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Routinised recognition and anxiety: Understanding the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations

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Abstract

Why do interstate relations deteriorate and become conflictual, even under conditions where one might expect improved ties? The article seeks an answer to this question through a case study of the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations in the twenty-first century, which took place despite the existence of several factors that might be thought likely to have led to an improvement. Existing theoretical approaches cannot fully explain this puzzle. The article argues that such deteriorations can result from disruptions to states' reciprocally performed routinised recognition, and identifies three mechanisms through which these can occur. To facilitate this argument, the article draws on scholarship on relational identity, recognition, and ontological security to develop a theory of identity construction that takes account of how self and other routinise the ways in which they recognise each other and how they react to the other's representational practices.

Keywords

Introduction

Why do interstate relations deteriorate and become conflictual, even under conditions where one might expect them to improve? This is a fundamental question for International Relations (IR) research, perhaps most importantly because a deterioration in relations might lead to military conflict, whereas an improvement arguably makes war less likely. Sino-Japanese relations present an empirical example of a puzzling deterioration in interstate relations. Japan waged an aggressive war in China in the 1930s to mid-1940s, but it adopted a pacifist constitution after its defeat. It has since made repeated apologies and developed peaceful norms and a culture of anti-militarism.[1] In the 1990s and 2000s, levels of trade and other exchanges and the interdependence between China and Japan massively increased.[2] China has provided opportunities for Japanese business and Japan

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[1] Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms & National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

[2] Ryosei Kokubun, 'The shifting nature of Japan-China relations after the Cold War', in Peng Er Lam (ed.), *Japan's Relations with China: Facing a Rising Power* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 21–36; Linus Hagström, 'Sino-Japanese relations: the ice that won't melt', *International Journal*, 64:1 (2008/9), pp. 226–9.

largely facilitated China's rise.[3] Despite these developments, which might be thought likely to have led to improved relations, Sino-Japanese political relations have deteriorated remarkably in the twenty-first century to the point where observers increasingly regard military confrontation as conceivable.[4] This makes Sino-Japanese relations an especially important case that could generate insights concerning the general question of why bilateral ties deteriorate and become conflictual even under conditions that seem conducive to an improvement in relations. It is, however, a case that existing approaches cannot fully explain.

This article draws on scholarship on relational identity,[5] recognition,[6] and ontological security,[7] to develop a theory of identity construction that takes into account how self and other routinise the ways in which they recognise each other, and how they react to the ways in which they are being recognised. Applying the theory to the Sino-Japanese case, it argues that puzzling deteriorations in interstate relations can result from disruptions to states' reciprocally performed routinised recognition, and that these disruptions can occur through three mechanisms which are set out below.

The simple answer to the research problem posed in this article is that routinised mutual recognition can be disrupted by *mis*recognition resulting from identity change. But why, in a situation of mutual recognition, does a state suddenly alter its identity and the way it recognises the other? And why do states react in different ways at different times to similar representations and practices? Theorising mechanisms that explain identity change is needed in order to provide answers to these questions. Drawing on the work on anxiety discussed in ontological security theory, the present article theorises three such mechanisms: incongruity between an actor's identity and a new international environment seen as indicating that one's self-identity has become obsolete; loss of status resulting from the belief that the other has overtaken or become overly similar to oneself in a key

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[3] Björn Jerdén and Linus Hagström, 'Rethinking Japan's China policy: Japan as an accommodator in the rise of China, 1978–2011', *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 12:2 (2012), pp. 215–50.

[4] See, for example, Yixue Wu, 'Sino-Japanese ties at a "40-year low"', *China Daily* (11 August 2014); see also Genron NPO, *The 10th Japan-China Public Opinion Poll: Analysis Report on the Comparative Data* (Tokyo: Genron NPO, 2014).

[5] See, for example, Roxanne Lynn Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Bahar Rumelili, 'Constructing identity and relating to difference: Understanding the EU's mode of differentiation', *Review of International Studies*, 30:1 (2004), pp. 27–47; Xavier Guillaume, *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach* (London: Routledge, 2011).

[6] See, for example, Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Erik Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action: A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Michelle Murray, 'Identity, insecurity, and Great Power politics: the tragedy of German naval ambition before the First World War', *Security Studies*, 19:4 (2010), pp. 656–88; Thomas Lindemann and Erik Ringmar (eds), *The International Politics of Recognition* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2012).

[7] See, for example, R. D. Laing, *The Divided Self* (London: Penguin, 1959); Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991); Catarina Kinnvall, 'Globalization and religious nationalism: Self, identity and the search for ontological security', *Political Psychology*, 25:4 (2004), pp. 741–67; Jennifer Mitzen, 'Ontological security in world politics: State identity and the security dilemma', *European Journal of International Relations*, 12:3 (2006), pp. 341–70; Brent J. Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-Identity and the IR State* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Ayşe Zarakol, 'Ontological (in)security and state denial of historical crimes: Turkey and Japan', *International Relations*, 24:1 (2010), pp. 3–23.

identity category; and anxiety over an actor's self-identity induced by the ways in which others recognise the self.

Section I critically discusses rival explanations for the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations. Section II outlines the theoretical framework. Sections III and IV use the theory to analyse Sino-Japanese relations since 1972, divided into a period of mutual routinised recognition and a period of increased misrecognition. The conclusion critically discusses the promises and pitfalls of mutual routinised recognition as a way of improving bilateral relations and provides suggestions for future research.

I. Rival explanations

Guided by realism, analysts have tended to argue that the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations and the increase in bilateral conflict result from a change in the balance of power in East Asia. Bilateral relations have deteriorated, the argument goes, because of China's 'rise', which has created a situation in which both Japan and China are powerful in terms of material capabilities, but where Japan is declining while China is rising. This causes fear and perceptions of mutual threat. The reason why states are believed to focus so much on capabilities is because other states' intentions cannot be known.[8] To this, some analysts have added exacerbating factors such as increased nationalism, the personalities of leaders, and domestic power struggles. Nonetheless, the underlying power shift tends to be seen as the key reason for increasingly conflictual relations.[9] According to this explanation, realists would expect Japan to balance against China. Research has demonstrated, however, that Japan facilitated China's rise up until 2011.[10] While recent research suggests that Japan has subsequently turned to balancing,[11] it seems that for the realist explanation to hold, balancing should have started much earlier since China has been 'rising' for some time.

The constructivist and poststructuralist literature seems better equipped to account for the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations since the mid-2000s as such approaches argue that threat perceptions and views of intentions are not only based on an assessment of capabilities but also influenced by identity constructions and other ideational factors.[12] The way in which one state constructs its identity in relation to the other has consequences for bilateral relations. Typically, the way in which the self represents the other is seen as influencing its behaviour and policies towards it. For example, some studies have suggested that by depicting China as a victim of Japanese colonial aggression, Chinese negative representations of Japan can be seen to have contributed to the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations. Others suggest that the increased strength of negative

[8] See, for example, John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (updated edn, New York: W.W. Norton, 2014).

[9] Jin Kai, 'Can China and Japan solve the dilemma of "two tigers, one mountain"?', *The Diplomat* (2 April 2014); Peng Er Lam, 'Japan's deteriorating ties with China: the Koizumi factor', *China: An International Journal*, 3:2 (2005), pp. 275–91; Hiroki Takeuchi, 'Sino-Japanese relations: Power, interdependence, and domestic politics', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 14:1 (2014), pp. 7–32. For a critique, see Linus Hagström and Björn Jerdén, 'East Asia's power shift: the flaws and hazards of the debate and how to avoid them', *Asian Perspective*, 38:3 (2014), pp. 337–62.

[10] Jerdén and Hagström, 'Rethinking Japan's China policy'.

[11] Bjørn Elias Mikalsen Grønning, 'Japan's shifting security priorities: Counterbalancing China's rise', *Asian Security*, 10:1 (2014), pp. 1–21.

[12] Rex Li, *A Rising China and Security in East Asia: Identity Construction and Security Discourse* (London: Routledge, 2009); Chengxin Pan, *Knowledge, Desire and Power in Global Politics: Western Representations of China's Rise* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2012).

portrayals of China in Japanese discourses similarly contribute to deteriorating ties.[13] Both constitute only partial explanations in that they do not take account of both sides of the conflict. Studies that only explore, for example, Chinese representations of Japan fail to account for exactly how such depictions contribute to deteriorating relations by failing to examine Japanese reactions.

