

A Bad Brotherhood?

Chinese Nationalism and Japan



By

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前世不忘，后事之师。Past experience, if not forgotten, is a guide for the future. -Old Chinese proverb

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. China and Japan – A Shaky Relationship

In the East Asia area two of the most important players in the realms of security, economic and political influence are the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Japan. These two nations are very extensively interlinked culturally, historically, and economically. Their position vis-à-vis one another is of great importance to regional security and is, furthermore, increasingly essential for the stability and prosperity of the region (He, 2008). It can be argued that this bilateral relationship is not just of regional importance but has world-wide implications in the context of the 21st century. A century that has already been described as being the 'Asian century' (Mahbubani, 2008) in general and the 'Chinese century' (Fishman, 2004) specifically.

Moreover, recently China has been showing off its economic might to influence a wide range of polarizing issues, oftentimes supported by nationalist sentiment back home (Reilly, 2012). It has been suggested that it is exactly because of its newfound economic power that Chinese 'nationalism has increased exponentially' and that it may lead to 'increased defensiveness and assertiveness' (Shambaugh, 1996), as has been the case. It is vital to note that Japan has played a main role in the rise of Chinese nationalism, not only historically as a trigger for Chinese state patriotism but also as an aim for Chinese xenophobia (Shih, 1995; Zhao, 2013). In light of this, what is left between China and Japan is a turbulent relationship marred by tensions, historical grievances, strong nationalist sentiments, stereotypes and negative popular attitudes which seemingly could cause even further strain on the already shaky bilateral relations.

Much of the popular animosity against Japan and the staging of anti-Japanese protest come through the mobilization and initiative of Chinese students (Wasserstrom, 2005). Therefore, it is safe to assume that the opinions and identities of China's young have a strong impact on events taking place within the People's Republic. The questions that arise from this are several: why is there so

much animosity towards Japan amongst young people? What influences this negative perception towards China's neighbour? How does this negativity relate to Chinese nationalism? And finally, can there be talk of a light at the end of the tunnel of Chinese identity and perception that might suggest a break in this negative image of Japan?

1.2. Research Question and Hypotheses

The text looks from the Chinese side of the bilateral relationship. The research question of the thesis is: How has Chinese nationalism in combination with anti-Japanese sentiment influenced Chinese students self-identities and their perceptions of Japan?

To answer this the argument will try to consistently deconstruct how the historical record, reinforced by Chinese narratives of the self and the other together with the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) government policies cemented a negative image of Japan in the popular mindset. It will be presented how nationalism in combination with anti-Japanese bias has taken root in Chinese education. Afterwards, through empirical research in the form of interviews with Chinese students it will be sought to establish whether/how these government-led Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese bias have imprinted on China's youth.

In relation to the qualitative empirical data conducted with Chinese students for this thesis there are two possible hypotheses.

H1: Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese bias through social environment and education (including university level) have strongly influenced young Chinese students' attitudes towards Japan in a negative manner.

H2: Because of higher education's access to more information, differing views, and possibility for less restricted discussion Chinese students hold better and more positive views of Japan in spite of the general anti-Japanese social environment and initial education.

H1 and H2 do not follow from one another but stand in direct opposition to each other and are, therefore, mutually exclusive. If H1 is proven then it follows that H2 is invalid and vice versa.

1.3. Justification and Contribution

This is an important area to look into and examine due to several reasons. First of all, China is quickly becoming one of the most important (arguably the most important) player on the wider world political stage whilst also being seen as more and more nationalist, even at home¹. Therefore, it is natural to have a closer look into the relationship it has with its close neighbour, and learn from it. In addition, it is interesting to see how/if higher education together with opening up to the world influences young Chinese's opinions and attitudes – whether they become more resilient or become more prone to change and re-evaluation. This is particularly meaningful in a context of more-or-less authoritarian state education during a person's formative years. If they hold particularly negative attitudes then there can be no talk of a change in Sino-Japanese relations, whereas if they hold more positive views there might be a chance of future change in a more favourable direction. Simultaneously, the wider Chinese public has strong sentiments and is very sensitive in relation to some issues China faces with Japan².

An understanding of nationalism itself is not only interesting but essential because despite previous expectations of it withering away, it has made a strong comeback in world politics (Smith, 1996). Subsequently, it is a vital factor for understanding the realities of East Asian politics where it has a particularly deep presence (Hasegawa & Togo, 2008). Notably, in a recent survey of nationalist attitudes world-wide, the Chinese had one of the highest levels of popular nationalist feelings (Tang & Barr, 2012). Hence, it can be suggested that nationalism can become a driving power in domestic

¹ In the 9th Japan-China Joint Public Opinion Poll it was indicated by 59.3% of Chinese respondents that nationalism has intensified greatly or slightly, with only 9.7% believing it has decreased and 28.8% reporting no change. (Genron NPO, 2013)

² According to the 9th Japan-China Public Opinion Poll (Genron NPO, 2013) negative attitudes towards Japan from China have also reached an unprecedented high at 92.8% with the Diaoyu/Senkaku territorial dispute constituting 77.6% of responses as to what reason is responsible for negative perceptions, closely followed by Japan's lack of remorse over the history of invasion at 63.8%.

politics as well as strongly shape people's attitudes towards people from other nationalities. That is why a closer look into the question of what drives Chinese nationalism and its relationship with Japan is crucial for a better understanding of the Chinese themselves.

Additionally, the general public's perceptions of foreign countries also matter in understanding policy choices and international relations although they might not necessarily be shared or accepted by decision makers (Shiming, 2010). Moreover, in many cases, the population's understanding of international relations is based on the perceived world rather than the real one (ibid.). This clearly implies that stereotypes, prejudice and perceptions of the "other" do not simply play a role in the act of world politics, but take centre stage. This is particularly the case in China where perception is considered 'the result of psychological cognition of the observer rather than an objective reflection of the object that is being observed' (ibid., p. 269). Therefore, comprehending subjective Chinese understandings and narratives about Japan could help better put Chinese political actions towards Tokyo into perspective. This is so because from an argument that 'an independent public opinion is certainly a myth' (Sun, 2011) in China, the message as of recent has shifted towards one that Beijing's leaders are '[m]ore than ever before... listening to their people' (Denyer, 2013). And by taking the importance of the potential power of student action and attitude in China into consideration it becomes evident that students' perceptions and attitudes must be studied.

The thesis aims to make a contribution, however limited its scope, to the literature on Chinese students' attitudes and perceptions. And particularly so in relation to what influences them and how these reflect on Japan. There are texts that focus on Chinese students' stereotypes in regards to Japan (Peng, 2010), as well as on general stereotypes and opinions about Japan in China (Kashima et al., 2003; Neuman, 2001). There are also texts that link student mobilization with Chinese nationalism (Yang & Zheng, 2012). However, this text will specifically add to the literature on nationalism and its effect on higher education students. Furthermore, by examining attitudes towards Japan the thesis will implicitly look into the issue of Chinese identity and how it is delimited

by various factors – education, state influence, an outside threat. Through the argument, and particularly the empirical section, it will be presented how there is not one strict Chinese identity, but that it is instead multi-faceted. Given the enormity and complexity of China it should not be surprising that this is the case.

1.4. Outline of the thesis

What comes next is the second chapter which elaborates on the theory connected to the discussed topic. The chapter begins with an extensive literature review on nationalism, the specifics of Chinese nationalism and current Sino-Japanese relations. Then it explains the theory implemented within the thesis that is used for the analysis. It is followed by chapter three which elaborates on the methodology used for the gathering of the empirical evidence related to the topic of the thesis.

Through the fourth chapter the symbiosis between Chinese nationalism and Japan is exemplified. The issues of history between the People's Republic of China and Japan and the reasons for the animosity which many Chinese harbour in regards to Tokyo are presented. The chapter will furthermore explore China's narratives about her own history in relation to Japan, as well as narratives about the Japanese themselves. The fourth chapter will lay down the necessary groundwork information needed for the interpretation of the data presented in the fifth chapter.

The fifth chapter will attempt to see whether patriotic education and nationalist sentiment has influenced young Chinese people and what kind of attitudes they hold in regards to Japan. The first-hand empirical data is presented and analyzed therein. The final chapter will draw a conclusion based on the these findings, as well as academic literature, sum up the argument and propose new avenues for future research related to the explored topics.

2. THEORY

2.1. Literature Review

In order to properly answer the question how nationalism and anti-Japanese bias in China influence Chinese students' perceptions of themselves and of Japan it is necessary to look into what the literature has already said about the various phenomena: namely nationalism, Chinese nationalism and Chinese attitudes towards Japan.

When speaking about nationalism it is possible to easily get lost in a 'theoretical jungle' (Akzin, 1964). The concept of nationalism is one that emerged in Europe in the era of national self-determination in the early 19th century and is, therefore, a comparatively modern Western concept. Despite the relative youth of the notion it is one of the most powerful forces of collective action (Tand & Darr, 2012). However, although it is a powerful idea the question remains what exactly makes nationalism *nationalism*? Or in the words of Lucian Pye: 'Nationalism has become a very fuzzy concept because we have tended to lump together under its label all manners of identities and primordial sentiments.' (1996, p.87). Pye argues that nationalism 'should not be confused with tribalism, ethnicity, or shared cultural, religious and linguistic identities' and adds that these actually 'work against the creation of a unifying sense of nationalism' (1996, p. 87). He technically argues that nationalism is a state-led sentiment. In accordance with this, it has been said that nationalism is mainly a political principle, which establishes congruency between the national and political units (Eriksen, 1993). In terms of this, '[n]ationalist *sentiment* is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment.' (ibid., original emphasis)

Smith's idea (1998), however, is that nationalism is derived exactly from such pre-modern origins like kinship, religion, belief systems, common historic territories and memories, and therefore his view is defined as "primordial". Also known as a "culturalist" theory, this sense of nationalism is

clearly defined and rigid. Still, there are many more theories of nationalism. From historic and non-historically based nationalisms (Herod, 1976), to “old” and “new” nationalisms (Seton-Watson, 1965), just to name some of the variants. Moreover, there are other influential theories of nationalism in the existing literature that could be termed as functionalist and constructivist (Tang & Darr, 2012). Gellner (1983) expresses the functionalist theory by explaining that the desire and move to modernize society into the ideal of a nation-state ultimately end up in the establishment of the nation; hence Gellner arrives at the conclusion that ‘it is nationalism which engenders nations, not the other way round’ (p.55). The constructivist view in turn argues that nationalism is a product of what can be described as elite manipulation of mass publics. Moreover, Brass (1991) specifically underlines the role of political elites and their manipulation of cultural symbols in the building of ethnic and national identities in relation to nationalist sentiment.

