was of great importance for Japan because it brought Japan into a new era——modern society. Its political system was transformed to Western modem industrial nation-state, and culturally it had absorbed western civilization model after they received Buddhism and Chinese civilization[[58]](#footnote-58).

By the end of 20th century, the goals planned at the beginning of the reform had already mostly achieved. In particular, the unequal treaties that were forced to sign by foreign powers to give them judicial and economic privileges were revised in 1894[[59]](#footnote-59). This is the first step for Japan to be a modernized state, and from then on, the state began to gain their confidence and even self-conceited. Japan waged wars against China in 1895[[60]](#footnote-60) and Russia in 1905[[61]](#footnote-61), and defeated both of the countries. In 1902, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was founded which included both Japan and the Great Britain for the purpose of to safeguard their Asian vested interests ripped off from other Asian countries such as China and Korea. Also, it was deemed as a means of resisting the far-reaching hands of Russia in the Far East[[62]](#footnote-62). Under the guidance of the notorious Militarism, Japan began to step on the road of aggression and expansion and this was not the end.

Meiji Restoration was a great success for Japan and it reflected its determination to reshape itself to major power in the world, equal to the rest of countries, especially the Western nations. What Japan wanted was not just expanding its territory, but to be a dominated power in Asia, and even in the world. In order to accomplish its goal, Japan sought to resort to the way of military aggression. Having tasted the fruitful war trophies that didn’t need to pay and the power it gained by invading other states, Japan further strengthened its grand strategy.

In such a way, Japan was recognized by the world and for the first time the advanced Western countries were stunned by Japan. China at that time was declining at the end of feudal society and naturally became the target of Japan’s expansionist greed. Realists believe that once states get power, they will tend to take advantage of their power to project influence on its neighboring states[[63]](#footnote-63). When Japan became an economic and political power at that time, it reached its hands to China and Korea with a purpose of getting more resources they need to meet the demand of its development. By promoting its economy, then it can become more powerful, and then it will try to further explore the places they didn’t reach for more resources and more power.

### Sino-Japanese War and the Two World Wars

Having built up a strong military power, Japan began to confidently wage wars to its poor neighbors. From 1894 to 1895, it started it ambitious strategy to realize its continental policy. The war Japan declared to China was called the “Sino-Japanese War”[[64]](#footnote-64), and was the competition between China and Japan for the rights of dominating Korea. In the long history, Korea was one of the most important client states of China. After Japan’s Meiji Restoration, it had set up a modernized military based on advanced technology, and China then was still using very traditional and backward weapons, so the consequence was naturally the defeat of China[[65]](#footnote-65).

Before the war, Japan had forced Korea to open itself to other states, especially to Japan and to claim independence from China[[66]](#footnote-66). The purpose of Sino-Japanese War was to further reach out Japan’s hands to open the door of Korea so that they can use their affluent natural resources and control Korea in their hands. Besides, Korea’s geopolitical position is very important to Japan, which also constructed the reason why Japan wanted to take over Korea[[67]](#footnote-67).

Although China was much bigger than Japan, due to its isolation to the outside world and backwardness in developing technology, it was defeated by a just newly modernized and well-equipped Japan. The war started in August 1st, 1894 and ended as Chinese proposed to stop fighting and signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki. The treaty was extremely unequal. First, China had to admit the independence of Korea and lost its own territory and second, Japan also had to pay Japan a huge amount of indemnity of war and to give Japan trading privileges on Chinese territory[[68]](#footnote-68). Until March 1895 Japan had invaded and occupied Shandong province and Manchuria, but Japan was forced to return Liaodong Peninsula to China under the intervention from the alliance of Russia, Franc and Germany and Japan then annexed Taiwan in 1895. The defeat of China also brought itself more pains from other Western powers because they all came to China and demanded for the same rights like Japan[[69]](#footnote-69). So after the war, China was split into several pieces and actually became the platform for the imperialist powers’ fighting for interests.