Such incompleteness characterises not only the literature on Sino-Japanese relations but also much of the broader theoretical IR literature on identity construction in relation to difference.[14] Some scholars motivate such a limited focus through reference to the fact that a relationship is asymmetrical, in that one party produces the other's conditions of existence. While this may be largely accurate in North-South relations,[15] however, it is not always the case. It can be argued that the theoretical frameworks used in such studies do not sufficiently account for identity construction as an interactive process. In addition, even in asymmetrical relationships the weaker party may not necessarily lack agency to the extent that is sometimes assumed. In the case of contemporary Sino-Japanese relations, as well as many other bilateral relationships, both parties can exercise agency and it cannot be assumed prior to analysis that either party is more influential than the other.

The literature on relational identity does contain exceptions that go some way to addressing how others, especially 'liminal' others, react to how they are represented and thereby exercise agency when the self constructs its identity.[16] However, I would suggest that it is not just liminal others that exercise such agency, and that interactivity needs to be explored as a much more general feature of identity construction. Those described as the other are not just agents influencing how the self constructs its identity; they are also constructing their own identities in similar ways at the same time. Seeing identity construction as a truly interactive or dialogical process means that both sides are constantly considering how they are recognised in the other's representational practices.[17] This article contributes to existing research on identity in IR as it explores such interactive processes. It does so by drawing on recognition theory to

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[13] Shogo Suzuki, 'The importance of "othering" in China's national identity: Sino-Japanese relations as a stage of identity conflicts', *The Pacific Review*, 20:1 (2007), pp. 23–47; Linus Hagström and Björn Jerdén, 'Understanding fluctuations in Sino-Japanese relations: to politicize or to de-politicize the China Issue in the Japanese Diet', *Pacific Affairs*, 83:4 (2010), pp. 719–39; Shogo Suzuki, 'The rise of the Chinese "other" in Japan's construction of identity: is China a focal point of Japanese nationalism?', *The Pacific Review*, 28:1 (2015), pp. 95–116; cf. Christian Wirth, 'Japan, China and East Asian regional cooperation: the views of "self" and "other" from Tokyo and Beijing', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 9:3 (2009), pp. 469–96; Kai Schulze, 'From "Head of Flying Geese" to "Thought Leader": The Rise of China and Changes in Japan's Foreign Policy Identity' (unpublished PhD thesis, Department for Social Sciences/Institute of East Asian Studies, Duisburg-Essen University, 2013); Taku Tamaki, 'The persistence of reified Asia as reality in Japanese foreign policy narratives', *The Pacific Review*, 28:1 (2015), pp. 23–45.

[14] For an extended critique along these lines, see Neumann, *Uses of the Other*, ch. 8.

[15] Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, p. 3; See also Campbell, *Writing Security*; Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006).

[16] Rumelili, 'Constructing identity and relating to difference'; Viatcheslav Morozov and Bahar Rumelili, 'The external constitution of European identity: Russia and Turkey as Europe-makers', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 47:1 (2012), pp. 28–48. Liminal others are those whose status in identity discourses is ambiguous as they are both self and other.

[17] In *International Relations and Identity*, Xavier Guillaume develops a dialogical approach to identity in IR. Unlike the present study, which focuses equally on Japanese and Chinese identity construction and interactions between such representations, Guillaume focuses primarily on Japanese identity construction.

further theorise the reactions to and consequences of the representational practices that bilateral identity construction entails. Theoretical discussions of emotions such as 'anxiety' and 'feelings of being offended', dealt with in ontological security theory and recognition theory, respectively, are especially illuminating for such purposes because they are linked to bilateral practices of recognition, which influence views of intentions, as well as to identity change.

II. Routinised recognition, anxiety, and identity change

This section develops the concept of 'routinised recognition' and discusses how identity change can occur in situations characterised by routinised recognition. Recognition can be divided into thin and thick recognition. Thin recognition is about being recognised as a member of a community and is therefore a matter of common *identity with* other actors, of being the same kind of subject. For states, it means that an entity is recognised as a sovereign state belonging to the international community.[18]

This article is concerned not with thin, but thick recognition. Thick recognition acknowledges difference or uniqueness, for example in the form of specific qualities. Misrecognition, or the denial of thick recognition, thus entails not recognising a state's *particular* identity. The state in question is recognised in a way that differs significantly from the dominant representation of its self-identity.[19] Misrecognition does not mean that a state is recognised in a way that diverges from some kind of 'correct' or 'true' identity, but in a way that differs from how it *constructs* its own identity.[20] Identity, as understood here, is constructed in narratives about who the self is and how it tends to act. In this sense, state identity is no different from the identities of individuals.[21] States, of course, are not people and do not have emotions. Nonetheless, people tend to identify with states and many feel offended when the state is criticised.[22] In such self-identity narratives states construct their self-identities in relation to difference, typically in relation to other states or groups,[23] but also to their own pasts.[24] Because such particular identities change over time, what was once regarded as

[18] Alexander Wendt, 'Why a world state is inevitable', *European Journal of International Relations*, 9:4 (2003), p. 511; Pierre Allan and Alexis Keller, 'Is a just peace possible without thin and thick recognition?', in Thomas Lindemann and Erik Ringmar (eds), *The International Politics of Recognition* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2012), pp. 71–84; Karl Gustafsson, 'Recognising recognition through thick and thin: Insights from Sino-Japanese relations', *Cooperation and Conflict* (forthcoming), DOI: 10.1177/0010836715610594.

[19] Poststructuralists might object that this kind of approach risks reifying state identity (See, for example, Neumann, *Uses of the Other*, pp. 222–8; cf. Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), ch. 2.) The present article, however, remains sensitive to the problem of reification and explicitly discusses the problematic effects of practices of recognition in the conclusion. Furthermore, it does not exclude the possibility that numerous domestic groups may compete to make their preferred version of national self-identity dominant. What one group views as misrecognition could be seen by its domestic opponents as 'correct' recognition. As is discussed below, in periods of increased anxiety the opportunities for domestic groups to promote identity change increase.

[20] Patchen Markell, *Bound by Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

[21] Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action*; Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*.

[22] Erik Ringmar, 'Introduction: the international politics of recognition', in Thomas Lindemann and Erik Ringmar (eds), *The International Politics of Recognition* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2012), pp. 7–8.

[23] Bahar Rumelili, 'Ontological (in)security and peace anxieties: a framework for conflict resolution', in Bahar Rumelili (ed.), *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 10–27

[24] Ole Wæver, 'Insecurity, security and asecurity in the West European non-war community', in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 69–118.

'correct' recognition could later come to be seen as misrecognition. This makes it possible to explain why reactions to similar representational practices change over time.

Recognition can be expressed in the form of practices of recognition,[25] statements, representations, or behaviour. What is important is that the other interprets the way in which it is recognised as corresponding with its self-identity. Many scholars of recognition understand recognition as a speech act but,[26] while it certainly can be expressed through utterances, to view recognition as something that can be expressed once and for all by a single act is often insufficient. Instead, it is necessary to analyse whether recognition has been routinised. Something is routinised when it has been made into 'a matter of routines'. A routine is 'a sequence of actions regularly followed'.[27] The meaning of 'regularly' cannot be specified temporally but certain acts or representations would need to be repeated numerous times. What is important is that 'sequences of action' are performed and that they are 'followed'. Routinised recognition is thus *an ongoing way of recognising the other that is not departed from*. It involves not only representations of but also behaviour in relation to the other to the extent that this behaviour is interpreted as indicative of a certain way of recognising the other.