A very appropriate overview of the essence of Chinese nationalism is that presented by Jonathan Unger (1996): ‘Chinese nationalism today seems like Joseph’s biblical coat of many colours. It does not consist of a single cloth, a single easily comprehended sentiment. Rather, it comprises an inter-stitching of state-inculcated patriotic political appeals, Han ethnic identification, and culturalist pride; a confusion of aspirations for national greatness alongside growing sub-national assertions of regional identity; open-minded optimism and anti-foreign resentment’ (p. xvii). Greenfeld’s (1996) understanding of nationalism as culture, in the sense of a shared representation of ideal social relations, in which the nation is envisaged as the basic source of sovereignty and object of solidarity is one additional way of understanding Chinese nationalism.

However, it is important to note that, unlike European nationalism which emerged out the oppression of multiethnic empires, Chinese nationalism is different in two major aspects. Firstly, it came into being as a direct response to Western imperialism, i.e. from an external threat instead of purely domestic developments. Secondly, China is ‘an empire-turned-nation’ (Tang & Darr, 2012, p.814), or even more appropriately, in the words of Lucian Pye ‘a civilization pretending to be a

nation-state' (1996, p.109). That is why Chinese nationalism has no simple explanation relating it to the more traditional views on nationalism which stem from a European context. It is not so much a case of oppression and a fight for independence as a fight against aggression in the name of preserving independence. Therefore, it is possible to suggest, like with other terms, that one must not speak precisely of Chinese nationalism but of nationalism with Chinese characteristics instead. Not simply because of the different historical context but also because of multifariousness of China.

What is also essential is that the very word nationalism has a difficult translation in the Chinese language. Conscious of the importance the term bears in Western political thought, Chinese intellectuals have been on the lookout for an appropriate equivalent (Hunt, 1993). 国家, 国民 and 民族 all have their supporters, however historians and intellectuals have begun to pay more attention to patriotism or 爱国主义, or simply 爱国 (ibid., p 63). This is an interesting word in itself because the component parts are 爱, ai, which means (to) love, and 国, guo, which most closely translates as state. Therefore, patriotism in Chinese is literally loving the state. As Hunt (1993) notes it: '[b]y professing aiguo, [the] Chinese usually expressed loyalty to and a desire to serve the state' and that it 'also highlights the old and indigenous nature of this seemingly "modern" and "Western" phenomenon and thus helps us guard against reducing Chinese nationalism to Western terms.' (p. 63). Again, the difference in understanding the notion of nationalism and its application to the Chinese context is pointed out. In the Sino-centric world, the state has been there since time immemorial, traditionally in the face of the Emperor and his bureaucracy, later on through the CCP, which was the continuation of that powerful state tradition following the unrest of the inter- and War years. Therefore, it can be assumed that state and country are deeply intertwined concepts in the Chinese psyche.

Hence, like some have argued (Zhao, 1998, 2005; Walton, 2012), China's nationalism is of the state-led or state-centric kind. Or in the words of Charles Tilly this is a phenomenon in which 'rulers who spoke in a nation's name successfully demanded that citizens identify themselves with that

nation and subordinate other interests to those of the state.’ (1995, p.190) Furthermore, in the Chinese case loving the state is practically intertwined with loving the CCP for it is because of the CCP that modern China exists. Thus, love and support for China cannot be distinguished from love and support for the Chinese state and the Chinese Communist Party (Zhao, 1998, p. 290). There are suggestions that this is no longer a completely valid point because of the introduction of market reforms and the PRC’s opening up to the world which allowed an inflow of a lot of different points of view and opinions as well as a probable crisis in political trust in the long term (Wang, 2005).

There can be no question that Chinese nationalism has influenced relations between the PRC and Japan. When talking about modern Sino-Japanese relations the academic literature is just as split in its many opinions and takes on the situation between the two East Asian nations. This is not that surprising given that as far back as the 1970s it was noted that in the modern age the Middle Kingdom and the Empire of the Rising Sun ‘have been interacting with each other and misunderstanding each other for a century... There is little evidence that either country understands the other any better than it did in the past’ (Johnson, 1972, p. 711). On top of that ‘it is doubtful whether any two people in the twentieth century have approached each other with more profoundly misleading stereotypes’ (ibid., p. 717).

The importance of stereotypes in the relationship between the two countries cannot be underestimated. Although the image of Japan in Chinese minds has been primarily negative (Neuman, 2001; Ching, 2012), Beijing officials have been playing a balancing act to foster economic stability by showing the Japanese in positive light whilst at the same time adhering to popular sentiment (Rozman, 2002). Still, it has been argued that Chinese officials exploit their populace’s sentiments in regards to Japan (Sun, 2011) to exert pressure on Tokyo in the international realm and make it yield to Chinese demands. At the same time Beijing has argued against this and even engaged in what it calls ‘smile diplomacy’ (cf. Rozman, 2002) in regards to its important neighbour. In spite of smile

diplomacy, some academics concentrate on the territorial disputes between the states as well as of energy sources posing an issue (Wiegand, 2009) in bilateral ties.

Related to this, some authors speak of an 'intensifying rivalry' which pushes out the prospects for a positive development between Tokyo and Beijing (Self, 2002). By including the topic of stereotypes, a number of experts have pointed out that distrust and misperception of Japan among Chinese policy makers and advisors, augmented by the widespread animosity toward Japan, exacerbate the likelihood that China will act aggressively towards its neighbour (Christensen, 1999; Garret & Glaser, 1997). In one particularly negative view, though hopefully very unlikely: 'If China doesn't democratize, Beijing's hostility toward Tokyo could facilitate a war in the 21st Century' (Friedman, 2000, p. 99)³.

Even though relations between the two states at the beginning of the new millennium have reached their lowest point since diplomatic ties were rekindled (Reilly, 2011, p. 2) it is dubious to speak of war. Despite all the popular animosity and tensions between Beijing and Tokyo, the bilateral relationship seems relatively stable at the higher political and diplomatic levels (Reilly, 2011, p. 7), not least because the two states 'share one of the most interdependent relationships... in the international system' (Manicom & O'Neil, 2009, p. 227) but also because both refrain from allowing key issues to inhibit cooperation (Mochizuki, 2007), especially when it comes to the sphere of the economy. This pragmatism at the higher levels, however, is not reciprocated at the popular level, where protests have become an almost regular occurrence and passions run high. In the words of one commentator: 'China and Japan REALLY don't like each other' (Zheng, 2013).

Overall, the literature is particularly negative about the current situation and future prospects of Sino-Japanese relations. More positive views are rare, but not exceptional, however. A problem with some of the analyses is that they only look at the Chinese side and its actions, not

³ It is, in fact, the case that in 2013 slightly over 50% of the Chinese public believed that there would eventually be a military conflict between China in Japan, whether within a few years or in the future. This is in stark contrast to Japan's 23.7% who believed the same. (Genron NPO, 2013)

really taking into account the Japanese side. A further problem is that in addition to this many authors consider the domestic Chinese influences, popular opinion, and patriotic education for example, but they fail to do so in relation to Japan, where domestic politics plays just as vital a card on the political game field as in China. A notable exception is Caroline Rose's (2012) *Sino-Japanese Relations* which offers a very in-depth look into the motivations and driving forces behind the two states' actions and what influences their opinions of each other.

From the literature review it can be assumed that for Chinese students nationalism, or nationalism with Chinese characteristics, would be related to a sense of admiration and love for the state, as opposed to a more abstract idea of the nation. Hence, it can be suggested that nationalism would have strong influences when it comes to the very political – and would be connected to what the Chinese state does and says, especially in its reactions to Japan. Given the fact that academics seem to be negative about the future prospects of Sino-Japanese relations at the higher levels it can follow that the same should be valid when it comes to the popular level and to students in particular. Additionally, the literature states that the two countries act towards each other based on misconceptions and stereotypes. It can be assumed that this is the case because these very misconceptions are perpetuated in their relative social environments. Thus, it is maybe the case that Chinese students would hold negative attitudes towards Japan because of the above. The empirical part of the thesis will aim to give an answer to that.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

In presenting the argument of the thesis and evaluating the gathered data, the theories of constructivism and social identity will be implicitly used. The two theories complement one another because both see phenomena as derivatives of and which are shaped by their surroundings. This is pertinent in the given case because it is to be assumed that Chinese students have been strongly influenced by the environment in which they have grown up, be it social or educational. This, in turn,

should have direct consequences for the attitudes and opinions they hold in general and particularly about Japan.

