The nature and construction of Chinese nationalism towards Japan

Through the lens of the Diaoyu/Senkaku case study, 2010 and 2012

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List of abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Cooperation
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCTV	China Central Television
CDT	China Digital Times
CFCCJ	China Federation of Civil Claims against Japan
CFDDI	China Federation for Defending Diaoyu Islands
DA	Discourse Analysis
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
JCG	Japan Coast Guard
KMT	Kuomintang (The Nationalist Party of China)
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party of Japan
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PM	Prime Minister
PRC	People's Republic of China
SDF	Japan's Self-Defense Forces
US	United States
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II

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Abstract

In the last two decades, against the backdrop of multiple anti-foreign protests in China, among which the anti-Japanese protests were prominent, debates emerged over the rise and meaning of Chinese nationalism. This thesis analyses the nature and formation of China's nationalism towards Japan, with an emphasis on bottom-up manifestations of nationalism. The analysis compares the anti-Japanese demonstrations and boycotts of 2010 and 2012 triggered by disputes over the contested Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in the East China Sea.

The current literature on Chinese nationalism is largely dominated by top-down perspectives which neglect the prospect of a nationalism separate from the state. This thesis argues that it is not only that bottom-up and top-down forces coexist, but that they interact in a dynamic and bidirectional process. This interaction, explained through Giddens' structuration theory and Wendt's constructivist theory, is significant in understanding how nationalism is shaped.

In the detailed analysis of nationalism theories of instrumentalism, along with those of primordialism and ethnosymbolism are used. It is through these lenses that each step of the "nationalism" is studied - from history and triggers of nationalism to popular manifestations, current discussions of nationalism and its effect on China's domestic and foreign policy.

By placing China into the historical context of the last century, it is shown that anti-Japanese feelings in China are the result of embedded memories of war and a need of unifying the nation against Imperial Japan, rather than purely the result of a political machination. History, combined with threat perception and China's development, led to large anti-Japanese manifestations over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in 2010 and 2012. The authorities employed a number of strategies in order to tone down these events domestically.

Through interviews conducted with Chinese academics, researchers, protesters and activists, and discourse analysis applied to state media, it was identified that history, territorial sovereignty, mistrust and reactiveness to Japan's actions frame the meaning of anti-Japanese nationalism in China. These shared themes brought together a wide spectrum of state and non-state actors, who put aside their dichotomous views over loyalty to the Party-state and loyalty to the nation, and showed their support for the Chinese government. The problematic effects of this type of "unified anti-Japanese nationalism" are that domestically it sets restrictive "standards" for what it means to be a "good nationalist" in China; internationally, it raises serious concerns over China's foreign policy should a fatal Sino-Japanese accident in the East China Sea occur.

The substance of Chinese nationalism may be indicative of the type of international power that China aspires to be and informs the domestic challenges that may influence its external behaviour. By understanding the substance of nationalism, China's perceptions of itself and "the other", as well as its intentions home and abroad are captured. Policymakers within China and abroad should not ignore the challenges nationalism poses at the domestic level; they should look into the intricate disputes and negotiations among state and non-state actors, driven not only by economic and political calculations, but by a shared past and emotions that contribute to the internal dynamic of Chinese nationalism.

Chapter 1.

Introduction

75 years have passed since the end of WWII and almost 45 years since China and Japan re-established diplomatic relations, but anti-Japanese feelings in China have not yet dissipated. Despite increasing economic and cultural ties China's nationalist attitude towards Japan is often described as "xenophobic", "resentful", "aggressive" and "on the rise" (Shambaugh, 1999a; Shi Y., 2015; Chang, 2001; Blumenthal, 2011). The expectation of fading nationalism under the pressure of globalisation underestimates the importance of history, territoriality and the desire and pride of belonging to a "great" nation, along with the hidden political agendas of those in positions of power in China.

Strong anti-Japanese feelings have been more prominent recently, as seen in the 2010 and 2012 dispute between China and Japan over the controversial islands known as Diaoyu in China and Senkaku in Japan. The conflict over this uninhabited chain of five small islands and three rocks, which cover a meagre total surface of seven square kilometres in the East China Sea, triggered an outpouring of anti-Japanese feelings in China. These tensions raised questions over whether Chinese nationalism is more aggressive than in the past, and whether this rise should be attributed to the Chinese government itself. But perhaps these are false alarms since every country practices nationalism daily, as Billig (1995) writes. After all, if it is only natural for any country to foster national interest and national pride; why should China be any different? Identifying whether jingoistic nationalism has increased, and its cause, is not straight forward. Queries over the nature of anti-Japanese nationalism in China demand a systematic analysis of how Chinese actors define nationalism and perceive themselves in relation to Japan.

The starting point of this inquiry into anti-Japanese nationalism is the question: why has it resurfaced periodically over the years, and particularly in 2010 and 2012? One answer lies in history and historical memory. The Second Sino-Japanese war lasted eight years (1937-1945) and was costly for China who recorded "14 million deaths, massive refugee flight, and the destruction of a country's embryonic modernisation" (Mitter, 2013a, p.5). As Sneider notes: "The existence of distinct historical memories is a central obstacle to the ability of Asian nations to finally reconcile their still profound tensions over the wartime past" (2014, p.45). History cannot and should not be easily forgotten; however, Sino-Japanese wartime events are 75 years old, and with the "war generation"

in China declining every year so is first hand historical memory. As such it would be logical to assume that anti-Japanese feelings would similarly be softening in China. On the contrary, the opposite seems to be happening.

An explanation for this may be in the use of historical events to form a nationalist narrative. The Chinese government has not helped the impasse; on the contrary, it has long been accused of purposefully fostering anti-Japanese feelings. At the end of the 1980s, nationalism filled the void left by the communist ideology and ever since has continued to bolster the Party's legitimacy with the Chinese population (Zhao S., 2000a; Zheng, 1999). In cases of territorial disputes the Party has had the opportunity to further reinforce its legitimacy by portraying itself as the bulwark against an otherwise potentially chaotic and fragmented China (Shirk, 2007; Christensen, 2002). In addition to the domestic benefits, nationalism is useful for the government in justifying and making gains at a foreign policy level by invoking the constraints of domestic pressure and domestic unrest (Weiss, 2014). Whether nationalism is used just to strengthen the CCP's legitimacy or to provide clout for pursuing desired external policy aims represents one of the debates in the literature. These type of arguments are in themselves problematic because they imply only a top-down understanding of nationalism, orchestrated by the government, largely through the state media and education system. They disregard the feelings and interpretation of nationalism harboured by the masses, which even if directed by the government at times, can potentially reconstruct new narratives of nationalism. Anti-Japanese feelings and nationalism in general should not be interpreted as a static phenomenon, as a single dogmatic narrative or as a switch controlled by elites.

This thesis reconsiders Chinese nationalism against Japan by taking into account a dual type of nationalism, incorporating both top-down and bottom-up perspectives. In so doing it seeks to understand what is the nature of anti-Japanese nationalism in today's China and to what extent has it been formed in a top-down and a bottom-up manner? Through what means, how or for what purpose, and with what implications was anti-Japanese nationalism formed in China?