Existing research on how self constructs its identity in relation to other(s) has typically either implied or explicitly argued that in order to make peaceful bilateral relations possible, the parties to a conflict should reconstruct their identities to make them compatible. If two states recognise each other's self-identities in the ways they each imagine them, we have a situation characterised by *mutual recognition*. Recognition theory suggests that mutual recognition is a possible solution to bilateral problems.[28] Recent research on ontological security and conflict resolution has similarly argued that in order to move from conflict to peace it is necessary to redefine self-identities and corresponding images of the other.[29] Peace, according to this understanding, seems to require some form of mutual recognition of identities; and, for it to be stable,[30] such mutual recognition arguably needs to be routinised. These literatures have so far paid scant attention to situations characterised by mutual recognition. When mutual recognition is routinised, a bilateral order might be said to have been constructed. Like international orders in general, such a bilateral order makes the interactions between states within it predictable and stable.[31]

If routinised mutual recognition makes bilateral relations stable and peaceful, it follows that a deterioration in bilateral relations occurs when routinised recognition is disrupted and the bilateral order breaks down. This takes place when the self interprets the way in which the other recognises it as misrecognition and hence feels offended. As Erik Ringmar puts it: 'To be denied recognition is a

[25] Cf. Erik Ringmar, 'Recognition and the origins of international society', *Global Discourse*, 4:4 (2014), p. 2; Emanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot (eds), *International Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[26] Oliver Kessler and Benjamin Herborth, 'Recognition and the constitution of social order', *International Theory*, 5:1 (2013), p. 158.

[27] *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (12th edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[28] Wendt, 'Why a world state is inevitable'; Reinhard Wolf, 'Respect and disrespect in International Relations: the significance of status recognition', *International Theory*, 3:1 (2011), pp. 105–42; Allan and Keller, 'Is a just peace possible?'; Lisa Strömbom, 'Thick recognition: Advancing theory on identity change in intractable conflicts', *European Journal of International Relations*, 20:1 (2014), pp. 168–91.

[29] Rumelili, 'Ontological (in)security and peace anxieties'; Christopher S. Browning and Pertti Joenniemi, 'The ontological significance of Karelia: Finland's reconciliation with losing the promised land', in Bahar Rumelili (ed.), *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 154–71.

[30] Allan and Keller, 'Is a just peace possible?'

[31] Janice Bially Mattern, *Ordering International Politics: Crisis, Identity and Representational Force* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

traumatic experience. We feel slighted, insulted, and brought low; our pride is injured, we have lost our status and face.'[32] In the worst-case scenario, the outcome of such perceived misrecognition can be military conflict.[33] Feelings of being offended[34] caused by perceived misrecognition are thus crucial to explaining why bilateral relations deteriorate.

However, if mutual recognition has been routinised, making bilateral relations stable, and agents are attached to routines: why would change occur?[35] Why would one of the parties suddenly interpret the way in which it is being recognised by the other as misrecognition? It could of course be reacting to a change in how it is being recognised by the other, but this does not explain why one party, in a situation of routinised mutual recognition, would suddenly alter how it recognises the other.

Anxiety is an important part of the explanation as it functions as a driver of change. Anxiety is not an absolute state but a matter of degree. Low levels of anxiety are associated with relative stability in, whereas higher levels can unsettle, systems of meaning and identities and thereby make possible identity change. Anxiety is different from fear as the latter takes a definite object whereas the former is a more general state. One way of dealing with high levels of anxiety in an interstate relationship is to securitise the other, thereby reducing anxiety by replacing it with fear of the enemy other. One reason why states grow attached to conflicts could therefore be the anxiety-reducing effects associated with the certainty of fear and a knowable enemy.[36]

Routines, however, make life orderly and predictable, meaning that we are less anxious about that which is routinised.[37] But routines do not eliminate anxiety altogether. Instead, 'anxiety is precisely what motivates the agent to perform' the routinised actions.[38] Even though routines can help to manage anxiety, levels of anxiety can at times become greater than our routines can handle. Increased anxiety can thus disrupt order and predictability. Increased anxiety, in other words, can make it possible to redefine previously stable identities. In this sense, anxiety is closely related to freedom and opportunity.

My review of the existing ontological security and recognition literatures has identified three mechanisms that can cause increased anxiety, which could, in turn, result in identity change. It must be noted that these mechanisms are not mutually exclusive; the processes that they set in motion can occur at the same time, thereby contributing to even higher levels of anxiety. First, critical,

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[32] Ringmar, 'Introduction', p. 7.

[33] Richard Ned Lebow, *Why Nations Fight: Past and Future Motives for War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Thomas Lindemann, *Causes of War: The Struggle for Recognition* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2010).

[34] Rather than 'slighted' or 'insulted', I use the term 'offended' as it is not necessarily intentional and is related to what the offended party sees as fitting (for example, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, online edn, available at: {http://www.merriam-webster.com} accessed 27 September 2015), which implies that it is appropriate in the context of thick recognition. Feelings of being offended can, of course, develop into more lasting feelings of 'resentment'. What is important to the purposes of this article, however, is not to pinpoint the exact emotional reactions to representational practices but rather to highlight that there is a negative emotional reaction to the way in which the other recognises the self.

[35] Cf. Mitzen, 'Ontological security in world politics'.

[36] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety* (London: Liveright, 2014); Mitzen, 'Ontological security in world politics'; Rumelili, 'Ontological (in)security and peace anxieties'.

[37] Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, pp. 50–5; Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, pp. 60–1.

[38] Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, p. 61; see also: Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, p. 53.

unpredictable situations or events can be interpreted in ways that suggest an incongruity between an actor's identity and a new international environment.[39] These situations are not objective, material crises that result in an identity becoming objectively obsolete.[40] Instead, they function as windows of opportunity for domestic actors to *frame a self-identity as obsolete*.[41] Second, numerous scholars have stressed the importance of having an identity that is exceptional or at least different from those of others.[42] Consequently, a loss of status resulting from the belief that the other has become excessively similar to or even overtaken oneself in a dimension central to one's identity can cause increased anxiety, leading the self to refashion its identity because of the resulting loss of status.[43]

The third mechanism is linked to anxiety over an actor's self-identity triggered by the way in which others recognise the self. Because an agent's sense of pride and identity is 'vulnerable to the reactions of others',[44] the way others recognise the self can induce anxiety concerning whether our actions correspond to our self-identity.[45] The other can either recognise the self in a way that differs from the self's identity narrative, or suggest that the self's actions do not correspond with that narrative. In the former scenario, if the self agrees that its self-identity was incorrect it can either accept the other's description or refashion its self-identity in the hope that the new narrative will be accepted. In the latter case, the self might alter its behaviour to make it correspond with its self-identity.[46]

All three mechanisms produce increased anxiety, which in turn can result in internal reflection on one's behaviour and/or identity.[47] While the outcome of such reflection can be the reaffirmation of an identity it can also lead to identity change or cause states to make their own negative or shameful past a key component of their narratives about themselves, in order to stress the mission to create a new identity by jettisoning certain characteristics of its past self.

The theory outlined above is illustrated in a case study of Sino-Japanese relations from 1972 to the present. In order to demonstrate the explanatory power of the theory it is necessary to first establish the existence of routinised mutual recognition by showing that recognition is expressed with some frequency and that it is not departed from. One important issue is how potentially disruptive incidents, such as acts that might be interpreted as misrecognition, are dealt with, and whether efforts are made to return to routinised recognition. Through such efforts, do the agents involved

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[39] Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, p. 12.

[40] Stefano Guzzini, 'The framework of analysis: Geopolitics meets foreign policy identity crises', in Stefano Guzzini (ed.), *The Return of Geopolitics in Europe? Social Mechanisms and Foreign Policy Identity Crises* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 55–7.

[41] Linus Hagström and Karl Gustafsson, 'Japan and identity change: Why it matters in International Relations', *The Pacific Review*, 28:1 (2015), pp. 1–22.

[42] See, for example, Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*; Wendt, 'Why a world state is inevitable', pp. 511–12; Rumelili, 'Constructing identity and relating to difference'.

[43] Kai Schulze, 'Risks of sameness, the rise of China and Japan's ontological security', in Sebastian Maslow, Paul O'Shea, and Ra Mason (eds), *Risk State: Japan's Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 101–16; Pertti Joenniemi, 'Ontological (in)security after peace: the case of the Åland Islands', in Bahar Rumelili (ed.), *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 137–53.

[44] Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 66.

[45] Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, pp. 52–5, 61–3.

[46] Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action*; Brent J. Steele, *Defacing Power: The Aesthetics of Insecurity in International Relations* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2010).