Social identity theory has been chosen because social psychologists focus on the meaning that a given social reality has for the individual, and the processes through which individuals shape and are shaped by the social world (Allport, 1954). According to the theory it is a natural tendency of groups to be divided by an us/them dichotomy. This leads to a division of an in-group and an out-group. Social identity theory could thus be understood to imply that in-group identification could be associated with higher levels of prejudice (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), since evaluating out-groups less positively than the in-group is one of several ways to achieve positive distinctiveness (Brown 2000).

In addition, it is explained that social identity theory emphasizes the importance of attending to the group members' socially shared and socially mediated understandings of themselves and their intergroup relations with others (Turner, 1999). These aspects of the theory make it appropriate for analyzing stereotypical understandings of the 'other'. In addition, as Triandafyllidou (1998) explains, '[t]he notion of the other is inherent in nationalistic doctrine itself' (p. 594), thus bringing together the different elements of the argument. Therefore, it is a pertinent tool for analyzing the phenomenon of Chinese nationalism, and the interconnectedness with opinions held in relation to Japan.

Nationalism is strengthened via nationalist discourse in the public sphere. Ladegaard (2012) argues that discourse is not seen as a neutral carrier of content but as a social practice in itself. He further states that 'stereotyping and other forms of social categorization are seen as discursive constructions which are created and negotiated in everyday talk and shaped by contextual and situational factors' (ibid., p. 61). This is important because it exemplifies the importance that narratives, as parts of discourse, have in forming attitudes and opinions. Discourse analysis is implicitly used in the argument in presenting the various narratives that have a grip in China – those of the Century of Humiliation, and of Japan and its people.

Furthermore, narratives are closely linked to stereotypes, which in themselves are strongly connected to a group in memory (Stangor & Lange, 1994). In the context of Sino-Japanese relations where history, and by proxy memory, plays such an important role in shaping interaction, stereotypes also become a vital factor. According to Hughes and Baldwin (2002) stereotypes 'are generally considered to be overgeneralizations of group characteristics or behaviours, which are applied to individuals of those groups' (p.114). In short, 'stereotypes are cognitive shortcuts that inaccurately describe the world' (Peng, 2010, p. 244) and 'once objectified, assume an independent and sometimes prescriptive reality' (Augustinos et al, 2006, p.258).

The above taken together with Ikatura's (2004) finding that mass media and education can create stereotypical images makes the theoretical approach chosen a fitting explanatory tool for the processes taking place in China. However, the thesis will seek to see if the idea that 'individuals tend to maintain rather than change their stereotypes' (Lyons & Kashima, 2003, p. 989) (and by proxy – their attitudes) is valid when applied to Chinese overseas students and their experience with Chinese nationalism in order to test the hypotheses.

3. METHODS

3.1. Interviews

A series of qualitative semi-structured interviews , ranging around fifteen minutes each were conducted with members of the Leiden University Chinese student population in late April and early May 2014 about their personal views on Japan and in regards to the Sino-Japanese relationship. The advantages of this type of interview is that after setting the topic with a question related to the area of knowledge or relevance of the interviewees, the respondents are able to elicit data on perspectives of salience to them (Barbour, 2008). However, due to the structure of the interviews, as well as the specific sample of interviewees, bias is possible which would reflect on the obtained information's credibility. It was possible to conduct only ten interviews; however, they provided insightful information and important patterns were formed.

Snowballing, or the referral of one interviewee to another was used as a main method of finding the interviewees beginning with subjects the author knew personally and through referrals from colleagues. However, due to the limitations of this method (some respondents were reluctant to share information with their acquaintances while others did not know people who would be willing to speak on the subject) the author also approached Chinese students at random to ask whether they would be willing to take part in an interview.

One specific condition in the selection of interviewees was that they were raised and educated up to before coming to Leiden on the Chinese mainland, thus excluding possible respondents from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, as well as Chinese who had emigrated out of the mainland. The fact that only Chinese students at the University of Leiden were contacted may lead to a lack of satisfactory variation and therefore lead to selection bias (King et al. 1994). All participating students are Han Chinese. Most of them come from the Eastern parts of China which are much more developed than the remaining areas of the country. This, in combination with the fact that the

students are doing their Master's degrees or exchange semesters in Leiden and a lot of them describing themselves as being "*very middle class*" (Interview 2) , "*luckily middle class*" (Interview 3), or coming from "*poor family before. But now middle class [sic]*" (Interview 6) it can be assumed that they are of China's more well-off citizens. Thus, they interviewees are a very appropriate sample for the research – young, well-educated, middle class Chinese with good prospects.

The carried-out interviews are anonymous, with no mention of name or any personal information that might be too revealing. Still, security remained an issue with some prospective respondents reacting negatively to the research topic and declining participation. All participants were briefed on the topic of the thesis beforehand, when asked whether they would like to participate and everyone who is quoted gave their consent. All participants were free to refuse answering and the interviews could be terminated by their initiative if they felt uncomfortable or had any problems⁴.

3.2. Limitations

A recording device was used to tape the interview so as not to miss any of the information and to ease transcribing. All subjects were expressly asked before the start of the interviews whether they agreed to have the conversation put on record for transcribing purposes. Some interviewees explicitly noted that they would not like to have their interviews recorded on a recording device and showed great concern about anonymity. Again, this inferred that security was an issue for several of the participants. Because of this the author has to rely exclusively on his hand-taken notes in 5 out of 10 cases. A problem related to this that occurred was that because of the process of taking notes requiring a longer period of time, respondents would wait for transcribing to finish before they would continue talking, thus sometimes trailing off from what they were previously talking about and the natural flow of the interview would break. Some respondents were very concerned about the exact notes that were being taken. On several occasions subjects demanded seeing what exactly was

⁴ For the mandatory questions that each participant was asked see Appendix.

being written down with some participants wanting certain words changed and additionally clarifying their positions and opinions.

Based on the author's observation it could be said that almost all of the respondents were very careful when choosing their words and were very cautious about the image they would present of themselves and of the opinions they espoused. It can be argued that this is in a way related to the traditional social and cultural practice in China of 'saving face' - 面子. Saving face, is similar to the Western concept of dignity, however it is related to a person's social performance relative to the people he or she is interacting with (Lam, 1993; Yan, 2010). In Chinese culture, it has been argued, that losing face is a fate worse than death (Rosenberg, 2004) and therefore saving face is essential. In the case of the conducted interviews, it can be suggested that because of this concept there has been information bias, self-censorship and restraint in relation to the given information. Thus the true opinions of the respondents are probably not fully disclosed which suggests that all information should probably be taken with a pinch of salt. A case and point in relation to this was at the very end of one of the interviews when one respondent claimed that she '[did not] *want to say anything negative. Only positive things [sic]*' (interview 8).

The fact that the interviews were conducted in English, a foreign language for the participants, may have had an effect on the quality of the data. Some students apologized repeatedly for taking long to find the right word. This supposes that some of their original thoughts might have been, and probably were, lost in translation. However, most of the conversations kept going at a natural pace without many stunts.

The interviews were conducted in a friendly an atmosphere as possible, so as to have the respondents feel at ease, not perceive any threat and produce as honest and full information as possible. The fact that the author speaks some Mandarin Chinese, has spent time in China and spoke to them in their native tongue a bit helped make the respondents feel more comfortable. However, a barrier stemming from speaking with a foreigner probably remained intact. Additionally, in light of

the fact that some respondents were not personally known by a previous contact or the researcher and were selected at random can explain why they were reserved in comparison to the snowball interviewees.

The interviewer suggested conducting the interviews in a more secluded, yet public, environment, some distance away from other people so that the respondents would not be concerned with others overhearing the conversation and provide more information. Although some interviews were conducted in such a manner, some respondents wanted to stay in a very public setting. The author interpreted this as a sign of self-restraint from one side. By making sure that we are surrounded by people the interviewees would be cautious of what they were saying and avoid controversial opinions. From another side, this was seen by the researcher as a probable defense against invasion of personal space. It is possible that a more secluded environment might have been too personal to the interviewees and refusing to answer a question would have been more difficult than in a more public setting.

3.3. Other Empirical Data

Other empirical data supplementing the theory, presented in footnotes, in the thesis are public opinion polls conducted on China-Japan perceptions. The thesis mostly uses the data obtained through the 9th Japan-China Public Opinion Poll by the Genron NPO. However, data from various polls conducted by The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation are also utilized. It must be noted at this point that finding relevant available public opinion polls from China is rather difficult. Considering the restricted character of the political system in the PRC and strict scrutiny over available information, especially on a sensitive topic such as Sino-Japanese relations in light of recent popular anti-Japanese sentiment, this should come as no real surprise. However, polls related to the topic but originating from Japanese sources proved to be of significant value.

Of course, a huge proportion of the information in the thesis comes from academic sources, which have conducted research on the relevant topics. Scholarly articles are used throughout the

entirety of the text to substantiate and evaluate the argument and empirical data. Thus, through a combination of all the different types of sources – qualitative and quantitative, i.e. triangulation, it was aimed to give a better answer to the questions raised.

4. THE SYMBIOSIS OF HISTORY AND NATIONALISM

4.1. Historical Account of Sino-Japanese Relations

In order to properly understand what influences Chinese students' attitudes and identities and their relation to Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiment, it is essential to first look into the history of interaction between the two countries and the traditional attitudes associated with it. This is also important because of the central role that Japan plays in China's more recent history. Therefore, it is safe to assume that history education especially would concentrate on this topic and mould a lot of China's young minds.