The answers to these queries are important both at the external level, much debated in the literature, and at the internal level, a less explored area of study. Externally, the world has been exposed to the harsh lessons of nationalism. At the turn of 20th century, nationalism came to prominence in Japan and Germany (although not limited to these two countries), and increasingly shaped the mentality of the masses and drove belligerent foreign policies until the end of WWII. Given the current strong resurgence of nationalism around the

world whether these lessons from history have been learnt remains to be seen. From a different perspective, China's global economic might on the one hand, and its political power both home and abroad, on the other hand, underpin nationalistic discourses; such discourses raise concern among observers about the role that Chinese nationalism plays in China's trajectory to a great power. Some compelling insights point out that:

> building nationalism in China cannot be separated from building a powerful military that protects the country's national interests […] it provides a solid social base for promoting a defence culture (…) that directs the people to identify with the goals of the state (You, 2004, p.248).

The literature is replete with further assumptions based on Realist theories of international relations, which claim that a rising power such as China will not rise peacefully.[1] This thesis only investigates anti-Japanese nationalism in China, but inevitably one wonders if this is just one aspect of a wider anti-foreign campaign that Shambaugh predicted in 1999: "Ever since the West intruded on the insular Chinese imperial world three centuries ago, nationalism and xenophobic radicalism have lurked just beneath the surface of Chinese society" (Shambaugh, 1999a). Looking at the Diaoyu/Senkaku case, Japan's alliance with the US and the US role as the temporary administrator of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands internationalises the issues and complicates things further.

Internally, a government that spreads a popular form of nationalism that looks to the state for solutions can be dangerous if the Party is unable to deliver on those promises (Walton, 2008, p.26). From a different perspective, "ordinary citizens have their reasons for embracing nationalism: to make it their channel for social action after the failed attempt at democracy in 1989" (Shen, 2007, p.32). For actors pushing from a bottom-up direction, windows of opportunities for reform may open. This can eventually create a strand of nationalism different from that of the state, a nationalism which criticises the ruling Party and its legitimacy in the name of the nation (Rose, 2000, p.178). The way in which the government responds to these manifestations of nationalism, whether by co-

[1] For a summary of the numerous voices pointing towards China's threatening rise see "China threat: perceptions myths" by Herbert Yee and Ian Storey (2002); "Can China rise peacefully?" by John Mearsheimer; "Thucydides trap has been sprung in the Pacific" by Graham Allison.

option or oppression of these voices, serves as an indicator of the government's fears and intentions, both domestically and externally.

1.1. Research questions

The main research question that this thesis raises is: "What is the nature of anti-Japanese nationalism in China and how is it formed?" The complexities of this question are reflected in the words "anti-Japanese nationalism" and "formed". Anti-Japanese nationalism requires a review of the broader definition of what nationalism is in the Chinese context before narrowing discussions to its anti-Japanese element; additionally, given the dual nature of nationalism, both bottom-up and top-down approaches to nationalism have to be incorporated in this analysis. The "construction" of nationalism, or perhaps merely the "formation" of nationalism, refers to the degree to which Chinese nationalism is instrumental for those in a position of power, or primordial, stemming from culture and history. If nationalism is primarily primordial and bottom-up driven, then the manner in which the government has responded to and managed it is of interest. But if nationalism proves to be strongly directed from the top, then inevitably questions loom large over which official actors direct it and for what purpose; consequently, the reaction of non-state[2] actors and their interpretation of the political elites' narratives is of interest.

Given the number of terms and concepts unpacked from the main research question, in order to make it manageable and operational, the question has been broken down into multiple minor questions: 1) Under what domestic and external conditions was anti-Japanese nationalism fostered in 2010 and 2012?; 2) How was nationalism expressed and manifested at the non-state level?; 3) What were the state responses to these public expressions and manifestations of nationalism?; and 4) What are the perceived effects of nationalism over aspects of domestic and foreign policy, particularly in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute? All four questions are addressed by looking at one main case study, the 2010 and 2012 Sino-Japanese disputes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands.

The first question seeks to investigate what caused the outburst of anti-Japanese nationalism in 2010 and 2012 by looking both at the historical and

[2] Non-state actors are defined in this thesis as individuals or organisations that participate in the formation of nationalism in China, but do not belong to a particular state institution, nor to a supra-state structure. It generally refers to activists, protesters and NGOs; it also includes academics, researchers and intellectuals for the reasons mentioned in Chapter 3.

contemporary conditions that bred nationalistic feelings against Japan. Then, in order to gain answers to the second and third research questions, the incorporation of both top-down and bottom-up approaches into the analysis of nationalism is deployed to allow a detailed insight into the manifestation of Chinese nationalism and state responses to it. Many analysis of governments' responses to social unrest or public pressure, particularly in non-democratic states, are often simplistic. It is commonly assumed that protests are met with oppression or are government coordinated (French, 2005; Schell, 2005). As some scholars have already pointed out (Reny and Hurst in Ogden, 2013; Tong and Lei, 2014) and as this thesis will show, the reality is significantly messier and a wide range of uncoordinated responses coexist. Moreover, one must take into account that state responses are managed by political elites who do not operate solely in a "realist" framework, but in a frame also formed by the historical past, national values, collective ideas and perceptions which often shape their views and behaviour (Sinkkonen, 2014, p.15). As Fox and Miller-Idriss also write, "nationhood operates as an unselfconscious disposition: it underwrites people's choices without becoming a self-conscious determinant of those choices" (2012, p.544). In pursuance of the fourth question, an evaluation is carried out among academics and activists of the perceived effects of nationalism at both the domestic and international level, the former of which is rarely discussed in the literature on China.

These four research questions are analysed by following an analytical framework, which will be set out below. Through this comprehensive analysis, the thesis will also address the wider question that has troubled many scholars and pundits of Chinese studies in the last decade: Why is China jeopardising its internal and economic goals, such as domestic stability and trade security, and running the risk of an ever-growing international coalition against it, for the sake of the islands?

1.2. Theoretical conceptualisations of nationalism

This section starts with definitions of and approaches to nationalism. It is then followed by a review of nationalism and policy linkage, and by the introduction of the analytical framework.[3]

[3] Some of these aspects of nationalism are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

1.2.1 Nationalism – definition and approach

Nationalism often appears as an umbrella term encompassing a number of meanings, varying from ideologies and identities to memories and feelings. Verdery warns against "social scientists [who] too often lump together 'nationalisms' that are quite different" (1993, p.202) as nationalism is largely unique to social and political dynamics. The complex nature of nationalism as understood in this thesis has been well captured in the following quote:

> [nationalism] presents itself as a universal and global phenomenon, but is ineluctably particular and local (Anderson); it is a feature of the modern age, but has its roots in something much older (Smith); it is essentially about cultural matters - language, religion, symbols- but cannot be divorced from matters of economic and material development (Nairn) (McCrone, 1998, p.6).

In other words, nationalism is specific to a time and place, but a general framework can be applied to it. It is also both old and new, meaning that it is history based, but also influenced by the undergoing modernisation process. Not least, it is both material, when pursued for specific gains, and ideational, as history permeates to an extent all actors' collective memory.

Nationalism in China is defined by the same complexities, perhaps even further complicated by the five nationalities recognised during the Republican Era (1912-1927) and 56 ethnic minorities recognised today. Whilst this thesis recognises that anti-Japanese nationalism is not evenly distributed across China as it depends on historical legacy, fear of uprising, availability of resources (Wallace and Weiss, 2015), the term "Chinese nationalism" is used in a generic manner.