[47] Cf. Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*.

demonstrate that the possible disruption was an exception to the 'normal' state of routinised recognition rather than an attempt to alter the existing bilateral order and establish new routines? Counterfactual reasoning is used in the analysis of the period of routinised recognition, in order to address the issue of what is likely to have happened had events not been handled in the way they were.[48] In the subsequent analysis, the key is to demonstrate that the previously existing routinised recognition has clearly broken down. The analysis focuses primarily on government representatives and parliamentarians. When analysing reactions to perceived misrecognition, however, it takes a broader range of societal actors into account, making it possible to show that a certain reaction is more broadly shared within a society.

III. The period of routinised recognition in Sino-Japanese relations

The period of routinised mutual recognition in Sino-Japanese relations lasted from diplomatic normalisation in 1972 until at least the mid-1990s, but was not clearly disrupted until the early 2000s. In the Joint Communiqué issued when China and Japan established diplomatic relations in 1972, it was stressed that Japan had victimised China in the Second World War: 'The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself.'[49] During this period, Japan's self-identity in relation to China had two main components: Japan as a former aggressor; and Japan as an economic great power that functioned as a model of development for China and other Asian countries.[50] Importantly, there was little dissonance between these identities. Actions that confirmed one identity also confirmed the other. For example, Japan's Official Development Aid (ODA) to China has often been viewed as unofficial war reparations, and as evidence of Japanese contrition,[51] which recognised China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression. At the same time, providing ODA and technological expertise to the economically inferior China confirmed Japan's identity as an economic great power. Both Japan and China, according to one scholar, 'view bilateral aid through the lens of a hierarchical relationship'.[52] Japanese economic cooperation and ODA to China were understood in the context of the Japanese 'Flying Geese' development model, according to which Asian development would be based on a hierarchical relationship where Japan would be the 'Head of Flying Geese' that underdeveloped states such as China would follow:[53] 'Heading a "flying V" of Asian economic geese, Japan would pull the region forward with its own successes in industrialization and manufacturing.'[54] The understanding of Japan as the superior leader that would

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[48] Richard Ned Lebow, *Forbidden Fruit: Counterfactuals and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[49] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 'Joint Communique of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China' (29 September 1972), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/joint72.html} accessed 4 May 2015.

[50] Schulze, 'From "Head of Flying Geese" to "Thought Leader"'; Linus Hagström and Ulv Hanssen, 'War is peace: the rearticulation of "peace" in Japan's China discourse', *Review of International Studies* (forthcoming), DOI: 10.1017/S0260210515000157.

[51] Reinhard Drifte, 'The ending of Japan's ODA loan programme to China: All's well that ends well?', *Asia-Pacific Review*, 13:1 (2006), pp. 94–117; Tsukasa Takamine, *Japan's Development Aid to China: The Long-Running Foreign Policy of Engagement* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[52] Iain Watson, *Foreign Aid and Emerging Powers: Asian Perspectives on Official Development Assistance* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 107.

[53] Kaname Akamatsu, 'A historical pattern of economic growth in developing countries', *The Developing Economies*, 1:1 (1962), pp. 3–25.

[54] T. J. Pempel, 'Gulliver in Lilliput: Japan and Asian economic regionalism', *World Policy Journal*, 13:4 (1996/7), p. 15.

guide the other geese already existed when Japan started to provide economic aid to and began its economic cooperation with China, since it had been applied to Japan's relationships with other East Asian developing nations. Based on the flying geese concept, 'a certain Japanese supremacy was formulated, with an inferior China, that only became one of the following geese'.[55] In other words, China as an 'economically developing and inferior country' was clearly a central aspect of Japanese identity construction in relation to China.[56] Giving could thus be understood as a way of representing the self as magnanimous and superior.[57] By accepting Japanese aid and attempting to emulate Japan's development model, China effectively recognised Japan's identity as an economic great power and economic leader. From its inception in 1978 until the decision to end ODA to China in 2005, Japan's provision of aid to China was a stable, routinised and long-lasting feature of the relationship that significantly contributed to China's economic development.[58]

When Deng Xiaoping visited Japan for ten days in October 1978, Japanese politicians and business leaders repeatedly apologised for the war and expressed their willingness to help China modernise, while Deng explicitly recognised Japan's identity by noting that: 'We must admit our deficiencies. We are a backward country and we need to learn from Japan.'[59] After Deng returned to China, 'Chinese factories posted banners stressing the importance of studying Japanese management systems and establishing training programs.'[60] Japan's technological superiority was also shown to Chinese people in photographs of Deng's visits to Japanese factories and other sites. In order to improve China's understanding of Japan, Deng made sure that Japanese culture was publicised while not emphasising Japanese wartime atrocities, thereby constructing a more nuanced image of Japan.[61] Excessive emphasis on Japanese wartime aggression domestically would probably have made closer relations and recognition of Japan's identity as an economic great power more difficult. Not emphasising Japanese atrocities and providing a more nuanced image of Japan was thus a way of facilitating closer relations with the former aggressor as well as the recognition of Japan as a superior economic power. This does not mean that Japan's identity as a former aggressor and China's corresponding identity as a victim of Japanese aggression were denied, just that by depicting Japan in a more nuanced way the '*former*-ness' of Japan as a former aggressor was stressed. Bilaterally, Japan was still reminded of its identity as a former aggressor every time a possible rupture of routinised recognition took place.

Observers of Sino-Japanese relations have noted that bilateral relations in the 1970s and 1980s followed a pattern where Chinese government representatives referred to Japan's wartime aggression and Japan, because of its sense of remorse, yielded to Chinese pressure.[62] This suggests the existence of routinised recognition of China's identity as a former victim and Japan as a former aggressor. By recognising Japan as a former aggressor, China thus both generated and appealed to Japanese

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[55] Schulze, 'From "Head of Flying Geese" to "Thought Leader"', p. 17.

[56] Schulze, 'From "Head of Flying Geese" to "Thought Leader"'; cf. Hagström and Hanssen, 'War is peace'.

[57] Marcel Mauss, *The Gift* (London: Routledge, 1954).

[58] Jerdén and Hagström, 'Rethinking Japan's China policy', pp. 233–4.

[59] Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 304.

[60] Ibid., p. 309.

[61] Ibid., pp. 297–310.

[62] Hidenori Ijiri, 'Sino-Japanese controversy since the 1972 diplomatic normalization', *China Quarterly*, 124 (1990), pp. 639–61; Chalmers Johnson, 'The patterns of Japanese relations with China, 1952–1982', *Pacific Affairs*, 59:3 (1986), pp. 402–28.

remorse, which Japan turned into actions. For example, the Chinese government mobilised war memory as part of its campaign to influence the Japanese government to accept the inclusion of an anti-hegemony clause in the 1978 Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship. During treaty negotiations, guides suggested to Japanese journalists who had been brought to the death pits in Datong, where thousands of Chinese died labouring in mines during Japan's occupation, that China had been generous in not demanding war reparations when normalising relations and that Japan ought to respond in kind by accepting the anti-hegemony clause. Despite the fact that the Soviet Union expressed strong opposition to the clause, the Japanese government eventually accepted its inclusion in the treaty.[63] While it could be argued that Japan may have had other reasons for accepting the inclusion of the clause, by not acting *against* this Chinese representation Japan in effect recognised China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression and acted in accordance with its own identity as a former aggressor. Had Japan acted against this Chinese representation it would have been indicative of a lack of correspondence between its identity as a former aggressor and its actions. Acting in accordance with the Chinese way of representing Japan was therefore a way of avoiding an identity-behaviour disconnect.[64] The Chinese way of recognising Japan thus guided the Japanese decision to accept the inclusion of the anti-hegemony clause.

This pattern of Japanese actions recognising China's identity as a former victim of Japanese aggression was repeated in key episodes throughout the 1980s. In 1982, China fiercely criticised Japan after Japanese newspapers erroneously reported that Japanese history textbooks had altered descriptions of the invasion of China from 'aggression' (*shinryaku*) to 'advance' (*shinshutsu*).[65] The incident concluded with the Japanese government announcing that it would include a 'neighbouring countries clause' in its textbook authorisation guidelines, which would state that the authorisation process would take into account the feelings of neighbouring countries – and mentioned China explicitly.[66] Even though the episode began with what was interpreted as an act of Japanese misrecognition of China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression, the introduction of the neighbouring countries clause clearly reaffirmed that the Japanese government recognised China as a victim and that Japan had been an aggressor.