China has a history of a millennial 'glorious civilization' (Gries, 2005). To the Chinese the Middle Kingdom was literally the center of the world, the embodiment of 文明 – civilization in itself. Notably, the distinction between China and non-China was based on this idea of civilization opposed to barbarity. The farther away you were from the center – i.e. China – the more barbaric the character of the people (Jacques, 2012). Hence, because the Japanese had been influenced by Chinese civilization they were "less barbaric", however still inferior. This inferiority was also perceived from a moral standpoint, which is an important detail to keep into account. Moreover, the two are separated by 'a mere belt of water' suggesting Chinese paternalism and cultural hegemony over Japan (Gries, 1999). Interestingly enough, it is argued that even nowadays this great-power psychology characterized by China's position at the core remains in the subconscious of many Chinese (Lu, 2004). That is reason enough to argue that the Chinese have historically, and up to this day, felt free to express dissatisfaction with Japan (Self, 2002, p. 78).

However, China's self-centeredness and self-perception of superiority came to suffer badly with the onset of the Western imperial powers in the 19th century (Spence, 2013). The Opium Wars in the middle of that century marked the beginning of what was to be called the Century of Humiliation – arguably the darkest period of Chinese history when it fell prey to foreign powers.

Moreover, Chinese self-understanding of supremacy was suddenly ended not by any of the new Western barbarians, but by a nation they called 倭, dwarfs or people of servitude (Takeda, 2005). This took place in 1895 with China's defeat in the First Sino-Japanese war which was experienced as a shocking and intolerable humiliation by its people.

This period is deeply ingrained on Chinese popular memory with its constant reiteration serving as a reminder not only of things past but also as a warning against a possible recurrence whenever the Chinese leadership feels under pressure by foreign powers or seeks to unite the population against an external threat, no matter real or perceived (Whiting, 1983, p. 931). More importantly, in addition to the above, the Century is a traumatic and foundational moment because it turned traditional Chinese worldviews upside down (Gries, 2004). Unlike when invaders would adapt to the Chinese way of life and "barbarians" would pay tribute, the Chinese lost their footing in the confrontation that arose between East and West (ibid. p. 47). This caused a trauma that 'brings about a lapse or rupture in memory that breaks continuity with the past' and further 'unsettles narcissistic investment and desired self-images' (LaCapra, 1998, p. 9). Furthermore, it is precisely the Century of Humiliation that is the birthplace and birth time of Chinese nationalism.

The destabilization of China's worldview and the worsening of attitudes towards Japan continued with the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. What followed surpassed any foreign act of aggression on modern China and the bitter fight between 1937 and 1945 became known as the Anti-Japanese War. In it roughly 20 million Chinese lost their lives and most of the country's industry was left in shambles. Tragic instances such as the Nanjing Massacre in which an estimated two hundred thousand people, mostly civilians, were brutally killed by the Japanese Army, the experiments with chemical warfare to the north and the system of pleasure women, all contributed to creating a negative idea of Japan.

Together with the end of the War came the end of the 'Century of Humiliation', however it was by that point deeply imprinted on Chinese memory (Whiting, 1983). Moreover, the Century

deeply rooted a strong sense of injustice at the hands of foreign powers in the national psyche of China (Zhao, 2013). China was never to be in such a demeaning position again and the dream of a strong China, 强国梦, is now shared amongst Chinese people (ibid., p. 538). Even more importantly, the Anti-Japanese War is what gave birth to the People's Republic of China. In the words of Gries (2004): '[b]y mobilizing and leading the peasantry in nationalist resistance against the invading Japanese, the Communist Party gained the mass following it later used to defeat the Nationalist Party' (p.69). Furthermore, resistance to and the defeat of Japan and the salvation of the nation has been a dual legacy at the heart of the CCP's claims to widespread nationalist legitimacy (Johnson, 1962; Gries, 2004).

After the War relations between the two countries were reestablished in the 1970s and through economic investment Japan gained an important role in China's modernization. When the relationship was normalized the question of an apology to the Chinese from Japan was raised and the wording of the apology was perceived as satisfactory by both parties at the time (Rose, 2012). However, tensions between the two would continue up until the present day and the issue of an official apology would resurface regularly, especially amongst the Chinese population⁵.

It is suggested that a joint analysis of conflict is a fundamental element of a 'process of transactional contrition and forgiveness between aggressors and victims which is indispensable to the establishment of a new relationship based on mutual acceptance and reasonable trust' (Montville, 1993). However, it is this joint analysis that is missing in modern Sino-Japanese relations and the lack of settlement on the issue has fostered innumerable problems. Demands for apologies from the Chinese for past grievances⁶ became the norm (Rose, 2012). Moreover, so that a collective

⁵ It is notable that the most important perception for the Chinese public on what needs to be resolved in the historical issues between China and Japan, at 61%, is 'Japan reflecting on its history of invasion and apologizing to the invaded countries'. (Genron NPO, 2013)

⁶ There has been an increase in 2013 to 37.9%, in comparison to 2011 and 2012, both at 25%, in the opinion held by the Chinese public that bilateral relations between China and Japan will not develop unless historical issues are resolved (Genron NPO, 2013)

Japanese apology be accepted it must be official and stated on record (Tavuchis, 1991). And apparently it is this exact official recognition that is lacking in the Japanese approach (Rose, 2012)⁷.

Historical issues are particularly important for China because there the past is 'considered a mirror through which ethical standards and moral transgressions pertinent to the present day could be viewed' (Unger, 1993, p. 1). Concomitantly this gives the PRC a justification to stand on a higher moral ground in regards to Japan, thus reasserting its lost superiority. Being of a higher moral standing is especially important in China (Cranmer-Byng, 1973; Yan, 2011) and is vital not only for Chinese's self-perception but also for their handling of foreign affairs. By perceiving Japan on a lower moral footing than themselves, the Chinese people can justify their anger and actions towards Tokyo as well as their political demands and concerns.

Fifty years of aggression became an indispensable factor in the ties between the two great Asian nations despite centuries of communication. The question is whether the two states and their peoples are ultimately able to go beyond historical grievances and establish a cooperative relationship involving the positive, and not the negative. Premier Zhou Enlai remarked that 'The history of the past sixty years... is a thing of the past and we must turn it into a thing of the past. ...Compared to the history of a few thousand years, the history of sixty years is not worth bringing up.' and continued that 'we cannot let such history influence our children and grandchildren.' (cited in Reilly, 2011, p. 55) Whether this is truly the case remains questionable because it is precisely the history of these sixty years that Zhou is referring to which remains the main reason for distrust between China and Japan (Rozman, 2002). Furthermore, the CCP has attempted to influence exactly China's youth towards a negative perception of Japan based on this very history of confrontation. Moreover, this part of history has become a crucial building block of

⁷ Interestingly, in 2006 51% of the Japanese themselves did not think that Japan had done enough to apologize and compensate for the damage that it had caused to the countries and people it had invaded and colonized (MMMMF, 2006a). In a more recent poll 48% of Japanese, however, thought the country had done enough in that respect and 15% thought no apology was necessary (PEW, 2013). This could be understood as a defensive reaction to growing military power by other countries in the region since the first poll was conducted.

new China's self-perception and thus has a strong impact on the way she reacts to Japan. Finally, this episode of history served as the lighting match to the fuel of China's until then dormant nationalism.

4.2. Chinese Narratives And Self-Perception

To better understand how Chinese self-identity is, to a certain degree, shaped, it is vital to look into the narratives which prevail in China. These narratives are not only important for their presence in the social environment which has a distinct impact on identity and perception but they are also essential from the point of view of nationalist politics that is being dealt with here. Narratives are stories about our past which, psychologists have argued, infuse our identities with 'unity, meaning, and purpose... [and] [f]ar from being simple tools of our invention, the stories we tell about the past both constrain and are constrained by what we do in the present' (Gries, 2004, p. 46). Therefore, feelings such as pride in past accomplishments could translate into confidence about an uncertain future (Barbalet, 1998). That is why it is possible to argue that the opposite experience – that of a humiliating past – has a counter effect, namely becoming a source of anger and anxiety. The Century of Humiliation thus serves as an explanation for the ongoing popular animosity between China and Japan.

Chinese struggles to come to terms with this traumatic period which turned the Chinese world upside down are reflected in the emergence of different narratives about the Century (Gries, 2005, p. 109). There are two dominant narratives: the victor and the victim narratives which, contradictory as they may sound, complement each other in their ability to stir emotion. On one side you have China as coming out victorious against all odds, being able to overcome all of its enemies and on the other you have that of China as a victim, actually suffering a destitute fate at the hands of conquerors and aggressors (ibid.).

After the end of the Second World War and the ensuing Civil War with the Nationalist Party, the Chinese Communist Party established the foundations of the new Chinese state. By utilizing the heroics of the anti-Japanese resistance the CCP managed to establish a heroic discourse about the

recent past by stressing the vigor and passion of the people to regain their freedom from foreign intrusion. This "victor" national narrative first served the requirements of Communist revolutionaries who wanted to mobilize popular support in the 1930s and 1940s and later came in use for the nation-building goals that the People's Republic had set between the 1950s and 1970s; thus, defeating the Japanese in the War of Resistance and saving the nation became not only a mantra of the CCP but also a dual legacy of the Party's claims to nationalist legitimacy (Gries, 2004, p. 69; Gries, 2005, p. 109).

This positive outlook on the history of China served as a foundation for the establishment of the new Communist society, full of energy and in sync with the ideas of a constant revolutionary existence proclaimed by Chairman Mao. In addition, by solidifying that image of Communist resilience and bravery opposed to Japanese militarism through new methods of propaganda, socialist ideology was strengthened on a popular level. Thus, through the establishment of a permanent enemy image of Japan and a victorious discourse about defeating this enemy, the CCP was able to have an influence over people's minds and hearts and to justify its claim to power. Furthermore, this negativity towards Tokyo is not as much about the Japanese themselves per say but about China (Ching, 2012). The narrative of heroism and patriotism were also aimed at producing an awareness of and national pride in China's history (Rose, 2012). This victorious vision continued into the 1990s, although not as strongly in the post-Mao era.