In 1914, the World War I broke up. When the Western powers were ravaged by war and plagued by terrorism of on the European continent, they were so busy that had no time to mind the Asian part. Japan took the chance to invade China with a view to expand its interests in China and to regain the interests it lost in Sino-Japanese War. In the World War I, Japan occupied Shandong province of China[[70]](#footnote-70).

According to Zhou Wu and Chen Xianchun’s research: to annex China was a part of Japan’s foreign policy that had been planned in the Continental Policy at Meiji time. Japan was trying to be a regional hegemon with Japan in the center and other countries subordinated to Japan. This strategy will be fulfilled by conquering countries around Japan and would begin with Korea and China and then expand to Asia and the world through military forces, and ultimately turn Japan into Great Imperial Japan[[71]](#footnote-71). But the grand strategy didn’t come true. The western powers had realized the ambition of Japan and they also had inter-tangled interests in Asia, so they wouldn’t stand aside in such a condition.

The main battlefield of World War I was in Europe, but it had profoundly changed the international politics in East Asia because the European powers were stuck to the war in front of their doors, so they could spare no time to look after the far Asian interest areas. But the Japanese government was delighted and thrilled to see such international environment and they believed that this was the chance given by the Heaven for them to pour out their irrepressible, fanatical Japanese militarist expansion desire.

Taking Anglo-Japanese alliance as an excuse, the Japanese government claimed to "fulfill" alliance obligations. Firstly, Japan took Kiaochow bay away from Germany. Secondly, they didn’t forget to interfere with China by military force. Japan waged war to Germany and took over German leased territory in China under Japanese control unconditionally. However, Japan didn’t stop. They further occupied Jinan and controlled the mineral resources whole line and the nearby of Jiaozhou-Jinan Railway. In January 18th, 1915, Japan forced China to sign the notorious *Twenty-One Demands*[[72]](#footnote-72). This treaty was on the purpose of full control China both politically and financially so that it could change China to its actual subordinate. Its aggressive policies in China was finally caused the attention of the Western powers, so Japan changed the way of controlling China in the name of promoting economic cooperation[[73]](#footnote-73), but in fact it was the same as military intervention.

After World War I, Japan jumped from the debtor nation to creditor nation, and squeezed into the world's five major powers[[74]](#footnote-74). We can conclude that the development of Japan was based on the primitive accumulation of capital in a way of imperialist aggression at the expense of other states’ sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Then after two decades of relatively stable period (“stable” here means no large wars), a second world war broke up, involving virtually every part of the world during the years 1939–45[[75]](#footnote-75).

It started from the German dictator Adolf Hitler invaded and occupied Poland in 1939, and when the Great Britain and France declared war, the World War II formally begun[[76]](#footnote-76). In 1931 and 1932, Japan had invaded Manchuria (Northeast China) and set up its puppet state of Manchukuo. China then was under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, the Nationalist government of China. Due to its reluctance in respond to the Japanese invasion, and Chiang Kai-shek had spent much of his efforts to the Civil war with the Communist Party led by Mao Zedong, China suffered a lot from the Japanese invasion. Japan once occupied the city of Shanghai, Nanking, and Peking and other cities. In 1938 the Japanese launched several ambitious military campaigns that brought them deep into the heart of central China. As Japan further gave it a push to begin a military buildup, the Nationalists and the Communists determined to cooperate to fight against Japanese intruders. But the road of cooperation was not smooth because the struggle within the two parties. Japanese invasion was so stubborn and determined that as if no one could stop them. In 1941, Japan suddenly attacked the giant U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, completely bringing the United States into the war. The United States hadn’t realized until they saw the damage in the harbor and the number of casualties of their military. The big shock and hit prompted the United States to change its neutrality in the war. And in 1945, the United States drop two atomic bombs to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to force Japan stop its crazy behavior, and after that Japan treaty on unconditional surrender[[77]](#footnote-77).