On 15 August 1985, Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro made an official visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, which enshrines the spirits of 14 convicted Class A war criminals along with almost 2.5 million Japanese war dead. Prime ministers before Nakasone had made unofficial visits that had met with little reaction from China.[67] This time, however, the prime minister went in his official capacity, triggering fierce Chinese criticism. In the autumn of the same year, a commentary in the *New York Times* described the Chinese criticism as 'unexpectedly harsh' and mentioned that the prime minister had decided to cancel another scheduled visit to the shrine 'yielding to sharp Chinese criticism'.[68] Shortly thereafter, Prime Minister Nakasone expressed contrition for the war in a speech

[63] Johnson, 'The patterns of Japanese relations with China'; Yung H. Park, 'The "anti-hegemony" controversy in Sino-Japanese relations', *Pacific Affairs*, 49:3 (1976), pp. 476–90.

[64] Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, pp. 54–5; Karl Gustafsson, 'How to make former aggressors repent through shaming and praising: the case of Sino-Japanese relations', *Global Affairs*, 1:3 (2015), pp. 315–24.

[65] Johnson, 'The patterns of Japanese relations with China'.

[66] Kiichi Miyazawa, 'Statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Kiichi Miyazawa on History Textbooks' (26 August 1982), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/state8208.html} accessed 7 July 2014.

[67] For a full list of prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine from 1945 to 2013 see Kei Koga, 'The Yasukuni Question: Histories, logics, and Japan-South Korea relations', *The Pacific Review* (forthcoming).

[68] Clyde Haberman, 'Nakasone, giving in, will shun shrine', *New York Times* (10 October 1985), available at: {http://www.nytimes.com/1985/10/10/world/nakasone-giving-in-will-shun-shrine.html} accessed 4 May 2015.

to the United Nations General Assembly: 'Since the end of the war, Japan has profoundly regretted the ultra-nationalism and militarism it unleashed, and the untold suffering the war inflicted upon peoples around the world and, indeed, upon its own people.' He further added: 'having suffered the scourge of war and the atomic bomb, the Japanese people will never again permit the revival of militarism on their soil'. An article in *The Globe and Mail* commented that the 'apology was unusual in a hall where many other commemorative speakers have used the occasion to attack their country's foes and to defend their own policies'.[69] Furthermore, on 29 October 1985, Nakasone stated in the Japanese Diet that the war was 'wrong' and explicitly described the 'war against China' using the term 'aggression' (*shinryaku*).[70] On 14 August 1986, Chief Cabinet Secretary Gotōda Masaharu announced that the prime minister would not visit the shrine on 15 August that year out of concern for neighbouring countries.[71] Following Nakasone's decision not to visit the shrine, no Japanese prime minister visited for more than ten years. Chinese criticism of Nakasone's shrine visit clarified for the Japanese side what would be interpreted as a breach of the routinised recognition that made up the bilateral order. By making a high-profile expression of contrition at the United Nation's General Assembly, explicitly affirming in the Diet that the war against China amounted to aggression and announcing that no more visits would be made to the shrine, the Japanese government clearly reaffirmed that it had returned to and would stick to the routinised recognition. Had Japan acted differently, by for example Nakasone making further visits to the shrine, routinised recognition would have broken down.

In 1986, Japanese Education Minister Fujio Masayuki questioned the verdict of the Tokyo War Crimes Trial that general Tōjō Hideki was a Class A war criminal. The Chinese Foreign Ministry criticised the remarks for violating the 1972 Joint Communiqué. As a result, Fujio was forced to apologise and resign.[72] In 1988, Okuno Seisuke, Head of the National Land Agency, had to resign for making a similar statement. Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru described the statement as 'inappropriate' and declared that it diverged from the official view that Japan was the wartime aggressor.[73] By forcing the transgressors to resign, the Japanese government dealt with these potentially disruptive events and clarified that recognition was still routinised. Had the Japanese government handled these incidents differently, for example, by not distancing itself from the views expressed by forcing the transgressors to resign, this could have disrupted the routinised recognition.

Japan's reaction to the Chinese government's brutal crackdown on the 1989 student protests in Tiananmen Square is another indication that recognition of China as a former victim of Japanese aggression had become routinised. Asked about sanctions on 6 June that year, the Japanese Prime Minister, Uno Sōsuke, commented that he was 'considering none at all'. He added: 'I say clearly that Japan invaded China 40 [*sic*] years ago. Japan cannot do anything against a people who experienced such a war.'[74] The Japanese opposition parties, with the exception of the Japanese Communist Party,

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[69] 'Japan apologizes for war', *The Globe and Mail* (24 October 1985).

[70] Diet session 103, lower house budget committee meeting 2 (29 October 1985). Diet statements can be accessed in the Gikai kaigiroku database, available at: {http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp}.

[71] Masaharu Gotōda, 'Naikaku sōri daijin sonota no kokumudaijin ni yoru yasukunijinja kōshiki sanpai ni kansuru Gotōda naikakukanbōchōkan danwa [Statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Gotōda on official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine by the prime minister and other cabinet ministers]' (14 August 1986), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/taisen/gotouda.html} accessed 4 May 2015.

[72] Jane W. Yamazaki, *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 91.

[73] 'Official who denied Japan WWII aggression resigns', *Los Angeles Times* (13 May 1988).

[74] 'Keizai 5funkan [Economy five minutes]', *Asahi Shimbun* (7 June 1989), p. 9.

also refrained from criticising the Chinese government. Even though Japan did briefly suspend ODA to China, in response to pressure from Western countries, the decision to do so was described as 'reluctant and ambivalent', especially in comparison to the strong Western reaction. Japanese officials described the measure as a 'temporary freeze' that should be understood as a 'response' not a 'sanction'.[75] It could be argued that the Japanese government had other reasons for being soft on China than its identity, but these would not explain why the war was referred to.[76] Japan's actions, including the prime minister's explicit statement, clearly recognised China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression. The Japanese government's way of handling the issue suggests that the pressure to adopt sanctions also put pressure on Japan's identity. Because ODA, by indicating both Japanese contrition and its economic superiority, was such a key aspect of routinised recognition, the sanctions jeopardised both routinised recognition and Japan's identity. The statements by the Japanese prime minister and other officials could thus be seen as expressions of anxiety due to an inability to act in accordance with Japan's identity. In this case, anxiety seems to have been the result of a crisis that led to internal considerations of what certain actions would have indicated about Japanese identity.[77] The sanctions could be interpreted as having briefly disrupted routinised recognition. Given the magnitude of the Tiananmen crackdown, however, it would arguably have been difficult for Japan to avoid adopting any sanctions whatsoever.

Because Japanese government representatives compensated for the sanctions by making explicit statements recognising China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression, and the sanctions were only in place for a short time and were lifted at a time when China was still isolated internationally by other states which kept sanctions in place considerably longer, this suggests that recognition remained routinised even during this potentially disruptive event.

Routinised recognition largely persisted throughout the 1990s. Japan continued to provide China with ODA. The Japanese emperor visited China in 1992. Japanese leaders made increasingly explicit expressions of contrition for the war and cabinet members who denied wartime aggression were again forced to resign.[78] At the same time, the Japanese government's failure in 1995 to gather sufficient support for a Diet resolution that would include an explicit apology for Japanese wartime aggression could be taken to suggest that routinised recognition was weakening under the surface.