As noted, the victorious discourse taken together with Maoist ideology served to a certain degree as a foundation for Communist legitimacy in the PRC. After reforms started, and especially after the events at Tiananmen, however, Marxism-Leninism lost its footing and the Chinese political elite started looking around for something else that could take the place of the old dogma 'as the cohesive ideology to keep the Chinese people together' (Zhao, 1998, p. 289). Chinese leaders thus turned to nationalism as a substitute to Marxism-Leninism and Maoism, and the CCP became the representative of national interest, not simply of ideology and control (Tang & Darr, 2012). Thus,

nationalism served to become the new glue to hold the regime together. And with that came a swift change of dominant narratives.

It is in the late 1980s and early 1990s, that the positive view of history yielded to a negative interpretation (Callahan, 2007, 2010). A “new” narrative reintroduced the victimization concept from the pre-Mao period’s texts on the Century (Cohen, 2002). In it China was presented as falling victim at the hands of ‘the West’, including Japan, who was responsible for everything bad that had happened (Gries, 2005). Indeed, the image of China as a raped woman, a symbol of innocence and purity being mistreated, common in Republican China but unpopular during the early Communist period, re-emerged (ibid.). A narrative about “the rape” of China became particularly popular with the release of Iris Chang’s bestseller *The Rape of Nanking* (1997) which raised awareness about the incident but was also criticized by some for presenting a biased outlook on events (Hochschild, 1999)⁸.

The emotional potential force of the victim narrative is exemplified by the popularity amongst China’s youth of War of Resistance-related books such as Chang’s *Rape* but also of books such as *China Can Say No*, a text strongly influenced by nationalism, which is a supporter of a tougher stance on Japan and the United States (Song et al. 1996; Guo, 1998). Hence, it is essential to note that it is precisely such a ‘victimization-based popular nationalism [that] has gained strength and come to constrain Chinese foreign policy.’ (Wan, 2006, p.336)

It so happens that in regards to the Century of Humiliation it can be argued that it is simultaneously a ‘chosen glory’ and a ‘chosen trauma’ (Volkan & Itzkowitz, 1994). Both views live together side by side in China and reinforce China’s contemporary nationalism. Furthermore, because of all the harm that it did in the past Japan ‘forfeited the moral right to be a political or

⁸ The Nanjing Massacre was in fact given as the top reason by 42,19% of Chinese respondents to the question why they did not like Japan, more than twice as much than the next on the list – historical issues – at 19,76% (MMMMF, 2006b).

military great power... [and] should be kept in fetters' (Rozman, 2002, p. 103) thus invigorating China's claims for stronger presence in East Asia's political and security scenes⁹.

When looking at itself, from one side China feels wronged and humiliated. This feeling is strengthened during situations which provoke an indignant reaction amongst the Chinese populace, and especially amongst China's nationalists. It is precisely that such provoking events can activate underlying memories and sentiments that 'make up the framework in which perceptions are formed' (Shiming, 2010, p. 280) thus reinforcing negativity. From the other side, China's civilizational worldview in combination with its resurgence in influence together with the views on how heroically it overcame the Century of Humiliation whilst still being at a higher moral standing, shape a feeling of superiority on which Chinese nationalism feeds off. Subsequently, China has a conflicted view of herself ranging from one extreme to the other, creating a paradox – an image of an entitled loser.

Paradoxical is also a good way of describing China's narratives about her experience with Japan. On the one hand we have China's humiliating defeat at the hands of someone who she understood and viewed as being "lesser" and still seems to be seen that way in some respects. On the other hand there is the heroic overcoming of the darkest periods of China's history by defeating this very central enemy. Thus, Japan is essential not only for the creation of the modern Chinese state and all the pride relating to it but also to a large extent for the Chinese feeling of inferiority triggered by the Century. In a way it turns out that Japan is the breaker but also the maker of modern China.

From all of the above it can be inferred that China's narratives about herself would have a conflicting effect on China's youth and students. It would be safe to assume that in combination with nationalist sentiment the narratives construct a strong sense of pride of China but also emotional pain which could translate in anger towards Japan. This would lend credence to H1 that the social

⁹ The Chinese public views Japan as the second country to pose the highest military threat to the PRC – 53.9% think so. Only the United States ranks higher at 71.6%. (Genron NPO, 2013)

environment strongly impacts a negative attitude towards Japan. However, it remains to be explored what China actually says about its neighbour.

4.3. Japan in China's Eyes

Based on social identity theory it can be suggested that the way China sees Japan has important consequences for the way that young Chinese perceive Tokyo. It is also important to realize the role that Japan constitutes in the nationalism with Chinese characteristics. As was noted above and relating to this, the relationship between China and Japan has gone through a lot of turbulence and is based on some particularly strong (negative) emotions. It has been stated that the emotions and misperceptions resulting from the conflicting historical myths in China (also in Japan) exacerbate tensions, as well as intensify the political costs of conciliatory policies, and ultimately hinder progress toward reconciliation (He, 2009). Furthermore, the negative Chinese sentiments towards Japan are likely to persist over time, since distrust of a perceived enemy tends to be embedded within a coherent intellectual framework, or a "schema" that discounts additional information while still keeping the negative image (Burnstein et al., 1993). Thus, it is not surprising that despite Japanese involvement in China's economic development and it constituting roughly half of overall aid to China (Keating, 2010), Tokyo is still seen as a threat¹⁰. This is unlikely to change soon because of the constant repetition of a perceived rising militaristic wave in Japan in Chinese media (China Daily, 2014; Xinhua, 2014) – connected to the Century – and a lack of widespread acknowledgement of the positive aspects of the Sino-Japanese relationship which influences not only popular but also elite perceptions¹¹.

Furthermore, as was mentioned, social identity theory argues that at a collective level the formation of an insider group happens at the same time that the creation of an outer group, or

¹⁰ Curiously, however, the Chinese public holds a more positive view in regards to the economic relationship between the two countries and 58.6% completely hold or lean towards the opinion that a win-win relationship can be established. This is contrasted to Japan's 19.8% who hold the same view (Genron NPO, 2013).

¹¹ Elite perception of Japan's threat to China's interests is even higher than the popular one, though both are at a very high level: 75.66% and 73.43% respectively. (MMMMF, 2006b)

'other' (Reilly, 2011). This procedure of 'othering' shapes attitudes and behaviour, thus helping the establishment of a consistent and enduring group of ideas which sensitize emotions whilst eschewing objective analysis (Johnston & Stockmann, 2007). In the case of modern China, Japan has become that enemy 'other' who not only serves as an ideological opposite, but also strengthens Chinese positive self-perceptions and additionally mobilizes the population (Suzuki, 2007; Andreasen, 2006).

This negativity and remembrance of things past in relation to Japan is clearly recognized in the words of a Chinese scholar: 'What Japan has done in the past will be remembered *forever!*' (cited in Whiting, 1989, original emphasis). Even the rise of face-to-face contacts with the Japanese people have not managed to change much of the Chinese people's perceptions and they find Japan cold and unfriendly (Self, 2002)¹² and travel between the two countries has not been very successful in changing people's attitudes either¹³. Again, the fact that Japan plays a crucial role for China's economy does not seem to have made much of a change in perceptions either, an example being that Japanese-owned stores, Japanese-made cars and Japanese-affiliated sites become targets of public anger and vandalism during protests (Zhao, 2013). Hence, despite economic progress history, grievances, and events connected to the past of aggression play the key role in the perception of Japan on the popular level.

As was noted above, the CCP's claim to nationalist legitimacy lies to a specific degree on the basis of defeating Japan in the War of Resistance. Furthermore, grounded in this, the Japanese became the 'significant other' (Triandafyllidou, 1998) for the strengthening of China's national identity. It is in periods of social or economic crisis when the national identity is put into question that the saliency of the significant other becomes strong and it serves as the foundation for overcoming the crisis because it unites the people in the face of a common enemy, making the

¹² In fact, Japanese people's qualities such as 'generous', 'kind' and 'sociable' were ranked the lowest by Chinese respondents when asked about their opinion of the Japanese. The strongest trait that the Chinese affiliated with the Japanese at 52% was 'strong sense of patriotism' which probably reflects Chinese thinking of Japan's supposed military reemergence and the feelings related to it. (MMMMF, 2009)

¹³ A remarkable 74% of Chinese and 69.5% of Japanese say that they 'Don't hope to go' to the other's country (Genron NPO, 2013).

significant other technically a scapegoat (ibid.; Doob, 1964, p. 253). It can be argued that after the events surrounding Tiananmen Square and the stark economic changes from the new open-door policy, China found herself in exactly such a crisis. Hence, by turning towards nationalism and the significant other that Japan was already by that point in China's mindset, the PRC's rulers acted in accordance with Triandafyllidou's theory. She further argues that through the opposition with the significant other the insider's identity is 'transformed in ways that make it relevant under a new set of circumstances and/or respond better to the emotive and/or material needs of the members of the nation' (ibid., p. 603). In the Chinese context the population could handle the ideological turn imposed by the ruling elite and simultaneously look away from its own domestic problems.

In addition, the Japanese have not simply been labelled as enemies of China (Andreasen, 2006), but as 鬼子, or devils per say (Ching, 2012) in the popular vernacular. It is not even needed to characterize them as 日本鬼子, or Japanese devils, to specify who exactly one is talking about – at this point the Japanese are *the* devils (ibid., emphasis added) precisely because of their militarist endeavors in China. By designating the Japanese as devils Chinese moral superiority is reestablished in relation to Japan once more. Moreover, by linking it to the Chinese-center/barbaric periphery understanding from the imperial era, the traditional Chinese worldview is brought back which in itself can be related to China's reemergence on the world scene. In a way it could be argued that the Japanese are dehumanized by being characterized as devils, they are reduced to second-hand people, thus not only bringing back traditional Sinocentric views but also furthering negative perceptions and beliefs of the other.