Western academic and popular literature on Chinese nationalism is generally fixated on the post-PRC establishment period; it is dominated by narratives of an aggressive CCP interested solely in the preservation of the one party-system and of its own rule has inevitably focused analyses of Chinese nationalism at the elite level (Carlson, 2009; Gries, 2004; Callahan, 2005). Often influenced by China's position in the international relations realm, such instrumental theories of nationalism tend to marginalise domestic and ideational factors, particularly social and emotional factors. As Gries writes, "Chinese national identity [also] evolves in dynamic relationship with other nations and the past (...) Chinese nationalism involves both the Chinese people and their

passions" (2004, p.19). The tendency to underplay memories, history and emotions which are reduced to an on/off switch controlled by the elites, is common particularly in the context of non-democratic states to the dissatisfaction of the primordialists and ethnosymbolists.

There is a need to provide an interactive top-down and bottom-up perspective, where the external and the domestic environment matter, along with ideational factors of various actors operating in this environment. After all, as constructivists point out "actors do not have a 'portfolio' of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead, they define their interests in the process of defining situations" (Wendt, 1992, p.398). Similarly, Hutchinson defines the nation (or nationalism) "not merely [as] a construction of rational self-interest (…) it is a source of unique charisma and creative energy expressed in its origin, myths, history, culture and landscape" (1999, p.399). In the context of this thesis, interests and power rooted in structural and material factors, on the one hand, and collective identities and historical memory, on the other should be complementary when analysing Chinese nationalism; the former should not be solely attributed to elites, in the same way in which the latter should not be attributed solely to the masses. This approach is best covered in Giddens' structuration theory where structure and agency jointly participate in the production of social behaviour; he also brings the focus back on actors and their resources which enable them to occupy certain roles and design rules which eventually lead to change. Same as structure is reproduced and transformed continuously through this dialectical interaction between structure and agency, so is nationalism. It is in this vein that Chinese nationalism is described as encompassing both top-down and bottom-up perspectives, sometimes overlapping and sometimes dichotomous.

1.2.2. Nationalism and policy making linkage

Despite a rich literature preoccupied with one form of nationalism or another, there is still a lack of systematic analysis of the effects of nationalism on foreign policy making, and there are hardly any discussions about its effects at a domestic level. China's perceived assertive foreign policy has often been linked to the rise of Chinese nationalism, but rarely have such studies effectively addressed this causal link or have been backed up by convincing evidence (Johnston, 2013, p.37). A number of studies in the field (Downs and Saunders,

1998-1999; Deans, 2000; Wiegand, 2009; Koo, 2009) [4] found no clear correlation between Chinese nationalism and foreign policy, arguing that China's economic interest is the main driver of its foreign policy. The attention of these studies focuses on economics as the main force influencing Sino-Japanese relations, while considerably less attention is given to nationalism, which is rarely the central theoretical concept of research studies. Wiegand (2009) for instance, argues that China's threats to Japan regarding the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands cannot be explained only through the role of territorial nationalism, but through a strategy of issue linkage and coercive diplomacy, used as leverage to extract concessions from Japan. Though she conducts a thorough analysis of Sino-Japanese relations, not the same can be said about nationalism. Others such as Reilly (2012) and Weiss (2014) who also tackled this topic provided stimulating insights, but proposed analytical frameworks were not always followed through and nationalism was not the key operational concept.[5]

Discussions regarding the effect of anti-foreign aspects of nationalism on domestic policy are rare.[6] This is partially due to the interest of the international community on the effect of nationalism on foreign policy, placed in the context of a more powerful and threatening China. Much less attention has been given to the inward role of Chinese nationalism. Drawing on events from the 1980s and 1990s Caroline Rose, for example, points out how two trends of nationalism played out; although state nationalism, advocating centralised economic and social power, was declining, cultural nationalism (ostensibly articulated against outsiders), criticising the Chinese government for its weakness and its myth of leading the nation to victory, was rising (2000, p.178). The current literature would benefit more from this type of inward looking analysis of nationalism.

1.2.3. Analytical framework: sequence of Chinese nationalism

This thesis primarily elaborates on Reilly's framework (2011), which focuses on investigating the role of the Chinese public on foreign policy. He

[4] Deans (2000) takes further the argument promoted by scholars such as Downs and Saunders (1999), according to which economic priorities not nationalism have driven China's external behaviour, by claiming that inter-elite disagreements have accounted for variations in China's behaviour and nationalism.

[5] For a detailed discussion see p.46.

[6] However, scholarly research has been conducted on nationalism and ethnic minorities in China. See Barabantseva (2010), and Tang and He (2010).

assesses the triggers that mobilise public opinion, i.e. state and non-state actors' actions, external events, and then the subsequent authorities' response. This response can be tolerant by allowing popular activism and media sensationalism, or repressive. Reilly's framework provides valuable interpretations of China's leadership decision-making, but it differs from the framework of this thesis in several significant ways. The core theoretical concept of Reilly's framework is "public opinion" and not "nationalism". These two differ mainly in terms of the fact that nationalism is not a mandatory or an exclusive feature of public opinion; also, "public opinion" implies an analysis at the collective level, but this thesis is interested in the meanings attached to nationalism at a more individual level, composed of media organisations and individuals such as protesters or intellectuals. In addition, Reilly talks about public mobilisation, but he does not include in his analysis "boycotts", one of the most common manifestations of public mobilisation.[7] In a country where the mechanisms of communication between the society and the government are extremely limited, boycotts as well as street protests are common ways for people to express their views; moreover, boycotts of Japanese products have a long history in China. In response to such manifestations, in order to understand the Chinese leadership policies of both repression and tolerance, it is essential to look at the divergence of opinions among different state actors, including military actors. By overlooking these actors Reilly leaves out potentially important contributors to the "moulding" of nationalistic discourses. Empirically, Reilly's study does not include the 2012 incident and is not focused on territorial disputes alone, whereas the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute is the focus of this thesis. This allows an analysis centred on the link between nationalism - territorial sovereignty - history, and for a comparison between 2010 and 2012 events which indicate changes in the top-down and bottom-up anti-Japanese nationalism.

Similar to Reilly, Jessica Weiss tackles the link between protests, with which both public opinion and nationalism are sometimes conflated, and China's foreign policy. She highlights the instrumental use of protests by the Chinese government; when the cost-risk calculations are in the government's favour, it will try to secure bargaining advantages at the international level. Weiss' focus is on explaining foreign policy behaviour rather than on explaining nationalism

[7] In the article "A wave to worry about" Reilly (2014) discusses public opinion and foreign policy in relation to the 2012 events, but he makes minimal use of the analytical tools and frame proposed in his book.

and its meanings. Empirically, Weiss discusses several anti-foreign protests, the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident being one of them, but not the 2010 incident.

The analytical framework proposed incorporates five steps that form a "sequence of Chinese nationalism": the history and triggers of anti-Japanese nationalism in China, expressions of nationalism, discussions of contemporary nationalism and the effects of nationalism on areas of Chinese domestic and foreign policy. The first step starts with a historical discussion of nationalism, which is then followed by the second step surrounding a discussion of the triggers that led to a rising nationalism, particularly in 2010 and 2012. In the third step, the thesis looks at the expressions of nationalism from bottom-up perspectives and the top-down responses, respectively. In the fourth step, the focus falls more on the contemporary discussions of nationalism also from a top-down and bottom-up perspective. In the final step, the thesis analyses the (perceived) effects of nationalism on the foreign policy and domestic levels.

This thesis complements the findings of Reilly and Weiss' studies through its aim of assessing nationalism at all levels, from folk to elites, and only then through this prism to understand and evaluate the Chinese government's responsiveness to it.