In sum, throughout the period of mutual recognition China and Japan largely recognised each other's self-identities in a routinised manner. Even though this recognition was not always explicitly expressed, these identities were not *mis*recognised. Acts that were interpreted as Japanese denial of China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression were followed by actions that reaffirmed China's identity as a former victim and Japan's as a former aggressor. When China criticised Japanese actions, it seems that the Japanese reaction was acceptance rather than feelings of being offended. Japan arguably recognised China's *moral* superiority while China recognised Japan's *economic* and *developmental* superiority. In this way, the Sino-Japanese bilateral order made it possible for both sides to emphasise one positive identity that they could take pride in. At the same time, the bilateral

[75] Saori N. Katada, 'Why did Japan suspend foreign aid to China? Japan's foreign aid decision-making and sources of aid sanction', *Social Science Japan Journal*, 4:1 (2001), p. 39; K. V. Kesavan, 'Japan and the Tiananmen Square incident: Aspects of the bilateral relationship', *Asian Survey*, 30:7 (1990), pp. 672–74.

[76] Karl Gustafsson, 'Is China's discursive power increasing? The case of the "power of the past" in Sino-Japanese relations', *Asian Perspective*, 38:3 (2014), pp. 411–33.

[77] Brent J. Steele, 'Ontological security and the power of self-identity: British neutrality and the American Civil War', *Review of International Studies*, 31:3 (2005), pp. 519–40.

[78] Jennifer Lind, *Sorry States: Apologies in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

order relied on both sides accepting their inferior and negative identities in the other domain. Throughout the period both sides aimed for self-improvement within these areas. China aspired to develop economically and Japan sought to prove that it differed from its wartime self, or its temporal other. The next section shows how this self-improvement process eventually contributed to the disruption of routinised recognition.

IV. The period of increased misrecognition in Sino-Japanese relations

Japan's strong economic development, as well as its leadership position in Asia, functioned as a key source of Japanese identity and pride during the 1970s and 1980s. When the economic bubble burst in the early 1990s, however, it created not just a critical situation for the Japanese economy. It also caused increased anxiety and suggested that Japan's self-identity as an economic great power had become obsolete. The continued weakness of the Japanese economy, during the so-called lost decades, has added to this anxiety. Notwithstanding these developments, however, the Japanese economy remained the world's second-largest in GDP terms until China surpassed it in 2010. As China's economic development made it similar to Japan, it also threatened Japan's identity as an economic great power. These processes have contributed to Japanese anxiety, thereby opening up space for the promotion of alternative Japanese identities.[79] The visits to the Yasukuni Shrine by Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō between 2001 and 2006 and by Prime Minister Abe Shinzō in 2013 could be interpreted as attempts to promote alternative identities, emphasising religious identity, tradition and continuity with the past through the meaning-making practices that these visits involve.[80] The Chinese government has responded with strong protests. In the case of Nakasone's 1985 visit, Chinese protests were followed by Japanese gestures that reconfirmed routinised recognition through high profile expressions of contrition and an explicit statement in the following year that the prime minister would not visit the shrine out of concern for neighbouring countries. Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō, who was strongly criticised by the Chinese government when he visited the shrine in 1996, also chose not to visit again during his tenure. He also visited a war museum in northeast China in 1997, and stated that the apology issued in 1995 by the then prime minister, Murayama Tomiichi, remained the Japanese government's official position.[81] In sharp contrast to Nakasone and Hashimoto, Koizumi did not stay away from the shrine following strong Chinese protests in response to his first visit in 2001. Instead, he paid five more visits before leaving office in 2006. China has arguably understood these visits as Japanese misrecognition of China's identity, which has led to feelings of being offended. For instance, an article in the *People's Daily*[82] criticised Koizumi's October 2005 visit, arguing that it 'wantonly hurt the feelings and dignity' of the people of victimised countries, inevitably leading the Chinese people to feel 'righteous indignation' (*fenkai*).[83] Despite assertions

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[79] Schulze, 'From "Head of Flying Geese" to "Thought Leader"'; Hagström and Gustafsson, 'Japan and identity change'.

[80] John Breen (ed.), *Yasukuni, the War Dead, and the Struggle for Japan's Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

[81] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 'Press Conference on: Visit of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto to the People's Republic of China' (6 September 1997), available at {http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/conference.html#4} accessed 7 July 2014.

[82] The *People's Daily* (*Renmin Ribao*) is a Chinese government-run newspaper typically referred to as the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party.

[83] 'Dui renlei liangzhi he guoji zhengyi de tiaozhan [A challenge to humanity's conscience and international justice]', *Renmin Ribao* (18 October 2005).

that the visits were intended as prayers for peace, they have therefore directly contributed to the disruption of routinised recognition.

As China's economic development challenged Japan's identity as an economic great power and as economically superior to China, Japan was also engaged in self-improvement through Japanese leaders' continued expressions of contrition throughout the 1990s for Japan's past aggression. Japanese leaders had made statements of contrition in the two decades following normalisation, but these were less explicit than those issued from the mid-1990s on. Most notably, in 1995 Prime Minister Murayama expressed 'feelings of deep remorse' and 'heartfelt apology' for Japan's 'colonial rule and aggression'.[84] Subsequent prime ministers have paraphrased or stated that they stand by Murayama's apology. Such apologies constitute continued recognition of Japan as a former aggressor and China as a victim of Japanese aggression.

Significantly, these apologies have been accompanied by the construction and strengthening of a Japanese self-identity as peaceful, contrite, and generous in terms of ODA, which further distinguishes postwar Japan from its wartime self and treats the latter as a temporal other.[85] Prime Minister Koizumi's statement at the 2005 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, is one of numerous clear examples of how statements of apology include such identity reconstruction:

> with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan has resolutely maintained, consistently since the end of World War II, never turning into a military power but an economic power, its principle of resolving all matters by peaceful means, without recourse to use of force. Japan once again states its resolve to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world in the future as well.[86]

In July 2005, Japan's foreign ministry even published a leaflet, *60 Years: The Path of a Nation Striving for Global Peace*, which stressed its postwar achievements and identity as a peaceful, contrite state that has provided developing countries, including China, with substantial amounts of aid.[87] The more Japan apologised and recognised its identity as a former aggressor, the more it stressed that its identity had changed. In this way, 'apologies can enable a reconfiguration of the identity of a political community'.[88] Significantly, after a self-identity has been reconfigured in this way, other states can either recognise or deny it. During the period of routinised mutual recognition, China repeatedly reminded Japan of its debt to China and Japan accepted these Chinese representations. Yet, at least according to its own account, by the mid-2000s Japan had proved that it had changed, and sought recognition of its new and improved self-identity.

The economic reforms initiated in the late 1970s by Deng Xiaoping were not just a way of striving for self-improvement by leaving China's previous backward self behind. Over time, they fundamentally

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[84] Tomiichi Murayama, 'On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End' (15 August 1995), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html} accessed 7 July 2014.

[85] Cf. Hagström and Hanssen, 'War is peace'.

[86] Junichiro Koizumi, 'Speech by H. E. Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan' (22 April 2005), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/meet0504/speech.html} accessed 21 May 2013; for additional examples see Karl Gustafsson, 'Identity and recognition: Remembering and forgetting the post-war in Sino-Japanese relations', *The Pacific Review*, 28:1 (2015), pp. 117–38.

[87] MOFA, *60 Years: The Path of a Nation Striving for Global Peace* (Tokyo: MOFA, 2005), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/pamph60.pdf} accessed 7 July 2014.