The combination of an initial negative perception of Tokyo in combination with modern Japanese actions which trigger bad reactions (e.x.: Japanese history textbook revision and contested sovereignty over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands) leads to the creating of a very negative 'cultural baggage' (Neuman, 2001) which influences Chinese views and leads to stereotyping and prejudice.

Furthermore, the strong emotional character of the relationship leads to a distortion of values and events (Shiming, 2010) thereby causing even further damage to the possibility of a positive turn.

From all the above it becomes clear that Japan has become an integral enemy other of China. Thus, the Empire of the Rising Sun becomes an object of Chinese negative attitudes, stereotypes and anger. These ideas that seem prevalent in China would, assumingly, have a deep impact on young Chinese people's attitudes. If all young people hear is that Japan is to blame, that the Japanese are devils and that they would never apologize for the past and that they do not regret it then it would be surprising if they actually held a positive view about Tokyo. Thus, if social identity theory is to be counted on in combination with the narratives related to Japan in China, even more leverage is given to H1. However, it must be seen whether this is the case by seeing what actual empirical data from Chinese students will say on the question.

5. CHINA'S YOUTH

5.1. Nationalist Education

By now the history of the symbiosis between nationalism with Chinese characteristics and Japan's enemy image in the Chinese popular mindset has been presented. History and the feelings of being wronged, anger, but also shame have been identified as driving forces of anti-Japanese sentiment followed closely by the negative narratives about Japan and a conflicted Chinese self-perception. The question remains to what extent Chinese nationalism has managed to get a grip on China's youth and how this influences their perspectives in regards to Japan. Is it the case that it has strongly influenced young Chinese's attitudes and there is no breaking away from negative perceptions? Or will it turn out to be the case that higher education, despite previous education, is able to challenge stereotypical thinking in China? These questions lead into the topic of education in general in China. And particularly to the issue of nationalist education strongly influenced by the state in the face of the Chinese Communist Party.

The situation of successful Chinese development which creates strong pride of a reemerging leading economic position (Yang & Zheng, 2012) in a combination with history allows the constitution of a powerful mix to strengthen nationalist feeling. It was mentioned that China's Communist Party used nationalism as a new ideological tool to continue its rule because 'nationalism proved to be stronger than socialism when it came to bonding working classes together' (Nye, 1993, p. 61) in light of social and economic change in the PRC. By managing to identify the party with the nation (Zhao, 1998) through espousing nationalism the CCP also wanted to channel popular negative sentiment away from itself and let it vent out towards others and particularly those who were seen as the threat, especially Japan. In doing so the rulers in Beijing have practiced what has been labelled 'pragmatic nationalism' tempered by diplomatic prudence (Zhao, 2005, p. 132). Thus they are capable of boosting the faith of the people in the unsettled political system and at the same time

keep the state intact during its time of rapid economic and social change, on its move towards post-Communism (ibid.).

However, in order to achieve this the leadership in Beijing had a two-fold problem that needed to be tackled. From one side, the CCP had to popularize the turn from Marxism-Leninism-Mao-Zedong-thought to nationalism that is congruent with the state and its apparatus. From the other, it had to make sure that the 'force [of] expression must be "channeled"' (Zhao, 2005, p. 104) so as not to become a peril for the regime's internal stability, for it has been noted that when not restrained nationalism has the potential to threaten the status quo (Weiss, 2013).

The way that the ruling elite in Zhongnanhai dealt with this was to introduce what was called the Patriotic Education Campaign. The Outline for Conducting Patriotic Education was drafted by the Central Propaganda Department and its aim was to 'boost the nation's spirit, enhance its cohesion, foster its self-esteem and sense of pride, consolidate and develop a patriotic united front to the broadest extent and rally the masses' patriotic passions to the great cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics' (as cited in Zhao, 1998, p. 293). From the above statement the desire for a convergence of Party and patriotic fervor is evident. By appealing to self-esteem and a sense of pride there is an indirect link to the emotions left from the Century of Humiliation as well as a wish for the proud and powerful re-entry of China and its people in the spotlight of the world's political and economic arenas. In standard socialist language, moreover, the CCP calls for a united front, which not only implies internal unity but also echoes an external threat that must be dealt with. Simply put, it can be argued that the Patriotic Education Campaign is a vast socio-political exercise in nationalist propaganda to influence China's youth. Hence, in every educational level – from kindergarten to university – classrooms were converted into forums for the establishment of patriotic sentiment and lessons were permeated with patriotic viewpoints for students (ibid.). Given the nature of Chinese education – with its constant unison reiteration of pre-approved answers and ideas, it can be assumed that education is not merely propagandistic but an exercise of indoctrination.

Furthermore, it is through the change of history education under the influence of the campaign that the CCP changed the previous victorious narrative to the victimization one (Wang, 2008). Thus, in accordance with Lowenthal's (1985) notion that the past is selectively constructed by contemporary needs, Beijing superimposed the blame for China's problems on the Century of Humiliation and Japan. By stressing national unity and territorial integrity, the CCP was able to 'instigate nationalist resentment against foreign pressures' which allowed for China's foreign affairs to 'become an important component of education' (Zhao, 1998, p. 297). By educating China's youth in the victimization narrative of the past, a narrative which overflows with emotional imagery that stirs powerful sentiments and elicits passionate reactions, the strength of China's modern nationalism becomes understandable. The patriotic campaign is therefore suggested as a direct influence on the level of popular nationalism in China by many commentators (Gries, 2004; Pyle, 2007; Zhao, 1998, 2007; Wang, 2008) and especially in the construction of anti-foreign sentiment in general and anti-Japanese fervor in particular. The question which follows is, how much have all these factors described above contributed to anti-Japanese opinion formation of China's students?

China's students have been a vital contributing factor to many of the country's most important events during its modern history, especially when it comes to protests and mobilization (Spence, 2013). That is why their opinions and perceptions cannot be underestimated, especially when taking into consideration that they will most probably one day end up being part of the decision-makers of Chinese policy.

It is to be supposed that since the onset of the Patriotic Education Campaign in the early 1990s, the level of nationalism with Chinese characteristics has increased the PRC. It was noted earlier that China ranks as one of the most nationalist countries in the world and that a large proportion of its citizens also perceive that nationalism has grown or stayed stable. However, at the same time China has opened up to the world and a multitude of new sources of information have been made available to the Chinese public. The Internet, guarded and censored as it may be, has

become an important source of different views, news perspectives and a tool allowing the expression of discontent, not just a provider of a nationalist platform¹⁴. Still, a large part of the PRC's citizens get their news from state-controlled information sources and the most-visited websites on the Internet are Chinese ones¹⁵. This is important because the state is still powerful enough to influence the media and coordinate it through the Propaganda Department (Stockmann, 2010). Thus, education, together with nationalist education and the restricted access to information yet again go in favour of H1. However, universities usually have access to more information than the general information and are birth places of dissenting and different views. Therefore, this availability of additional information and the academic environment which usually has a large effect on the people there give some sway towards H2 of the current argument.

Additionally, the availability of different new sources of information is a particularly important point because it has been suggested that media influences people's views (Peng, 2010). Therefore, it can be assumed that having access to many differing views allows for a reexamination and a questioning of existing ones. It is possible to consider this even in regards to issues such as Japan, where a consistent pattern of information is presented in China. And again, this leads to the question what take Chinese students have on Japan.

5.2. The Rationality of China's Youth (Abroad)

Is it possible to counteract the negative image of Japan that is being fed to China's citizens through the constant reiteration in the media of a Japanese threat, through historical issues, and controlled information? Is it possible to reverse the downward spiral of negative attitudes reinforcing prejudice and a lack of acceptance of the Japanese "other"? To what extent are China's youths' perceptions, at whom many of these anti-Japanese messages are aimed (Whiting, 1989; Gries, 2004)

¹⁴ It must be noted that the Internet serves as Chinese elites' main source of information at 60%, as opposed to Chinese TV which is the general population's most-favoured information provider at nearly 67% (MMMMF, 2006b)

¹⁵ The most visited website by the general population is sina.com at 45.9% and the most watched TV channel is the state-controlled CCTV1 at 47.87% (MMMMF, 2006b)

and whose reaction is usually very strong (Weiss, 2007), influenced? What other influences are important? It was attempted by the author to gain an insight into these topics and probably find some answers by interviewing Chinese students abroad. Due to physical and time limitations it was only possible to interview ten mainland China students, 7 female and 3 male, at Leiden University¹⁶. However, limited by the scope of the sample, the information obtained succeeded in giving some very interesting points and provided intriguing patterns.

The analysis of the interviews was carried out by comparing all the answers of the questions which were asked to every respondent to one another, question by question. Similar words, phrases and themes were established. Through a comparative approach different patterns emerged from the answer, the most important of which are presented here. Some of the themes and patterns were congruent with the previously presented theory, however some important themes presented in the earlier text were glaring omissions or contradictions.

5.2.1. Japanese Culture

It was to be assumed that given the amount of negative image stereotyping of Japan because of World War II and the Century, the use of the term 鬼子, devils, in relation to Japanese people, it was natural to expect a negative perception of Japan, at some level. In addition, it would be possible to take that as an indication of stereotyping and/or prejudice, thus providing as an argument that patriotic education has been successful. However, when asked the question what was the very first thing to associate with the word 'Japan' the responses were overwhelmingly positive and related to an appreciation of Japan, at least on a cultural level. Six out of the ten people indicated that their first thought was *anime, manga* or *comics*. One person added Japanese comics at the end of a list entailing associations such as *culture, samurai* and *sushi*. The overall positivity was enhanced by responses such as *good manners* and *high quality*. The only somewhat negative answer to this question was provided by one female student from Chongqing who described her first thought as *complicated* and related it to the Sino-Japanese relationship.