World War II was the largest and bloodiest war in human history. After the war, the world system was dominated by two super powers——the United States and the Soviet Union[[78]](#footnote-78). This has marked the power shift in the world system. At the end of World War II, Japan was defeated and the world entered into the Cold War period with the United States and the Soviet Union two rival powers coexisting in the world. Under the supervision and control of the United States, and also with the economic assistance and protection of the United States, Japan started to recover and rebuild its own economy. In this period, China was under the leadership of the Communist Party, a Socialist government, still very poor, while Japan, in the opposite, was in alliance with the United States, developing in line with the Western world[[79]](#footnote-79). The nature of the Cold War is the confrontation between two super powers.

As we can see, the Sino-Japanese relationship is changeable and unstable along the history. Most of the time, Chinese history was scarred by imperial intrusion. We can simply illustrate the power shift in East Asia before the end of Cold War like this:

In the very early time, China was the dominating power of East Asia when China was strong and Japan was China’s agent state. When Japan went through the Meiji Restoration and gained economic and military development, it resorted to expansionist strategy to its neighboring states. The system of Chinese domination was broken. China became poor and backward. And for many times, Japan waged wars to China with a view to exploit the resources in China. Because of this victim-crime relationship, these two countries seem naturally two rivalries.

This is the basis of Sino-Japanese relations. Despite the growing interaction in many fields, controversies and disputes remain unchanged but evolved. In particular, recently China is rising and has re-gained its power and is seeking more participation in regional and international affairs, Japan has to be faced with the change it won’t want to see. If we define Sino-Japan relations as an alternatively “strong against weak” and “weak against strong” patterns in the past, the pattern today will be “strong against strong” and this kind of competitive relations creates tension and uncertainty. After knowing the history, we can better understand the foreign policies implemented by both countries towards each other.

### The End of Cold War and the Rise of China

The year 1991 witnessed a big change in the world system that the largest Socialist country——the Soviet Union collapsed, symbolizing the end of Cold War[[80]](#footnote-80). Since then China was the largest Communist country left. But China at that time was underdeveloped country, surrounding by a range of Capitalist states, and Japan, as the alliance of the United States, poised as closest threat to China. After the Cold War, the world went into a developmental period, and the interaction between states become more and more frequent. States began to turn to develop their own economy[[81]](#footnote-81). Until then, the United States was the only one super power.

Nowadays, the “rise of China” is not a very new word to many people since it has been recognized as a matter of fact by all over the world. After the implementation of the reform and opening up policy and decades of economic development, China today had become the second largest economy in the world[[82]](#footnote-82). Globalization has facilitated China to integrate itself into the world and the entering of the World Trade Organization is of great importance to China’s international trade. The United States and Japan are among the top partners. The amount of trade of these three states was totaled 36.3% in 1998[[83]](#footnote-83). And its superpower status has gradually transformed from a questionable argument into a statement.

It is said that the regional [turbulence](app:ds:turbulence) may appear in East Asia rather than in the Western world for the reasons that:

the skewed distribution of economic and political power within and between countries, political and cultural heterogeneity, growing but still relatively low levels of intra-regional economic interdependence, anemic security institutions, and wide-spread territorial disputes that combine natural resources issues with postcolonial nationalism[[84]](#footnote-84).

The realists hold that the world is a system and nation states are the rational actors in the system. When China goes up to the level of super powers, this actually has changed the stability of the world system. Previously, the world was uni-polar with the domination of the United States and other strong states as major powers, but today, with China is rising to a super power, the world system has to be changed to a system of two super powers and several other major powers. Once, the power of the states become uneven, uncertainty and counterbalancing measures will come along.

In the case of China and Japan, when they are trying to promote integration, they also have to overcome the difficulties and obstacles in front of developing East Asian integration. These factors may include: the historically rooted distrust between the two countries. As China had been invaded by Japan for many times, it is natural that China will suspect the intention of Japan. Once Japan get the chance to build up its own military, then they will have to worry about if it will take the same expansionist road; the territorial dispute on Taiwan; Japanese alteration of the invading facts in the text book of Japan; Nationalism is deeply rooted in the Chinese Society.