[88] Erin Wilson and Roland Bleiker, 'Performing political apologies', in Erika Resende and Dovile Budryte (eds), *Memory and Trauma in International Relations: Theory, Cases and Debates* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 43.

altered Chinese society. Previously, communist ideology had, in theory if not always in practice, provided individuals with basic material security based on the 'iron rice bowl' system and a related stable sense of identity. The societal cleavages caused by market reforms made communist descriptions of Chinese society appear obsolete, produced increased levels of anxiety, and contributed to a crisis for communist ideology and the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).[89] The 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown exacerbated this crisis and made the leadership anxious that they might lose the younger generation, which was being increasingly exposed to foreign ideas.[90] In this situation, the CCP fundamentally and comprehensively altered the identity narrative that it disseminated domestically through the education system from one that emphasised *communist* identity and struggle to one that stressed *national* struggle and identity. In this way, the CCP arguably sought not only to increase its legitimacy but also to reduce the anxiety felt by ordinary Chinese.[91] One of the key measures for dealing with increased anxiety was the Chinese government's attempt at strengthening patriotic education through the adoption in 1994 of the *Guidelines for Patriotic Education*,[92] which brought with them an increased focus on Japanese wartime aggression. Yet, the changes in Chinese education were given scant attention in Japan during the 1990s, and were not interpreted in Japan as misrecognition until the mid-2000s when they were used to explain 'anti-Japanese' incidents that took place in China.[93] An article in the Japanese right-wing magazine *Sapio* blames the Japanese foreign ministry for neglecting to examine and report on China's 'anti-Japanese patriotic education' in the 1990s.[94]

An important aspect of the changes in China's self-identity narrative was the increased emphasis on *humiliation*. To a large extent, this was a result of the crisis described above, which led to altered Chinese self-descriptions, forcefully promoted by the CCP through state propaganda, that depicted China's past self as a weak nation that because of its weakness was bullied by the strong, such as the West and Japan during the 'century of humiliation' from the First Opium War (1839–42) until Japan was defeated in 1945. The trope 'never forget national humiliation' (*wuwang guochi*), often accompanied by 'revitalise China' (*zhenxing Zhonghua*), which had been popular in the first half of the twentieth century but was little used during the Cold War, was resurrected.[95] A full text keyword search for *wuwang guochi* in the *People's Daily* newspaper database reveals that of the 102 search

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[89] Gerard Lemos, *The End of the Chinese Dream: Why Chinese People Fear the Future* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

[90] Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

[91] Cf. Alanna Krolikowski, 'State personhood in ontological security theories of international relations and Chinese nationalism: a sceptical view', *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 2:1 (2008), pp. 109–33.

[92] Central Committee of the CPC, *Aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shishi gangyao* [Guidelines for patriotic education] (1994), available at {http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-03/16/content_2705546.htm} accessed 29 September 2015.

[93] China rarely appeared in Japanese discourses on 'anti-Japanism' in the 1990s. This changed in the 2000s. In the 1990s, China was only mentioned in eight out of 81 Japanese parliamentary debates mentioning the word 'anti-Japan/anti-Japanese' (*han'nichi*). Between 2000 and 2012, China was discussed in 140 out of 235 such debates. In *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan's largest newspaper, only two out of 22 editorials in the 1990s mentioning the word 'anti-Japan/anti-Japanese' concentrated on China compared to 58 out of 70 published between 2000 and 2012. In *Asahi Shimbun*, the second largest newspaper, only seven out of 38 editorials published in the 1990s discussed China, compared to 65 out of 89 between 2000 and 2012.

[94] Kenichi Ōmae, 'Chūgoku hannichi bōdō o hikiokoshita hannin ha Nihon no gaimushō da [The culprit who caused the anti-Japanese riots in China was the Japanese Foreign Ministry]', *Sapio*, 17:9 (2005), pp. 87–9.

[95] William A. Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

results, only one article appeared in 1981, another in 1986, and the remaining 100 after 1991. The search turned up no hits whatsoever between 1946 and 1981.

That the narrative emphasises humiliation and the need for identity change is further exemplified in this quote from the concluding section of the exhibition at the Nanjing Massacre museum:

> We can never forget the historical lesson that the weak will be beaten, can never forget that in an overturned nest no eggs stay intact, can never forget how the country suffered disaster. Hold high the banner of patriotism, strive for improvement without rest, open up and be enterprising, develop socialism with Chinese characteristics, realise the unification of the motherland and make great efforts to safeguard world peace.

The emphasis on the century of humiliation is thus not only or even primarily about singling out and demonising the imperialists who humiliated China. Just as in the first half of the twentieth century,[96] discourse about humiliation is a crucial and productive component of the narrative. Recognising certain shortcomings of the self is thus a way to promote identity change by attempting to jettison those deficiencies. Narrating the century from the first Opium War until the defeat of Japan in terms of 'national humiliation' involves depicting China's past self as a weak nation that was bullied and humiliated by imperialist countries due to this weakness. This is seen as a reason to alter China's identity in order to avoid being similarly bullied in the future. This discourse arguably attempts, through an emotional appeal, to mobilise and unite the Chinese people in China's struggle for recognition as a great power.

Chinese patriotic education has increasingly come to be regarded in Japan as *mis*recognising Japan's identity as a peaceful state in the postwar era. This has become increasingly clear in Japanese reactions to the sometimes violent popular protests against Japan that have taken place in China since the mid-2000s. Large-scale demonstrations took place across China in the spring of 2005 over Japan's bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council, in the autumn of 2010 over the arrest of the captain of a Chinese fishing boat in disputed waters, and in the autumn of 2012 after the Japanese government nationalised three of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands by purchasing them from their private Japanese owner. The idea that the Chinese government's patriotic education, which focuses to a large extent on the War of Resistance against Japan, is the root cause of these anti-Japanese protests has become strong in Japan. China's patriotic education and its depiction of Japan more generally are described as 'anti-Japanese' not only for stressing Japanese aggression, but more importantly for forgetting Japan's postwar accomplishments, thereby denying Japan's identity as a peaceful, contrite state that has provided China with large sums of aid. Politicians from across the political spectrum as well as the major newspapers, including the left-leaning *Asahi Shimbun*, have repeatedly made statements to this effect.[97] Takebe Tsutomu of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party even stated explicitly during a 2005 visit to China that '[because] based on regret, post-war Japan has continued to walk the path of a peace state, it deserves some recognition'.[98] In contrast to the period of recognition, China's way of recognising Japan in the twenty-first century is increasingly being rejected as misrecognition, prompting

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[96] Ibid.
[97] See, for example, 'Chūgoku no hōdō: Jijitsu o tsutaetehoshii [China's news reports: Convey the truth]', *Asahi Shimbun* (13 April 2005); 'Nitchū shunō kaidan: Kawaranu chūgoku no "rekishiteki jujitsu" waikyoku [Japan-China summit: China's distortion of "historical truth" unchanged]', *Yomiuri Shimbun* (24 April 2005).
[98] 'Chūgoku fukushushō kikoku: Me ni shitakunakatta ugoki [The Chinese Vice Premier returns to China: a development we did not wish to see]', *Sankei Shimbun* (24 May 2005).

feelings of being offended.[99] These developments constitute an additional way in which the previous routinised recognition has been disrupted. China has increasingly come to express feelings of being offended due to what it interprets as Japanese denial of its identity as a victim of Japanese aggression, while Japan expresses similar emotions because China is seen as misrecognising its identity as peaceful, which Japan has developed through self-improvement. Japanese prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and China's patriotic education can both be seen as ways of mitigating anxiety caused in Japan's case by the loss of its identity as an economic great power and in China's case by anxiety related to societal changes caused by its rapid economic development.

Sino-Japanese relations did gradually improve for a few years after Koizumi resigned as prime minister in 2006. Koizumi's successor, Abe Shinzō, who had visited the Yasukuni Shrine on numerous occasions prior to becoming prime minister, refrained from stating whether he would visit the shrine, but in the end stayed away. Fukuda Yasuo, who succeeded Abe in September 2007, explicitly stated that he would not visit the shrine. By not visiting the shrine, and thus not denying China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression, these Japanese prime ministers made possible reciprocal actions by the Chinese side. Specifically, Japanese feelings of being offended were mitigated in 2007 and 2008 when China's senior leaders explicitly recognised Japan's self-identity. In 2007, China's prime minister, Wen Jiabao, stated in a speech to the Japanese Diet that: 'The Japanese government, and its leaders, have on several occasions expressed its attitude towards the history issue, officially recognised its aggression, expressed deep regret and apologies to the victimised countries.' In addition, he acknowledged: 'China has received support and assistance from the Japanese Government and people in its reform, opening-up and modernization drive.'[100] When China's president, Hu Jintao, visited Japan in 2008, similar expressions were included in a joint statement.[101] These statements were tremendously well received in Japan.[102] An editorial in the right-wing *Sankei Shimbun* suggested that by not revealing whether he would visit the Yasukuni Shrine, Prime Minister Abe had led China to 'actively recognise that Japan had developed as a peace state (*heiwa kokka*) during the post-war period' for the first time since the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations.[103] These explicit acts of recognition can be seen as attempts at desecuritisation[104] in a situation characterised by increased securitisation of identity.[105] Furthermore, these efforts could also be interpreted as attempts to construct a new bilateral order through routinised recognition of

99 Gustafsson, 'Identity and recognition'; see also Karl Gustafsson, 'Memory politics and ontological security in Sino-Japanese relations', *Asian Studies Review*, 38:1 (2014), pp. 77–83.