1.3. Research methodology

This section first introduces the methods used in this thesis, followed by a summary of the primary and secondary data used.

1.3.1. Methods

This thesis uses two research methods: a single case study design and discourse analysis, each of which is justified and explained subsequently.

The concept of China's nationalism towards Japan is analysed through the lens of one case study, which is the Sino-Japanese dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in 2010 and 2012. A single case study design is generally used as a political inquiry into a contemporary real life phenomenon (Yin, 1994). This permits an in-depth analysis of events which are already rich in detail because they stretch for a period of time of over a month. This type of single case study design also facilitates a comparative analysis over whether definitions of nationalism and state responses to expressions of nationalism changed in that time.

The 2010 and 2012 incidents surrounding the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku islands provided the necessary lens to analyse a contemporary "sequence of

Chinese nationalism" towards Japan. The case study selection criteria were closely related to the key theoretical concept of the dual nature of nationalism, which fits well with the empirical phenomenon of protests. An article entitled by *The Economist* (2012) "Of useful idiots and true believers" sums up the debate over the distinction between pre-arranged top-down protests and genuine bottom-up protests; it rightly stresses that "the two possibilities are not mutually exclusive (…) in short, officials are allowing the demonstrators to do their thing, and at the same time doing their best to channel them". Particularly in 2012, the anti-Japanese protests, often accompanied by boycotts of Japanese products and online discussions, were spread so widely across China, from Beijing to Guangzhou and Xinjiang to Shanghai, that it presents substantive materials to analyse the national manifestations of nationalism and the government's management of it.

The second method employed in this qualitative study is discourse analysis, applied primarily to media articles and secondarily on interviews with academics, researchers, journalists and protesters. Discourse analysis was mainly used to assess how the nationalism against Japan is conceptualised, what themes are the most popular and how Japan and China are depicted. The basis of primary sources was media news from *People's Daily* considered the main channel through which the CCP officials express their views. *People's Daily* along *Xinhua*, from which it publishes numerous articles, and the Propaganda department are also considered to coordinate the Party's message on foreign policy to the media (Jakobson and Knox, 2010). A smaller number of news articles were selected from regional newspapers retrieved via the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database. These different sources served as a point of comparison for Chinese media discourses. Most articles were selected from *People's Daily*, from September and October 2010 and August and September 2012 when the protests intensified and reached their height. 87 articles matched the search criteria of "Diaoyu islands", which were then coded and thematically categorised. NVivo, software used for qualitative data analysis, aided in accurately coding, interpreting, and representing the data.

Dominant discourses privilege those versions of social reality that legitimate existing power relations and social structures. Chinese state media produces one representation of social reality, which is "a way of *worlding*, of appropriating the world through knowledge" (Spivak cited in Diaz-Bone, 2007). Discourses are embedded in institutions, individuals' behaviour and regulations, all of which frame what is acceptable or non-acceptable to be talked about in a meaningful way (Hall, 1992, p.291). Discourses are not innocent representations

of the world, hence, by deconstructing media discourses it can be seen how and why some ways of thinking have come to be generally taken as truths.

1.3.2. Primary and secondary data

Coverage provided by other media sources such as *Xinhua News Agency, Global Times, South China Morning Post, Asahi Shimbun, Yomiuri Shimbun and the BBC* was indispensable in completing the picture of Chinese nationalism through the prism of the Diaoyu/Senkaku disputes. By looking not only at Chinese newspapers, but also at Japanese newspapers and other international third party coverage, the strategies employed by the Chinese government, such as media censorship were revealed. This also allowed for making informed guesses into why those specific facts were omitted. News related to the Diaoyu/Senkaku case study was collected primarily from online archives of the respective newspapers and through news monitoring services such as Lexis Nexis; the latter proved particularly useful in retrieving news already archived or newspapers which otherwise offered restricted access only. Several other additional sources were used: magazines and press conferences; publicly available documents such as White Papers and reports; and documents obtained from activists mainly in the form of petitions. Secondary sources such as academic books and journals were essential in supplying background information on the history of Sino-Japanese relations and of the disputed islands; the literature on nationalism was vital in allowing the evaluation of competing approaches on nationalism and Sino-Japanese ties. All these sources deepened the understanding and implications of the puzzle posed in this thesis and helped identify a gap in the literature.

Other essential data came from transcripts of semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face over two separate fieldwork periods in June-July 2014 and May 2015. The selection of interviewees was largely based on identifying those with prominent expertise concerning the field of nationalism, and Sino-Japanese relations and those academics closely associated with government think-tanks and research institutes. Protesters were considered effective sources through which understandings and manifestations of nationalism were better explained. Journalists offered clarifications into the control that the Chinese state exercises over the media, stemming from the questionable style of reporting on the events surrounding the Diaoyu/Senkaku issue. Access to interviews was obtained through personal contacts and the snowball effect, as well as through affiliations not only with the University of Nottingham whose campus in Ningbo

promotes its name in China, but also through affiliations with the Politics and International Department of Fudan University with which I was a visiting scholar in May 2015. Interviews provided the opportunity to obtain information that is not recorded elsewhere, despite carrying the risk of sometimes being off-the-record and unpublishable. Information obtained during interviews also complemented the discourse analysis on state media articles, to support the bidirectional approach taken towards nationalism, both top-down and bottom-up. As Fox and Miller-Idriss note "nationhood does not only define their talk; it is defined by their talk. In these ways, ordinary people give discursive shape and content to their otherwise taken-for-granted understandings of the nation" (2008, p.539). Interviews with non-state actors or "grey area" actors[8] assisted in understanding the nuances of anti-Japanese nationalism in today's China and the handling of such manifestation by the authorities (Chapter 5 and 6), as well as in evaluating their perceptions on the linkage between nationalism and policy (Chapter 7).

This study limits itself to investigating only the Chinese interpretation of nationalism. Despite making numerous references to Japan throughout the thesis and using several Japanese media sources, Japan is not the subject of interest of this thesis. Japan's actions and official statements in relation to China are considered exclusively when deemed relevant to explaining China's actions or reactions. Likewise, interviews were conducted mainly with Chinese respondents, as it was their views and perceptions that sat at the core of this research.

1.4. Argument

This thesis' primary purpose is to systematically explore the complex nature of Chinese nationalism towards Japan. It starts by establishing the claim that Chinese nationalism is constructed in a bidirectional manner where the top-down and bottom-up components are engaged in an interactive structure-agent relationship. This is reflected in three main ways. One, some of the bottom-up behavioural manifestations of anti-Japanese nationalism in 2010 and 2012 caught the Chinese authorities unprepared; they had to devise impromptu coping

[8] Non-state actors are those interviewees who are (formally) not associated with governmental institutions. "Grey area" actors are those who work in public institutions and are affiliated to the government, but may hold views different from those of their institution. Due to the pressure of the political system within which these actors work, it has to be taken into account that sometimes the views expressed may "have to" follow the views of the institution that they represent. To ease this potential pressure, all interviewees were offered the option to meet in locations other than their offices and their statements to be anonymised if required.

strategies. Second, nationalism is dichotomised between the loyalty for the nation and loyalty for the state. Nevertheless, anti-Japanese nationalism remains unified which indicates that nationalism remains closely related to territorial sovereignty. Third, the instrumental role played by the government in directing anti-Japanese expressions of nationalism is, at times, being taken over by parts of a strongly nationalised public, at the expense of the government itself. Overall, the thesis argues that the inconsistencies that appear in state responsiveness to expressions of nationalism in the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku case studies reiterate the importance of considering both the primordial and instrumental nature of nationalism when discussing Chinese nationalism; bottom-up and top-down actors alike operate in an environment shaped by emotional and rational factors.