## The Prosperity of Regionalization and the Buds of East Asian Integration

Regionalization, especially economic regionalization is the one of the products of globalization and has become a tendency of world development. When the Cold War ended in 1990s, regional integration has successfully set up in Europe, North America and Africa. However, Asia, as the largest continent, accounting for almost 30% of the world total land area, didn’t have actual development due to the lack of consensus between Asian countries and the interference of the “invisible hand” of the United States, although ASEAN worked well in regional affairs, it is still not inclusive and effective enough without other 38 Asian countries, especially China, Japan, South Korea these big ones.

Compared with other parts in the world, East Asian Integration has burgeoned much later. It belongs to the third wave of regional integration process after EU (European Union) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Area). Generally speaking, the development of East Asian integration can be divided into two stages taking 1997 (Asian Crisis) as the turning point . In 1997, a financial crisis hit the "tiger economies" of Southeast Asian , and its blast wave also caused heavy damage to other countries such as China and Japan. After the crisis, people began to realize the importance of unity in preventing themselves from risks.

Having seen the benefits of regional integration in other parts of the world, people in East Asia begin to think about if Asia can also develop in the same way. ASEAN, a model of regional integration has always been the influencing factor in promoting East Asian integration. While, although its success in South East Asia, it has limited ability to lead larger region, in fact, the ASEAN has failed to realize East Asian integration. China has deeply realized that one cannot clap with one hand and Asian countries should unit together to share interest and face risks, also, she has set up her own grand strategy, in which developing regional integration is included as part of projecting “soft power”, so it is very willing to support the integration of East Asia[[85]](#footnote-85).

## Involvement and Interaction of China and Japan in East Asian Regionalization

In November 1999, 10 ASEAN countries together with China, Japan and South Korea (10+3) held the 3rd meeting of the leaders in the Philippine capital Manila, and at the end of the meeting the two sides issued a "Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation"[[86]](#footnote-86). Although it seems like the cooperation mechanism has been set up, in fact, China and Japan seems have never achieved consensus on various issues. And at most of the time, they contradict with each other and compete with each other in leading the integration process. In the latter parts, I will try to present how such rivalry grows as the time and in what form.

ASEAN Plus Three includes three Northeast Asian countries into the ASEAN with a view to resolving differences between countries and reducing tensions through dialogues. The ASEAN here has played a positive role and has bridged the Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia. Both China and Japan want to increase their own influence in regional affairs. In 2000, China proposed Free Trade Agreement with the ASEAN unilaterally[[87]](#footnote-87). East Asia has its particular history and the cultural, linguistic, and political divisions are quite different[[88]](#footnote-88), therefore the development of APT Regionalism met a range of obstacles. Among these obstacles, the members’ conflicts in respective interests have limited the probability of cooperation. Japan and China both want to be regional leaders and naturally they don’t like each other and distrust each other[[89]](#footnote-89). As China has gradually participated in the cooperation with other Asian countries, it has established its influencing power in these countries. But this has caused the worries of Japan. In respond to China’s increasing proactive-ness and assertiveness in Asia, Japan begins to seek ways to assure its leading position and influence in the area by promoting the East Asia Summit.

**East Asia Summit** was previously planned as an accelerator of Asian Plus Three, putting the ASEAN in the center and producing radiation effect, as a result, to ensure the unity and equality of members and to replace the Asian Plus Three. But it turns out to be that the East Asia Summit was premature since the members cannot achieve consensus on many issues, and even the basic planning of how the East Asian Integration should be constructed was not clarified[[90]](#footnote-90). In the early stage, Japan was objected to the EAS for fear that China would increase its regional influence, but it couldn’t prevent other countries from accepting this move. In June 2004, the EAS gained widespread support from other East Asian countries and in December 2005 they held the first East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur[[91]](#footnote-91), but the statement was very general and broad.