100 Jiabao Wen, 'Speech by Premier Wen Jiabao of the State Council of the People's Republic of China at the Japanese Diet' (12 April 2007), available at: {http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t311544.htm} accessed 7 July 2014.

101 MOFA, 'Joint Statement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Comprehensive Promotion of a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests"' (7 May 2008), available at: {http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/joint0805.html} accessed 21 May 2013.

102 See, for example, 'On shushō enzetsu: Nihon e no hyōka o kangeisuru [Prime Minister Wen's speech: The appraisal of Japan is welcomed]', *Asahi Shimbun* (13 April 2007); 'On kahō shushō enzetsu: Chūgoku no tainichi shisei ni henka ga mieta [Wen Jiabao's speech: A change could be seen in China's attitude to Japan]', *Yomiuri Shimbun* (13 April 2007).

103 'Nitchū seijōka 35nen [35 years since the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations]', *Sankei Shimbun* (29 September 2007).

104 Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

105 Kinnvall, 'Globalization and religious nationalism', p. 749.

new identities. Because the previous self-identities had been altered, returning to the earlier routinised recognition was not an option.

Despite this interlude of recognition, the large-scale and sometimes violent protests against Japan in 2010 and 2012, along with the continuation of Chinese patriotic education, were seen in Japan as misrecognition. Subsequent attempts by the Chinese government to gain international support in the territorial dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, by appealing to the international community and trying to shame Japan, only resulted in strong Japanese rebuttals and reinforced feelings of being offended.[106] In addition, the perceived Chinese misrecognition of Japan's self-identity appears to have strengthened the Japanese right-wing's attempts to move away from, and depict as an obsolete past other, what it considers Japan's 'mistaken pacifism', which epitomises its 'abnormal' identity, towards an identity as a 'normal' state.[107] Such attempts arguably seek to reinterpret the period of mutual recognition in a way that depicts Japan as having been servile in its dealings with China. These developments have included calls to boost Japan's military capabilities and revise its pacifist constitution. It has also resulted in China's intentions being seen as more threatening as China is viewed increasingly as 'anti-Japanese' in Japan. Most conspicuously, Prime Minister Abe, who was elected again in December 2012, explicitly stated before his visit to the United States in February 2013 that the Chinese government was relying on 'anti-Japanese' patriotic education for its legitimacy because China is under one-party rule.[108]

Seemingly as a response to perceived Chinese misrecognition, Japan thus appears increasingly to be emphasising what makes it different from China, most notably its democratic identity. Japan's current government also seems to be showing less consideration for Chinese views.[109] For example, Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine on 26 December 2013. China's foreign ministry spokesperson, Qin Gang, commented: 'The Chinese government expresses its *strong indignation* over the behaviour of the Japanese leader which *grossly tramples on* the sentiment of the Chinese people and other Asian peoples victimized in the war.'[110] Once again, the visit sparked Chinese feelings of being offended because it was seen as denying China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression and Japan's corresponding identity as a perpetrator. Thus, attempts in 2006–8 to create a new bilateral order based on routinised recognition of new identities failed.

Conclusion

This article has argued that deteriorations in interstate relations can result from disruptions to states' reciprocally performed routinised recognition and that these disruptions can occur through three anxiety-inducing mechanisms. By highlighting the role of these mechanisms, the article explains why bilateral relations might deteriorate even in a situation characterised by routinised mutual

[106] Koichiro Gemba, 'Japan-China relations at a crossroads', *International Herald Tribune* (21 November 2012); see also Gustafsson, 'Identity and recognition'.

[107] Cf. Linus Hagström, 'The "abnormal" state: Identity, norm/exception and Japan', *European Journal of International Relations*, 21:1 (2015), pp. 122–45.

[108] 'Transcript of interview with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe', *Washington Post* (20 February 2013), available at: {http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/transcript-of-interview-with-japanese-prime-minister-shinzo-abe/2013/02/20/e7518d54-7b1c-11e2-82e8-61a46c2cde3d_story_3.html} accessed 15 September 2013.

[109] Hagström, 'The "abnormal" state'; Gustafsson, 'Identity and recognition'.

[110] Gang Qin, 'Statement by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang on Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine' (26 December 2013), available at: {http://www.chinaembassy.se/eng/fyrth/t1112096.htm} accessed 7 July 2014, emphasis added.

recognition. Increased levels of anxiety might cause a state to alter its identity so that it recognises the other in a way that the other views as *mis*recognition. In addition, over time ways of recognising the self that used to be accepted as 'correct' recognition come to be seen as misrecognition, thereby triggering feelings of being offended that contribute to deteriorating relations. This explanation for the empirical puzzle of the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations differs significantly from accounts provided by existing approaches. Unlike realist explanations, it is able to pinpoint more precisely the reasons for the deterioration and to account for the unmistakeable emotional dynamics that have been evident in Sino-Japanese relations since the mid-2000s. In addition, while the growth in military capabilities on both sides may negatively impact the prospects for peace by triggering a security dilemma, the present article has showed that perceived intentions, which are influenced by recognition dynamics, play an important role as they affect and exacerbate traditional security dilemmas. Perceived misrecognition thus arguably influences how strengthened military capabilities are interpreted. In contrast to existing identity explanations, the article not only shows how the way in which one of the parties to a bilateral relationship depicts the other contributes to deteriorating relations, but also captures more fully the interplay between the representational practices involved in the identity constructions of both sides. It has thus been able to illustrate a theoretical argument that accounts both for what characterises relations before they deteriorate and what causes the deterioration.

An important benefit of this approach is that it also indicates how relations can be improved through recognition. At the same time, since the identities that are to be recognised are socially constructed, such recognition involves the reification of particular identities. Even though mutual recognition through such reification could stabilise and improve bilateral relations between states, it still conspires to present those identities as the *authentic* identities of the states in question.[111] It thus hides the fact that such identities are socially constructed and could have been different. Mutual recognition between states in this way might silence alternative domestic visions of state identity, including those embraced by minority populations, and could thus result in conflict. Furthermore, this article has demonstrated that even such mutual recognition is vulnerable because anxiety caused by the three other mechanisms can still effect identity change and alter ways of recognising the other

Future research should explore the possible existence of different types of bilateral orders created through routinised recognition. It might be argued that the kind of bilateral order that characterised Sino-Japanese relations was based on a relatively weak type of routinised recognition and that misrecognition was never far below the surface. For example, the Japanese government dealt with potentially disruptive acts of misrecognition in the 1980s and 1990s in a way that reconfirmed recognition of China's identity as a victim of Japanese aggression. In the 2000s, by contrast, the Japanese government failed to manage such sentiments for the reasons outlined above. In addition, both China and Japan attempted from the beginning of the period of mutual recognition to improve the self-identities on which routinised recognition was based. In this sense, routinised recognition was inherently fragile. If as analysts we can identify such inherent fragility in existing bilateral orders based on routinised recognition, it might be possible to anticipate deteriorations in interstate relations. In contrast to the Sino-Japanese case, it is possible to imagine situations in which the bilateral order constructed through routinised recognition is stronger and deeper so that potentially disruptive acts become less common. In addition, routinised recognition might be more stable if it is based on identities that do not stress superiority and inferiority between the two sides, as those who

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[111] Markell, *Bound by Recognition*.

accept an inferior identity are likely to engage in self-improvement. Additional case studies would be useful for the conceptual development of different types of routinised recognition.

Acknowledgments

Biographical information

Karl Gustafsson is Senior Research Fellow at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. His doctoral dissertation received the Stockholm University Association's award for best dissertation in the Social Sciences in 2011. His article 'Memory politics and ontological security in Sino-Japanese relations' won the Wang Gungwu prize for best article published in *Asian Studies Review* in 2014. He has recently published in *Cooperation and Conflict*, *Global Affairs*, *The Pacific* Review, and *Asian Perspective*. This work was supported by the Swedish Research Council (grant number 2012-1150).