1.5. Significance of this study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the study of Chinese nationalism at the theoretical, empirical and policy level. The theoretical contribution is twofold. This study develops a comprehensive understanding of anti-Japanese nationalism by using the theoretical literature of nationalism, bringing together the perspectives of primordialists, ethnosymbolists and instrumentalists; this approach fills in a gap in the literature on Chinese nationalism. A more comprehensive image of anti-Japanese nationalism in China is drawn by focusing not only on identifying whether nationalism is top-down or bottom-up, but on the constant interaction and negotiation between these bottom-up and top-down forces. In doing so it counters the common Western assumption that Chinese nationalism is chiefly dictated by the Party's interests and its top-down active propaganda. It supplements the existing literature on nationalism with a multitude of bottom-up human experiences and narratives.

Second, the literature is supplemented with a deeper understanding and assessment of Chinese nationalism in Sino-Japanese ties through the analytical framework that breaks down nationalism into several phases and analyses each of these individually. The phases proposed, from history and triggers of nationalism, manifestations of bottom-up nationalism and state responses to it, contemporary understandings of nationalism in China and the effects of nationalism on China's domestic and foreign policy are all analysed through the lenses of primordialism, ethnosymbolism and instrumentalism. For instance, by placing anti-Japanese nationalism in China in a historical context, this thesis demonstrates that today's bottom-up nationalism derives from history. Likewise,

the last phase of this analytical framework, which discusses the perceived effects of nationalism on policy, while it represents only a section of this study, highlights the scarcity of this field and proposes several approaches of exploring this nationalism-policy link. Discourses regarding anti-Japanese nationalism in China are negotiated by those who try to influence foreign policy such as activists and set the domestic "conduct guidelines" of what it means to be a good nationalist.

At the empirical level, the contribution of this thesis lies in the analysis of Chinese nationalism towards Japan through the lens of the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku island disputes. This research provides rich details about how Chinese state media and other non-state actors portrayed Japan, and how it reinforced territorial sovereignty as a dominant feature of China's anti-Japan nationalism. To the best of my knowledge there is no study that stresses the bottom-up approach to nationalism to address the question of nationalism in Sino-Japanese relations and uses the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands as its main empirical case study.

At the policy level, the nature of Chinese nationalism may be indicative of the type of power that China will be and informative of the domestic challenges that may influence its external behaviour. "Understanding the other" (or the lack of it) in the international system is often marked by mistakes stemming from "misreading the enemy"; Fettweis (2015) articulates several such mistakes, two of which are particularly relevant to the Chinese case: 1) actors tend to see the behaviour of the "other" as being more centralised, disciplined and coordinated than it is, so while "we" have principles and values, "they" have secret agendas. 2) actors assume that the enemy is a "monolithic realist" that only understands the language of force with the sheer purpose of expanding their power. Therefore, policymakers within China and abroad should not oversimplify the behaviour of the "other". Equally, the challenges that nationalism poses at the domestic level have to be acknowledged by looking into the intricate disputes and negotiations among actors, driven not only by political calculations, but by a shared past and emotions.

1.6. Outline

This thesis is comprised of eight chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 examines the debates in the literature of Chinese nationalism over the sources of Chinese nationalism, and the linkage between nationalism and domestic and foreign policy. The debates pave the way to explaining the analytical framework and each of the five steps within it.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to a discussion of methodology, more precisely to the case study design and the methods of research. It sets out the justifications and limitations of using discourse analysis on newspapers and of collecting interviews with academics, activists and journalists.

Chapter 4 is split into three sections to provide a historical overview of Sino-Japanese relations. The first section looks at the Sino-Japanese relations from the decline of the Qing dynasty to today with the aim of understanding the role that Japan played in the formation of Chinese nationalism. The second section looks at how the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, since the dispute emerged in the 1970s, has become a focal point of anti-Japanese nationalism in China. The third section scrutinises further the domestic and external triggers that led to an outburst of nationalism in the two incidents in 2010 and 2012. It argues that a "dormant nationalism" existed in China for at least a century, and aided by China's economic development and domestic threat perceptions of Japan, it led to the type of nationalism witnessed in 2010 and 2012.

Chapter 5 discusses the limited influence and control the government wields over behavioural manifestations of nationalism. Such expressions refer primarily to bottom-up protests and boycotts of the "people", and to actions executed by activists of China Federation of Defending Diaoyu Islands (CFDDI), and associated sister organisations. The CFDDI is a prominent and dynamic group of NGOs in the field of Sino-Japanese relations and Diaoyu/Senkaku related affairs. The government's response to these manifestations of nationalism is often mixed, marked by inconsistent limitations on the freedom to act and freedom of speech of the protesters.

Chapter 6 identifies the features of modern Chinese nationalism and argues that there is a significant level of similarity between top-down and bottom-up descriptions of anti-Japanese nationalism, which the thesis calls "unified nationalism". However, when discussing Chinese nationalism *without* specific reference to Japan, a dichotomous "state vs nation" version of nationalism emerges from the same top-down and bottom-up expressions.

Chapter 7 is the last empirical chapter and looks into the perceptions of academics and protesters on the effects of anti-Japanese nationalism on areas of both domestic and foreign policy. The effects of nationalism *per se* would be at best an informed guess due the lack of robust analytical frameworks and limited information of the decision making process in China; instead, actors' perceptions of these effects provide insights to the link between nationalism and policy making. While some claim to have influenced China's policy by invoking the protection of its "national interests", others remain sceptical. Domestically,

changes were noted at a societal level. Vocal and often extreme nationalist elements from the masses set the parameters of what it means to be a "good Chinese"; accusations of betraying the country restricts and drives Chinese society into a "culture of silence". Inevitably, this trend reduces the otherwise potentially pluralised nationalism towards Japan and forces the acceptance of a more aggressive anti-Japanese discourse than it would otherwise do.

The concluding chapter summarises the key findings and reiterates the contribution of this thesis to the literature of Chinese nationalism. It makes predictions about the trajectory that contemporary Chinese nationalism is likely to follow and warns of potential risks and implications for domestic and regional stability. The thesis closes by raising several future directions of research.

Chapter 2.

Literature review

Against the backdrop of the Tiananmen protests in 1989 and the decline of the communist ideology, an increasing amount of literature has been published on the rise of Chinese nationalism. In the past two decades, a number of scholars have sought to track the origins of Chinese nationalism, to define and identify its most prominent features, to predict its rise and decline, and more recently, to assess its effect on policy making. Nationalism has sparked numerous debates,[9] two of which concern this thesis: the nature and formation of nationalism, and the link between nationalism and policy making. The first section of the literature review establishes what is already known about these areas of research: interpretations of Chinese nationalism and key debates in the literature of Chinese nationalism relevant to this thesis. By drawing on the limitation of this literature, an alternative interpretation of nationalism follows; an interactive dialectical bottom-up and top-down approach is proposed, in an effort to provide a more nuanced view of what constitutes anti-Japanese nationalism in contemporary China. The interaction between these bottom-up and top-down forces is analysed mainly through the lenses of instrumentalist and ethnosymbolist theories.