In 2000, Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji proposed a FTA with the ASEAN (CAFTA) for the purpose of expanding the influence of China in Asia, and attracting foreign investment to China[[92]](#footnote-92). By opening itself to the world, China also intends to change its image in other countries’ eye as a threat, in order to ease their worries towards a rising China and its intention of enlarging opportunities for both inside and outside China, focusing on independently self-construction with no harm to others. This has made Japan feel marginalized. In response to China’s strategy, Japan proposed to create a Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership and to establish an East Asian community. Also, Japan wanted to drag Australia and New Zealand into the Asian community. As a result, this will expand Asian integration to Asian-Pacific integration. The 2003 Bluebook said as follows In December 2003, Japan-ASEAN Commemorative Summit was held in Tokyo. The 2003 Bluebook asserted that FTAs create more benefits than the WTO rules and recognized the significance of EPA/FTAs[[93]](#footnote-93). But China kept emphasizing the dominance of Asian Plus Three.

Difficulty appears at the issue of whether to expand the membership. Japan wanted to seize the opportunity to develop the East Asia Summit towards its own good by dragging Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia into the Summit, but China wanted to keep the status quo and suggested that the expansion of membership should be implemented in the later stage. Other ASEAN countries held different views[[94]](#footnote-94). By adding new members that adopt the same opinions with Japan will certainly facilitate Japan to guarantee its own interest and the discursive power and on the other hand will limit China’s ability to stretch its arms. At the end of the discussion, the EAS was transformed to ASEAN+6 by adding the other three countries proposed by Japan. After that, Japan suggested other non-ASEAN countries should be given the right to set agenda for a particular year, but China didn’t care about this and preferred the integration process to develop at a slow and gradual pace[[95]](#footnote-95).Once again, China and Japan biased.

Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), promoted by Japan, was a further step towards regional integration. It reflected Japan’s efforts to promote its East Asian community, in which the activity of Japan Comprehensive Asia Development Plan (CADP) is exclusive to China. China Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) doesn’t include Japan, either[[96]](#footnote-96). Since 2010, ERIA has expanded its influence. While in China, GSM was put up with by the government[[97]](#footnote-97).

In 2006, Japan proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA) as its economic integration approach in response to China’s EAFTA proposed by Zhu Yunling[[98]](#footnote-98). In 2006 and 2007, there were discussions on a range of issues about environment protection, poverty elimination and so on. The year 2008 and 2009 witnessed stagnation due to political crisis in Thailand[[99]](#footnote-99).

## The Policies Implications of China and Japan

From the abovementioned historical facts we can clearly see that when they face issues that related to Asian integration, China and Japan are always contradictory or we can use the word “counterbalancing”, which means that once China take certain moves in the regional affairs, Japan will follow up and put up with corresponding measures, and vice versa. This has shown the China-Japan rivalry. The assertiveness of China and Japan in East Asian integration shows that both countries want to exert more influence in Asian regional issues. According to Neo-realists, distribution of power is changing and sometimes uneven, and states will seek greater power so that to counterbalance its adversary[[100]](#footnote-100). Cognitive variable means the judgment of a state on the outside world, including systemic changes and the intention and potential threat of other states. Other variables like domestic variables are composed of state institutions, elites, and societal actors within society, as well as leader’s own perceptions, all the factors that can influence foreign policy[[101]](#footnote-101). China and Japan all want to be the dominant power in East Asia, so this promotes both countries watch closely on each other, and once any one of them take actions, the other one will respond to that accordingly. By judging and assessing the potential intention of the other, they have made different policies towards each other.

This kind of rivalry has made the security dilemma in East Asia to exist and posits as the most profound difficulty for the fulfillment of East Asian integration. The security dilemma has been a matter of fact for a very long time. Why Japan fears a strong China and Why China worries about a strong Japan? Here I can conclude several factors that have made the security dilemma possible.