¹⁶ See Appendix

What can be assumed is that modern Japanese culture, and by implication Japanese soft power, has taken a strong hold over (some of) China's youth. Several responses indicate this. One noted the lasting impression made by animation: *"I have grown up with Japanese manga. It is so much better than Chinese [manga] which has boring stories [sic]"* (Interview 3). Another related a different aspect that made a mark: *"Animation... because music in the cartoon[s] is very beautiful"* which was contrasted, again, to *"boring"* Chinese versions (Interview 5). Japanese animation, it turns out, seems to be a unifying factor amongst the different East Asian countries despite their previous history of animosity. As one respondent explained: *"A lot of Japanese cartoons are shown in all Asian countries. We all have grown up watching the same shows and we know what people [from other countries] are talking about."* (Interview 7). The fact that young Chinese have had the ability to watch such animations can be attributed to China's opening up and the allowance of foreign, especially Japanese considering the extent of economic cooperation, influences. Thus, something which is not a direct source of information, like a cartoon series, turns into a tool that shapes perceptions.

Culture, it turns out, is a serious bond between the two countries in the eyes of the interviewed Chinese students. One student noted that in Japan *"They preserved their old architecture better. It reminds me of Old China. They kept culture"* (Interview 4) implicitly comparing this to China's experience of cultural change. Another student was more explicit in saying that *"I find a mutual element in both cultures. ...The Cultural Revolution ruined a lot of culture [sic] in China, but a lot was preserved in Japan"* (Interview 8). An additional comment made by a few respondents was that there existed a natural link between Chinese and Japanese culture, with one student noting that it allowed for a deeper comprehension between the two peoples and that that must be concentrated on.

5.2.2. Attitudes in Flux

In relation to what the Chinese students abroad felt about Japan, there is an interesting pattern that emerged. One respondent said that there has been an *"evolution of my attitude to Japan. All the education, exhibitions and museums back home show the past very emotionally. And I*

was very emotional about history. But I know more." (Interview 1). One student from Shanghai noted that *"Before I was 18 I hated Japan. Then I went to college and we had field trip there... [during which] I learned a lot of stuff about Japan. It's important... they are people as well."* (Interview 2). Another stated that when she was little *"...everything I know of Japan was about the War, what they tell us in school [sic]"*, however *"when I grow up I see Japanese technology and how successful their business [sic]"* (Interview 6) which made her think about Japan in a different light. Others mentioned that there were Japanese foreign students at their universities who they had met or that some of their friends at university studied Japanese which had made them revise their thinking of Japan. What can be concluded from these answers is that the concentration on history and vilifying Japan is successful at the early stages of education, most probably due to the Patriotic Education Campaign. This was observed by one of the interviewees: *"When you are young in education it's a lot about hatred [of] Japan"* (Interview 9). However, at later stages, especially if one continues to higher education, with access to more information and the possibility to have face-to-face contacts increases the chance of holding a positive attitude.

Several students indicated that they have Japanese personal friends. One noted that she had a friend who had married a Japanese citizen which did not bother her because her friend was happy but pointed out that the *"older generation is not so positive about it"* (Interview 3). Another student explained she had a lot of Japanese friends, partly due to the fact that in a way she is also a foreign student in Hong Kong, which helped bonding. She noted that *"It is good to be friends with them [the Japanese]"* (Interview 1). In addition, she explained that they avoided talking about politics because both sides know it is a contentious topic that raises issues. Most interviewees, however, had had no real deep personal experience with Japanese people besides coming across them at university, although all of them described the Japanese as *"nice"*. Only one of the interviewed Chinese students had actually been to Japan. Hence, it cannot really be tested whether face-to-face contact breeds understanding although one person stated that *"In person they [the Chinese people] don't have a deep sense of hostility [towards Japan]"* (Interview 8).

5.2.3. Japanese State, Japanese country, Chinese State, No Chinese Country

Still, another important pattern was established by talking about Japanese people: the differentiation between Japan's people and the Japanese government. Seven out of the ten interviewed mainland students made this separation: *"You have to separate government and politics from people and personal relations"* (Interview 10), *"Japanese people are friendly. The Japanese government is not"* (Interview 5), *"There is a distinction between people and government [in Japan]"* (Interview 6), *"You make friends individually but you have to see the bigger picture between governments"* (Interview 2), *"It's common sense that the Japanese government is crazy, not the people"* (Interview 9) were the answers given. Whenever any dissatisfaction in regards to Japan was mentioned it was aimed at the government in Tokyo specifically: *"The Japanese government should show some sincerity to our government"* (Interview 8), *"The [Japanese] government shouldn't be as aggressive as they are now."*, *"...we don't like them [the Japanese government]"* (Interview 5) and *"The Japanese government should make a gesture..."* (Interview 1) were some of the most explicit remarks in this respect. This is a very interesting dichotomy between people and government which indicates that there is a negative attitude (probably prejudice) against Japan, but it is reflected in a disapproval of its leaders. It is peculiar because it seems that the connection between Japan's population voting their rulers into power because they operate within a democratic system is not made. Thus there is a disconnect for the Chinese between the people's political views and the state's policy. A possible explanation that can be proposed is that because there is much more contact on a private level between China and Japan (*"Japanese are actually nice! [sic]"* (Interview 9)) which discounts Chinese's preconceptions, the government, which represents the state of Japan is put into the abstract as a way to keep one's beliefs whilst at the same time accepting the new information.

Interestingly, it must be noted that by discussing this a few students offered a similar opinion in relation to the PRC's ruling body. The most stark instances being *"I love my country but I don't love my government"* (Interview 9) and *"[unofficially] in the social media and people's personal views there is a separation, but not officially"* (Interview 2). The same respondent flat out stated that *"The*

young generation just don't buy that [the CCP and China being the same]" (Interview 2). However, this is contrasted by most students seeming not to make a state/country or government/people distinction in regards to their own country with one female being particularly perplexed by the question whether she thought differently of the Chinese state and of China. This relates back to the CCP's attempt, which seems to have been successful to a large extent, to create a symbiosis between state and country in the minds of its people and relate it all back to the Communist Party. Moreover, it is important to mention that despite this every single student said that China still had a lot of internal problems that it has to deal with and the situation there is far from perfect. Many mentioned how the booming economy has slowed down recently and it is becoming harder to find a job and that there are growing social problems which are not mentioned widely.

In relation to this, a couple of students stated that they thought a lot of information in Chinese media was influenced by the government and that *"All on TV [about China]is overly positive. It's like our country is the best so we don't need to know anything else about it"* (Interview 1); *"Information [in China] is a little bit biased about Japan. But it's same about [information relating to] China [sic]"* (Interview 2). It was not clarified, however, whether this realization came when the students were still in China or when encountering a different standpoint during their studies abroad. Furthermore, all students said that they get most of their daily information via the Internet. However, when asked where they receive most of their information about Japan the situation was different: education, Chinese media, history textbooks, and Chinese movies were answers shared by 9 out of the 10 participants. When considering the particularly negative image of Japan that is presented in all of these sources of information the obvious question that comes about is: how do you have a fairly positive view of Japan (in the face of its people and culture) whilst being in an environment that is highly anti-Japanese?

5.2.4. Rationality as a Guiding Principle

The answer to this question might come in the form of the word *rationality*. Every single one of the interviewed students used that word when talking about how China should approach Japan

and in particular when talking about anti-Japanese protests taking place in China. It seems that being *rational* has a very important meaning to them because it was stressed thoroughly during conversations and there was always a juxtaposition to *irrational* people and actions. Especially in regards to protests: *"You shouldn't overreact. You have to stay rational"* (Interview 3), *"I am neutral [in regards to anti-Japanese protests] because I am rational."* (Interview 5), *"I don't like it when there is violence. There should be rationality [sic]"* (Interview 6) and *"Is the Chinese public rational?... (smiles and makes a face) In the circle of friends at university people are more rational than the masses. ...those on the streets have no limit when compared to university people"* (Interview 7). The reiteration of *rationality* continues when talking about how protests should be kept within the limits of rationality and if they are to take place (8 out of the 10 agreed with the idea of protesting as taking a stand, only one said she would participate under the condition that it was peaceful) they have to stay calm.

Ultimately, students had a problem with the lack of rational actions of their compatriots when emotion and passion would take over them and protests would turn angry: *"They shouldn't be violent... In the end they actually hurt Chinese people"* (Interview 8), *"Protesting against Japanese business is stupid. You hurt Chinese business that way"* (Interview 2). Another very non-traditional insider view was presented by one student, again underlined by rational behaviour: *"Protests are stupid. They are to some extent manipulated. People who take part haven't even seen Japanese people but are protesting. They only know what they see from TV shows. This only reinforces animosity"* (Interview 9). He went on to say that he understood that people would protest because of what they are taught at school and what the media says and contrasted that to university students who *"like to speak rationally"*. In regards to political discussion one student stated that you should not do it on the Internet because *"most people [on it] comment irrationally"* (Interview 10).