The second section of the literature review introduces an analytical framework through which nationalism can be analysed. It builds on James Reilly's framework, which is amended according to the aforementioned dialectical construction of nationalism. This permits breaking down an understanding of anti-Japanese nationalism in China into five stages: history of anti-Japanese nationalism, triggers of anti-Japanese nationalism, behavioural manifestations of anti-Japanese nationalism, discussions of anti-Japanese nationalism, and the effects of anti-Japanese nationalism on domestic and foreign policy.

2.1. Interpretations of Chinese nationalism

Multiple interpretations of nationalism in general, and of Chinese

[9] Studies on Chinese nationalism have tried to capture the features and functions of nationalism which in time has been described as confident (Oksenberg, 1986), defensive (Shambaugh, 1996), pragmatic (Zhao, 2000a) to assertive (Whiting, 1983). Yingjie Guo (2004) and Simon Shen (2007) also disaggregate extensively different varieties of nationalism in contemporary China. Moving into the sphere of online nationalism, Breslin and Shen's co-edited book "Online Chinese Nationalism and China's Bilateral Relations" (2010) raises questions over the role of internet in China's bilateral relations.

nationalism in particular, have been advanced over time, although no consensus has been reached on a definition of nationalism. Simply put, nationalism is primarily the existence of "we-feeling" among members of a nation to the point where national loyalties take precedence over most other obligations (Rosecrance, 1973, p.16). The discussion of Chinese nationalism then progresses towards Greenfeld and Chirot's definition:

> The term "nationalism", in its neutral, general sense, refers to the set of ideas and sentiments that forms the conceptual framework of national identity. National identity is one among many, often coexisting and overlapping identities - occupational, religious, tribal, linguistic, territorial, class, gender, and more. The specificity of nationalism, what distinguishes national identity from other types of identity, derives from the fact that the source of identity, in this case, is located within a "people" that is seen as the bearer of sovereignty, the central object of loyalty, and the basis of collective solidarity (1994, p.79).

In both Rosencrance and Greenfeld and Chritot's accounts, at the centre of nationalism are the sentiments and ideas of people, seen primarily as bearers of national loyalty.

Nationalism as "we-feeling" in China stemmed from a self-defence mechanism associated with foreign powers entering the "Heavenly Empire" in the 19th century. Lovell (2011) traces the concept of Chinese "nation" and "nationalism" back to the First Opium War (1839-1842) as her book's title "The Opium War: Drugs, Dreams and the Making of China" suggests. The Opium Wars marked the decline of the Qing Empire and the beginning of the humiliation narrative. Prior to the wars, "[t]here was no concept of 'China' or 'Chinese civilisation' because in this universal empire, there were only civilisation and the barbarians" (Callahan, 2004a, p.85)[10]. The First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and post-war demands created a sense of national consciousness and replaced the concept of nation understood mainly in cultural terms with that of territoriality

[10] China had been governed largely by the principle of "tianxia"[10] (Xu, 2001, p.102; Yahuda, 2000, p.26) literately translated "all under heaven". Not only was China a "different polity from the nation - which (…) was a European invention- but it also implied a 'certain vision of the world'" (Wang M., 2012, p.338); the vision refused to recognise states as equal and instead it appeared as a necessity to conquer and civilise barbarians (Callahan, 2004a) or, put softer, as "a political system for the world with a global institution to ensure universal order" (Zhang F., 2010a). According to Fitzgerald, it was the modern Chinese state itself that "identified" the nation and "summoned" it into being (1995, p.76).

and sovereignty. Scholars at that time, such as Liang Qichao, deeply resented "the fact that our nation has no name [except for the dynastic names] which defy the principle of respecting the people" (cited in Xu, 2001, p.102). According to Pye, Chinese were unable to articulate a "clear and firm sense of the unique values and ideals that their nation should stand for in the world"; instead, he described Chinese nationalism as "confused" and "incoherent" (1996, p.12). Liang Qichao himself explained in an "Essay on patriotism" in 1899 "The reason why we did not know patriotism is that we did not know what a state [guo] is. If there is no state, it is hardly possible to have a feeling that you love it" (Lee, 2009, p.39). "The term 'Chinese nation' (*zhonghua minzu*) that started to appear in Sun's [Sun Yat-sen] policy statements in the 1920s implied a unified nation consisting of five nationalities united as a result of assimilation" (Hirono, 2008, p.55). In the face of a threat from imperial powers, Sun's imperative was the unification of the Chinese nation-state (Hirono, 2008, p.56). John Fairbank, promoter of Chinese studies, aptly summed up the origins of Chinese nationalism: "[t]he explosive capacity of this new nationalism stems from the ingrained tradition of Chinese superiority and its frustration by repeated foreign humiliations and 'semicolonial' subjection ever since the Opium War of 1840" (Fairbank, 1957). In the alluringly entitled book *Never forget national humiliation*, Wang Zheng (2012) further reinforces the power of historical memory in shaping China's material interests, as well as its nonmaterial interests such as national dignity and rejuvenation, gaining face and respect from other countries.

Nevertheless, the Chinese Communist Party has taken advantage of the power of history to legitimise their own rule. Chinese history, as written by the communists, abounds with myths which led some scholars to believe that rewriting China's history was "the most massive attempt at ideological re-education in human history" (Harrison, 1972, p.784). In the construction of the Party's legitimacy, the Long March retold as a heroic tale and the defeat of Japan mainly by the CCP are just two of the few most well-known myths (Mitter, 2003, p.119) the Party used for decades to promote its role in the national liberation and unification of China.[11] This "new history" led some scholars to assert that

[11] The retelling of the "Long March" from the Communists' perspective spun from defeat into a heroic victory over the Nationalists, with minimal or no mention of the party infighting in Jiangxi and the misery that its unruly army brought to those it encountered in its path (Sun, 2007). As for the war against Japan, the CCP discredited the KMT until the 1990s as perpetrators of China's fall into the hands of the Imperial Army; the CCP's long lasting stance stressed its army's courage in battle while it accused the KMT of sabotaging the resistance (Schwartz, 2012, p.595).

before the mid-1990s "[t]he CCP was able to decide the direction, content and intensity of Chinese nationalism, and then to mobilize the people. The CCP could appeal to nationalism whenever it so wished, and dismiss it whenever it needed to shift its policy" (Chen Z., 2005, pp.49-50).

Based on the above discussion, it can hence be argued that Chinese nationalism is dual; it forms both at the popular and at the state level, that is to say it is part of a bottom-up and top-down processes. Popular nationalism may converge with or diverge from state nationalism, and one may outweigh the other. Put differently, Chinese nationalism is not unidirectional, it is negotiated between top-down and bottom-up forces who operate in a similar historical and cultural frame.

A distinction has to be maintained between Chinese nationalism and anti-Japan Chinese nationalism. While, as mentioned above, Japan's actions at the end of the 19th century acted as a powerful catalyst in the development of Chinese nationalism, Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese nationalism in China should not be confused. Chinese nationalism can be seen as a wider encompassing concept, while anti-Japanese nationalism just one strand of it. For example, standard statements used in many surveys attempting to measure nationalism are (1) even if I could choose any other country in the world, I would prefer to be a citizen of China than any other country; (2) in general, China is a better country than most others; and (3) everyone should support their government even when it is wrong (Johnston, 2017, p.14). These types of statements have no specific external points of reference which matters for how ingroups define themselves in relation to outgroups and hence for how Chinese nationalism is defined in relation to anti-foreign nationalism, be it Japan or another country. Even when Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese nationalism share elements of sovereignty, loyalty, culture and history, the manner in which they are employed in both bottom-up and top-down processes differ, in the same way in which individual and collective sensitivity to these elements differs.