### Why China worries about a strong Japan?

First, based on the historical accounts, the Chinese history was full of the scars hurt by the Japanese invasion. If Japan begins to build its own military forces, China will worry about if it will adopt the same strategies in the past, say, the militarist expansionist. The historically rooted conflicts are still becoming very clearer.

Second, territorial disputes between these two countries are still unsolved. The defeat of China in 1895 resulted in the annexation of Taiwan into the Japanese Empire[[102]](#footnote-102). The controversy on Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands is still very intense in both countries. Besides, they still have the East China Sea problem to remain troublesome.

Third, the China-US-Japan Triangle is a fundamental element in the East Asia integration. Since the World War II the United States has involved itself into the Asian area in the name of taking over the post-war Japan, but actually changed Japan into its strategic ally to resist the Communist China.

Fourth, nationalism in the society is so popular and powerful. Historical lessons make the Chinese people believe that Japanese are dangerous and irrational. The Nanking Massacre still reminds people of the horror and pains of the wars. Whenever the conflicts on the issues like Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands disputes escalates, the reaction of people in China are always indignant.

Fifth, the attitude of Japan towards the history of invasion is very vague. Japan has done a series of controversial things such as the Yasukumi Shrine visits and revisions and whitewashing of their history textbook. All these deeds have aroused the resentment of China and also a challenge to the feelings and trust of states who suffered from the brutal war. And the counterpart of Germany is more honest and sincere when it deals with historical mistakes, so Japan dwarfs when compared with Germany.

Rise of China, Systemic changes in the world system

Eric Nathaniel Heller holds that the foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China is consistent with the theory of defensive realism. That is to say, China is trying to secure its Asian sphere of influence and do what it sees fit and necessary to defend itself as a developing nation[[103]](#footnote-103). While similarly, we can say Japan primarily adopts offensive realism.

### Why Japan fears a strong China?

The current East Asia landscape has been undergoing structural changes from a Japan-led “flying geese” model to the China-centered “Bamboo capitalism”[[104]](#footnote-104). Systemic changes are profound in the current world system and have altered the balance of power. In his paper, Li Xing stipulates that,

The hypothesis of the flying-geese pattern suggests that a group of nations in this region are flying together in layers with Japan at the front layer. The layers signify the different stages of economic development achieved in various countries. In the flying-geese model of regional economic development, Japan as the leading goose leads the second-tier geese (less developed countries) which, in their turn, are followed by the third-tier geese (least developed countries)[[105]](#footnote-105).

During the flight of the “second gaggle” of geese, Japan and the second flying layer of geese (South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong) became a member of the western blocs enjoying benefits from the US-led capitalist world system. This type of geopolitically supported regional economic development came to an end following the end of the Cold War at the end of 1980s. Furthermore, the rapid emergence of China and the Asian economic crisis in 1997 not only interrupted the flight of the “second gaggle” but also started the global debates about the “Asian crony capitalism” and the “Asian values” the original structure of world system.

Geographically, Japan is an isolated island and lack of natural resources to economic development. After the Restoration, Japan started its expansionist strategy seeking for more resources and more power. In this manner, it became the

According to realism, systemic variables may bring conflicts and if one state gains power, it will further project influence on other states, starting from its neighboring states. State’s highest goal is to maximize its power so that to secure itself. In this scenario, the focus of the world today is on Asia and its rising prominence in the world. A previously backward China who cannot guarantee its state’s sovereignty is becoming more and more assertive in the world and is more and more powerful and influential, thus for Japan it is not pleasant sign. The structural changes have made Japan behave like ants on the hot pan, deeply worries about a rising China.

China is already the world’s second largest economy and is predicted to overtake the U.S. by 2030 as the world’s largest economy.

China and Japan are two giant economies in East Asia. In 2012, the GDP of China and Japan were respectively $8.227 trillion and $5.961 trillion, with an annual growth rate of 7.7% and 2%, while the GDP of East Asia & Pacific (developing only) was $10.33 trillion 2012. The total number of China and Japan was even larger than that of East Asian and Pacific developing countries[[106]](#footnote-106). From these numbers we can see why China and Japan are called two giants in East Asia, and accordingly the influence of both countries must be very powerful, so naturally their relations is of great importance to Asian integration.