It seems to be the case that China's university-educated youth (or at least all of the participants who agreed to take part in this study) are very pragmatic. They see why people would

march against Japan, maybe even agree, but it has to be within limits that do not hurt people and the Chinese economy. This is very much similar to what some of the academic literature suggests in regards to the rulers in Beijing themselves – that they allow nationalism to take hold but to a certain controllable level which does not ultimately end up hurting the economy. What reason can be attributed to this stress on *rationality*? *Rationality* could probably be linked back to saving face. By letting emotions get the better of them, protestors lose face in the face of world which ultimately hurts China's prestige. And this is something which annoyed the interviewed students by them calling violent protestors "stupid" on multiple occasions. Saving face could also be the reason why one respondent from Beijing politely avoided the topic of protests completely and just changed the subject. Even discussion should be within the bounds of rationality and propriety, because it was inferred that it is not a good thing to get overly passionate. Furthermore, it is possible to assume that they know from older people that the last time people were lead by emotion and fervor – during the Cultural Revolution – things did not turn out that well and simply do not want things to go in that direction again. Whatever the reason, however, it seems to affect their reasoning in regards to Japan as well.

It was inferred that this guiding principle was instilled in them through higher education. This observation is based on several of the students comparing university-graduates and students to the remaining population and "the masses" (Interview 1, 2, 7 and 9). Also, most interviewees stated that the evolution of their opinion in regards to Japan came to be only when they entered university. Hence, this leads to the thought that H2 might be valid – that higher education and all that it provides gives Chinese students a much wider look on Japan, contrasting it to the average Chinese. This, however is interesting in itself because of the fact that most anti-Japanese protest are regularly with students at their forefront, thus creating a self-contradictory situation.

However, Chinese students' positivity should not be overestimated because the rationality they talk about is usually followed by thoughts and arguments that are critical of Tokyo and in accord

with anti-Japanese rhetoric. It is mostly the case that the relationship between China and Japan is compared to “*a bad brotherhood*” (Interview 7) which becomes an issue of “*leading East Asia forward*” (Interview 10). Although all the students agree on the importance of economic cooperation, it should be preceded by Japan “*face[ing] history. Like Germany after the World War*” (Interview 8), stopping “*the [Yasukuni] shrine thing [which] is annoying*” (Interview 1) and again “*Face the past. We Chinese people are open-minded. We can move on to the future. They should as well. Like Germany.*” (Interview 6). However, there is some irony in these last remarks because even these students, who have a much wider perspective on these issues, seem to be looking into the past to some level. Although they are not fervently nationalist they do share some of the typically nationalist perspectives expressed by Beijing. However, guided by their idea of *rationality* they do aim to be more objective in regards to Japan, as a couple of them said it themselves. Hence, it can be established that H2 is probably right, but only to a certain degree.

5.2.5. Something is Missing

It is vital to note that not a single student mentioned the Century of Humiliation. There were discussions about past aggressions by the Japanese, mentions of the War (everyone called it World War II as opposed to War of Resistance or anti-Japanese War). There was mention of “*discrimination from Western countries*” (Interview 2) and that they “*don’t want China to take over their position*” (Interview 5), echoing Chinese self-perception of universal superiority and new-found strength. However, not a single time was the word *humiliation* said. This is a very peculiar detail considering the scope of the Century of Humiliation propaganda that has been taking place in China. None of the students seemed to perceive China as a victim the way the previously explained narratives do. Everyone, again, appeared very pragmatic and indeed *rational* by seemingly accepting the facts of history and simply moving on. A possible explanation is the link back to *rationality*. Furthermore, it can be assumed that because of the respondents’ cautious approach towards the interviews they were particularly careful not to raise the topic of the Century because it might seem provocative.

Whatever the reason, it was a glaring omission of conversation given that the discussions dealt with the history of China-Japan relations as a main part of the interview.

5.2.6. Happily Ever After?

Although only ten Chinese students were asked to share their opinions on the Sino-Japanese relationship, the insights and thoughts provided paint an interesting picture about younger Chinese's attitudes not only about Japan but also about themselves. Conflicting in a way, they aim to look at the future and question their surroundings, but at the same time are still influenced by an anti-Japanese environment in China. All of them stated that they are very proud of China and of being Chinese and this pride does not exclude an acceptance of Japan, at least in the face of its people and business. So it could be assumed that if it depended on them, China would be as rational as possible in regard to Japan. The two countries would not concentrate on being each other's enemy but on having a good brotherly relationship. The students did not express any fervent nationalism by showcasing blind faith in their state and by denouncing Japan. Still, they remained proud of their country but acknowledged its defects and pointed out that cooperation with Japan is needed so that China herself can prosper.

Thus, by the repeated mention of the principle rationality in combination with a distinction between a higher level education and "the masses" (Interview 7) the data leans towards H2. Despite technically all of the theoretical chapters' leanings towards H1. Although H2 cannot be fully accepted because there are negative aspects of the students' opinions and attitudes towards Japan – even though they are conveniently tucked away. In comparison to the general idea of how China looks and perceives Japan, however, H2 seems to have been proven in this case – that higher education Chinese students have a much more positive view of their neighbour across the sea.

6. CONCLUSION

China and Japan have been through a lot together. The experience that they had with each other from the late 19th until the mid-20th century still haunts the interaction between the two countries to this day. History is a central factor in nationalism with Chinese characteristics and it is intertwined with Japan at its core. Because of the Century of Humiliation and the War of Resistance Japan was identified as China's adversary, breaking the traditional bond of an old "brotherhood" where it was the "little brother". The narratives which accompanied the Century threw China from one extreme into another – from being a victor to being a victim. This left a conflicting self-perception which strengthened the foundation of Chinese nationalism with a sense of superiority and entitlement from one side and a desire to "right what is wrong" and a feeling of humiliation from another. By utilizing these emotions and the perceived enmity with Japan the CCP managed to legitimize its hold on power and later on used nationalism as a new ideological tool to replace Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought. In the context of dramatic social and economic change Japan's 'significant other' helped take away pressure from China's rulers.

All of these had an impact on China's youth. However, the question remained exactly how much did Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese bias influence young better educated Chinese. Given the predominance of anti-Japanese sentiment in both education and the everyday social environment of China it was possible to assume that the government-led nationalism has strongly influenced Chinese students' attitudes negatively. However, it was also possible to suggest that higher education itself together with new sources and forms of information could break that deeply-rooted negativity and actually move China's young in a more positive direction.

To search for an answer to this, it was turned to Chinese students. Based on what they said it can be suggested that younger and well-educated people do not perceive Japan as negatively as was to be expected. No extreme nationalist sentiment was described by the interviewed students, but a deep sense of pride in China and its accomplishments. Hence, Japanese people were called nice and

not seen as enemies. However, there was a negative attitude towards the Japanese government. Thus, an important distinction between people and rulers was observed which is not clearly defined in regards to China herself. Both positive and negative positions were all under the denominator of *rationality*, a term it seems of immense importance. Rationality, it was inferred, should dictate Chinese actions, internally, but also externally. It can be suggested that for China's young both the people and the rulers should exercise rational thinking in their behaviour. This includes not only actions when it comes to economic interests, but also when it comes to the hot issue of history.

China, according to the interviewed students, has faced the past and Japan should do the same. This statement is questionable, however, in light of the constant reiteration of history from the Chinese side. Because of the positivity of these young people, despite anti-Japanese propaganda, it can be assumed that China is moving in that direction of overcoming its past. But until it really does that, China and Japan will continue acting like brothers who have to live together but at the same time dislike each other.

To answer the question "How has Chinese nationalism in combination with anti-Japanese sentiment influenced Chinese students self-identities and their perceptions of Japan?" it can be said that it most definitely has influenced them in a negative respect, but only in a limited manner – by restricting it to pure politics. Chinese students use stereotypes and refer to historical grievances when talking about the Japanese government, but not about the Japanese people. Through the qualitative data it was established that higher education must have a say in this. The implications of this are that it is possible to suggest that with future generations of policy-makers, China's Japan policy might move in a more positive direction. Once the Chinese realise that the Japanese government is also comprised of people and that these people have their own battles to fight in Japan, a "win-win" situation (to use this oft-used phrase in China) might finally be truly established. This also supposes that there is a growing dichotomy between higher-level and regularly educated

people, with better-educated people being far more practical and rational about political and economic issues (based on the interviews).

The scope of the conducted research of the thesis is very limited and more conclusive data can be gathered by performing similar qualitative research on a much wider basis including Chinese students in more than one university in more than one country, including in China. The issues of Chinese nationalism, its connection to Japan and perception of Tokyo are vast and in constant change, as is anything in the modern world. Therefore, it is not only interesting but also important to document these changes and if possible steer them in a positive direction.

The past indeed serves as a guide to the future. However, it should not be too binding for a natural evolution of life must be allowed. And sometimes sticking to the past simply keeps you away from the present, and from the future.

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APPENDIX

Interview 1 – 25 April 2014, female, Beijing

Interview 2 – 25 April 2014, female, Shanghai

Interview 3 – 28 April 2014, female, Zhengzhou

Interview 4 – 5 May 2014, female, Beijing

Interview 5 – 5 May 2014, female, Chongqing

Interview 6 – 5 May 2014, female, Beijing

Interview 7 – 7 May 2014, male, Shenyang

Interview 8 – 13 May 2014, female, Changsha

Interview 9 – 14 May 2014, male, Yinchuan

Interview 10 – 14 May 2014, male, Tianjin

Mandatory questions asked to each participant of the semi-structured interviews (Additional questions were asked based on the direction of the conversation and answers obtained):

1. What is the very first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word “Japan”?
2. What factors have contributed to the formation of that particular idea?
3. From what sources do you get your information on Japan?
4. What did you learn in school about Japan?
5. Has your opinion of Japan changed over time? If yes, what has caused that change?
6. Do you have any personal experience with Japan and/or its people?
7. Do you have any Japanese friends?
8. Does your family have any history related to Japan?
9. What is your opinion of anti-Japanese protests?
10. Would you participate in such a protest?
11. How would you describe the current relationship between China and Japan?
12. In your opinion, what can Japan do to improve relations with China?