2.2. Key debates in the literature of Chinese nationalism

This section introduces the debates to which this thesis closely relates, starting from the key research question over the nature and formation of anti-Japanese nationalism in China.

One debate that is of particular interest to this thesis is whether nationalism is an ideology that runs top-down or bottom-up. Chinese nationalism originated in humiliating historical moments brought about by foreign powers,

but which was also used by political elites in power to bring the "nation" together. When discussing anti-foreign nationalism, the focus is usually on the CCP and on the post-1989 period. This led some scholars such as Beukel to incorrectly label anti-Japanese nationalism as "a relatively new phenomenon in the PRC. It grew up in the first half of the 1980s, but after the early 1990s it was boosted as a prominent aspect of the new Chinese nationalism" (2011, p.10). By starting with the 1990s there is no point of reference for anti-Japanese feelings against which one can compare the current anti-Japanese sentiment. The literature tends to overlook a significant period of Chinese national cohesion, which took place under the Kuomintang (KMT) legacy, particularly in response to the Japanese semi-colonisation of China during the 1930s and 1940s. Moreover, after the take-over of the Communists in 1949, "Mao identified nationalism as one of the most powerful exports from the West, and strongly embraced it in his task of nation-building. Mao's nationalism stressed patriotism through loyalty to the nation and to the state" (Liew and Smith, 2004, p.4). Nationalism and anti-foreign sentiment came into play throughout the century, as will be shown in detail in Chapter 4.

This is not to deny that a shift in the management of nationalism took place in China in the 1990s, when devoid of communist ideology, the Chinese government had "little else to bolster their mandate for power than nationalism and the maintenance of national integrity" (Christensen, 2002, p.22). The Party has always legitimated its claim to power by painting itself as the inseparable guardian of the Chinese nation (Liao N., 2013, p.547) which inevitably requires the existence of an "external threat". The CCP has long been accused of reconstructing the past by placing itself at the centre of the nation which has to be defended against external aggressors, and of using this strategy to consolidate its legitimacy over time.

On the other hand, if political elites can guide or manufacture nationalism, so can non-political actors, i.e. society itself can influence or even give rise to a new form of nationalism. Some have called this "popular nationalism", which generally encompasses intellectuals, civil society or simply the public thoughts and feelings. Suisheng Zhao (2004, p.25) also distinguishes in his book *A Nation-State by Construction* between "liberal nationalism" represented mainly by students and intellectuals and "state nationalism" as embodied by government officials, differentiated to an extent by the goals that they pursue. The representatives of the former category are challengers to the state establishment through their association with Tiananmen movement and domestic liberal demands, but nationalists in the international arena requesting stronger stance

to be taken towards foreign powers. The representatives of the latter category are concerned with promoting loyalty both to the state and nation.

Distinguishing between the two camps is essential in understanding the duality of nationalism, which is also interrelated with the perceived rise of nationalism. The strength of bottom-up nationalism is usually attributed to technology and the "pluralisation" of society. In recent years, technology has contributed to the growth of popular nationalism as many Chinese used the internet as platform for expressing their views, in the absence of an official space for public debate. Cyber-nationalism "not only challenges the state monopoly over domestic nationalist discursive production, but also opens up new possibilities for performing common people's 'public discursive right'" (Liu S., 2006, p.144).[12] This is similar to what Simon Shen (2007, p.12) calls the "politics of public diversity" defined as "the unorganized voice of a group of people not aimed at lobbying the government" but more at expressing opinions informally, which ultimately can mould the nationalist discourse. Gries rightly indicates that "the party is slowly losing its hegemony over Chinese nationalism" (2004, p.126), in what appears to become an increasingly contested ground. However, this may not imply a positive development for nationalism. As Suisheng Zhao recently noted "a convergence of state nationalism and popular nationalism was catalysed as increasing numbers of people in powerful positions in the state found themselves sharing the views of popular nationalism" (2014, p.28). This convergence in itself may reinforce the idea that Chinese nationalism is on the rise, especially when related to Japan.

Strictly in relation to Japan, Zhang Jian (2007, p.16) observes that the rise of internet users and the pluralisation of society led to the emergence of anti-Japan NGOs and consequently to a form of nationalism separate from state nationalism which is demonstrative of the government's loss of control over the nationalist discourse and even over areas of foreign policy. Such bold claims are not fully justified in Zhang's account and while it may be tempting to give in to them, the emergence of anti-Japan NGOs do not necessarily mean that the content of their nationalist discourses are particularly different from the state; on the contrary they may be reinforcing each other and monopolise anti-Japanese discourses. Nevertheless, he widens the understanding of nationalist discourses by adding the NGOs into the equation, something that is investigated in this thesis too.

[12] For more details, see Shen and Breslin (2010), Xu Wu (2007).

Regarding the top-down of nationalism, it is Jiang Zemin's "patriotic campaign" that is seen as the new beginning of this anti-Japanese wave; however, when compared along with anti-foreign nationalism, Japan is not the only one vilified (see Chapter 4). More recently, the use of nationalism in China has also been attributed to the government's desire to pursue ambitious goals abroad: "[o]n every occasion, nationalism claims to fight for the national interest of the country, thus providing nationalism with some moral currency" (Yang and Lim, 2010, p.479). Maintaining domestic order in a country that is facing an increasing number of protests daily is another function attributed to nationalism – choosing Japan as an external target allows people to vent their anger at something other than the Chinese government (Okamoto and Tanaka, 2005). These views may have some truth in them, but the risks that the Chinese government faces if these anti-Japanese manifestations run out of control and the bilateral costs of damaging its relations with Japan do not make sense in the long term; such views hence can only account for a small part of what anti-Japan nationalism means in contemporary China.

History is one of the few themes that has been used in both bottom-up and top-down explanations of Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese nationalism. On the one hand, anti-Japanese feelings are seen as a normal reaction to Japan's continuous denial of history which offends the Chinese collective memory. It is a reaction to Japan's, alleged, lack of fully hearted apology, in contrast to Germany that showed remorse for its actions in the Second World War (Shu, 2008, p.46). Furthermore, historical examples of anti-foreign sentiment expressed throughout the 20th century are offered to highlight the longevity of this phenomenon. For instance, Qingguo Jia (2005, p.14), Professor at Peking University, argues that historical demonstrations against "international injustice" were common in China's history, including: May 4, 1919 against Western Powers and Japan, December 9, 1935 against Japan, and the 1967 attack of the British *chargé d'affaires* during the Cultural Revolution.[13] From Jia's perspective these attacks happened spontaneously against "foreign aggressors" and were no less intense than the demonstrations witnessed in contemporary China. Such accounts are right in pointing out the longevity of

[13] The movement was initiated mainly by university students, who were angry at China's treatment at the hands of Western powers after World War I. The 1935 student movement was within the tradition of previous anti-foreign movements. Student demanded the KMT government to actively resist the Japanese aggression. In 1967 the Red Guard broke into the British Legation in Beijing despite Zhou Enlai's call to act rationally; he eventually dispatched the PLA to protect the British office (Cheung, 2009, p.115).

anti-Japanese feelings throughout the century, but overlook the government's interests in maintaining or manufacturing such feelings for political purposes.