The conflicts between these two states are the most intense and the longest. Both countries have a wide range of controversial issues, such as territorial disputes over Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands, the Japanese visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, whitewashed versions of history textbooks, and the Taiwan issue[[107]](#footnote-107). And the changing status of China and its proactive participation in world affairs, especially in promoting East Asian integration make Japan very anxious in losing its influence, thus Japan sees China as potential threat. These are the negative aspects of their relations that are long-lasting and destructive. Both sides hold quite strong stance in these issues[[108]](#footnote-108). If not dealt with carefully and properly, the outcome will be permanent rivalry between both countries.

### The China-US-Japan Triangle

As I have mentioned in the previous parts, the United States has involved almost every issue in Asia. China is playing critical role in shaping international politics now and its influence will last in the future. Japan is basically the agent of the United States in Asia. The rise of China has also altered the US-led unipolar world.

Economic relations among these three states have been increasing. The United States on the one hand has been pushing China to take more responsibility in the international system, but on the other hand, it is also worrying about China’s increasing influence in Asia because it may shake the American leading position in the area. In order to counterbalance China’s influence, the United States has been strengthening its relations with Japan and other Asian countries in both economic and security cooperation. Japan is in the forefront of the United States in combating the threat from China and its policy is basically the reflection of the US policy and they also have taken measures such as agreeing to share military base[[109]](#footnote-109).

China is suspicious to the US-Japan alliance, too. Nowadays, although Japan was forced to disarm, in fact they have developed its Self-Defense Forces and they also have the powerful supports from the US military. What’s more, Japan is seeking to develop military forces of their own in real sense[[110]](#footnote-110) and this portrays potential threats towards China.

All these facts have cropped up to a perilous and complicated situation in East Asia. This kind of situation cannot facilitate the East Asian integration, but will hinder its development because it doesn’t match the basic conditions of integration. One of the most important conditions for integration is good will and trust between states. And good will and mutual trust are the basis of cooperation mechanism of integration. Both states are competing for leadership in the integration process which actually leads to no leadership in the development of regionalism.

# Conclusion

All in all, the development of East Asian Integration is facing various challenges, and the relationship between China and Japan is the most important. But they don’t always share good will towards each other. More often, they deem each other as potential enemies. The characteristics of the relationship can be concluded as: economically, they are interdependent. Politically, they are rivals, and socially they have already had contacts with each other since a very long time.

In the state level, the biggest obstacle is nationalism which is outstanding and prevailing in both countries. Although they share a lot of common economic interests, the historically mistrust and hatred haven’t removed but breed the security dilemma. Economically, these two countries have a lot common interest. Politically, they are rivalries.

In the system level, Both China and Japan are the variables in the world system. Structural changes have altered the distribution of power. China, as a newly rising power, has changed the geopolitical landscape. Declining Japanese power and increasing Chinese political and economic power brought tensions among the world system. The growing China-Japan tension is further solidifying security dilemmas within the region.

To answer the problem formulation, the current power relations of these two states do have profoundly bad effects on the smooth development. In the short term, to eliminate the security concerns of China and Japan seems impossible. But we can try our best to decrease the negative effects and to promote East Asia integration to a higher level. Here, I would like to give some suggestions on lessening the dilemma.

First, both states should further strengthen their mutual economic cooperation. If the economic ties become closer, they won’t want to sacrifice their economic interests to fight against each other.

Second, the high-level leaders should communicate with each other frequently. Communication is a way to break ice of misunderstanding.

Third, Beijing and Tokyo should create more opportunities to strengthen people-to-people exchanges. Nationalism has been exaggerated in both states for a very long time, so the people need to know each better to abandon prejudice.

Last but not least, both states should pay more attention to the public goods in East Asian integration, remembering that cooperation creates win-win outcome.

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