On the other hand, anti-Japanese nationalism in China was instrumentalised by the elites. The case of Germany's reconciliation with Poland, France and other European countries are often used as good examples from which East Asian states may learn to overcame the shadows of WWII (He, 2009; Hein, 2010). Perhaps if it was not for the Chinese political elites, who continue to use the past to serve various agendas (Walton, 2008, iii; Qiu, 2006, p.48); anti-Japanese nationalism may have diminished considerably over the years. Hutchinson rightly points out that "the nation is not merely a construction of rational self-interest (..) it is a source of unique charisma and creative energy expressed in its origin, myths, history, culture and landscape" (1999, p.399). The Chinese government's actions cannot be disconnected from Japan's action and at an individual level, political elites cannot be completely detached from their own "landscape" in which their views and attitudes formed.

Due to the multiple origins of nationalism, the formation and use of nationalism in China over the last century, the key debates are complex. There is no single approach bottom-up or top-down that can solve the puzzle of anti-Japanese sentiment in China today, as the following section further explains.

2.2.1. Limitations of the literature

The limitations of the current literature spring from the fact that "most pundits are content to blame the Chinese state for rising nationalism, but they have often ignored the possibility that nationalism is independent of the state" (Woods and Dickson, 2012, p.30). Likewise, Callahan notes "much of the discussion of Chinese nationalism has a very narrow, top-down view of identity and politics, typically redefining nationalism first as official nationalism, then as statism" (2004b, 201-202). This thesis argues that it is not only about whether state and non-state nationalism coexist, but about how they interact and what the interaction results in.

There are authors who discern the difference between state and non-state nationalism, but their works face several shortcomings. Some are overly succinct observations, while others may be vivid expositions of Chinese nationalism that have not been rigorously conducted. For example, Deans takes into account the "emergence of its [state nationalism] popular variant" which "is increasingly a constraint to, and a threat to, the CCP" (2004, p.10) without analysing in any detail this point, which remains an assumption rather than an argument. Germie

Barme also vividly describes a variety of forms of nationalism circulating among "non-official intellectuals and cultural circles" (1995, p.234), but it is not all inclusive, as it focuses solely on Chinese intellectuals.

Academic publications on the pluralisation of Chinese society and of the decision making process have become more common and will be discussed below, yet there still is a gap in research on the "pluralisation" of Chinese nationalism. Peter Gries and Suisheng Zhao are two of the few scholars who ventured to explore in greater detail the non-state or bottom-up nature of Chinese nationalism. The lack of extensive research in this field can be attributed to the deeper debate from the wider literature of nationalism. More precisely, the top-down approach, which corresponds to instrumentalists' theories of nationalism, dominates the literature at the expense of the bottom-up approach, which corresponds mainly to primordialist and ethnosymbolists' theories.

Before proceeding further, the three theories of nationalism are briefly explained. Instrumentalism is succinctly described as a top-down approach and implies that nationalism is controlled by the elites who pursue their own interests so that group resource or power can be secured (Cohen A., 1976). With the risk of simplifying, ethnosymbolism stresses the importance of nationalism among the masses, its social and cultural patterns and collective feelings of attachments; these features are all important because nationalism does not create wholly modern *ex nihilo* nations (Smith, 1996). Otherwise put, history, including social and cultural practices, memories and experiences provide a foundation for what 'homeland' means, and by extension, for what nationalism stands (Smith, 1996). Primordialism, while it comes close to ethnosymbolism, perceives identities not as mutable, largely because it defines the ethnic bond through primordial attachments to blood, race, territory, which they perceive inflexible (van den Berghe, 1981). From this perspective, nationalism based on blood lineage, for instance, is ineffable, but coercive (Shills, 1957, p.142).

The bottom-up and top-down debate can be translated into a debate between ethnosymbolists and primoridalists on the one hand and instrumentalists on the other. Instrumentalists prioritise power relations and focuses on the agency of elites, and their methods of manipulating language, religion, ethnic memories and culture in order to create a sense of national self-awareness. By doing so elites "protect their well-being or existence or (…) gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as for themselves" (Brass, 1991, p.8). Clearly, for instrumentalists, nationalism is not a given but a politically crafted concept (Özkirimli, 2010). "Such a perspective ignores that people might contest the nation and its official ideology and leaves open the

question of how people come to embrace the official discourse" (Madianou, 2012, p.15). Therefore, the criticism of instrumentalism lies not necessarily in the denial of the instrumental use of nationalism for elites' goals, but in the tendency to underplay historical memories and feelings, reduced to an on/off switch controlled by the elites.

Gries (2004, p.119) criticises Hobsbawm for his emphasis on reinventing tradition which fixated our attention on the elites only.[14] Carlson also notes that theories opposing instrumentalism have been neglected in Chinese focused literature due to the unjustified attention given to instrumentalists; China scholars, he writes, have "largely overlooked the fundamental debate in the broader field over the extent to which nationalism is best understood as a primordial or a contextual phenomenon" (2009, p.24). Therefore, this thesis aims to fill this gap by turning to the general theories of nationalism, such as ethnosymbolism and primordialism, to counter the centrality of instrumentalism and provide a more balanced and refined view of what constitutes Chinese nationalism.

2.3. Alternative proposals for understanding Chinese nationalism

This thesis brings ethnosymbolism and instrumentalism to the discussion, to enrich the current understanding of Chinese nationalism. The contribution that each of these theories makes to the literature on Chinese nationalism is explained in turn. This mixed approach contributes to the main debate in the literature of Chinese nationalism, raised earlier: Is nationalism a unidirectional process formed bottom-up or top-down or a bidirectional process?

Theories of ethnicity and nationalism

The limitation section touched upon the fact that a significant part of the literature on nationalism takes an instrumental view, particularly when discussing Chinese nationalism. This is not a problem that bedevils the literature on China alone. Ethnosymbolism highlights elements which are essential in the definition of the *ethnie*: "named units of population with common ancestry myths and historical memories, elements of shared culture, some link with a historic territory and some measure of solidarity" (Smith, 1995, p.57).[15] These elements

[14] For instance, Hobsbawm (cited in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994) discusses the "invention of tradition" by emphasising the role of education, public ceremonies and public monuments.

[15] Smith stresses the role of history in the origin and formation of the nation and he explains it in reference to four theories, explained next. For nationalists, the role of history is clear in that "the

tend to be often neglected by instrumentalists, Smith argues, who are more interested in elite's manipulation of the public than the dynamics at the public level itself (1995, p.40). By stressing these neglected elements, Smith also provides an answer to why people choose ethnies and nationalism "as a vehicle for their advancements rather than class and religion" (1995, p.39).

While ethnosymbolists along with primordialists argue that ethnicity and nations pre-date the 1789 period, modernists claim this period as the beginning of industrialisation and hence of the nation. For Benedict Anderson, nationalism is a modern concept defined as an imaginary "we" community which was largely brought about by print media and the capitalist market. In China, in the same way as in Europe, print media played an important role in creating the modern nation (Anderson, 2006, p.36). Newspapers made possible to share information across all strata of society, which instigated a sense of national identity, non-existent previously, modernists would argue, beyond the local geographical areas of where people lived. This enabled people to see themselves part of the wider nation and built a sense of national identity. The combined existence of illustrated newspapers and telegraphic news broke down local and provincial barriers and created a sense of involvement with, and concern for, groups of people across the country (Harrison, 2001, p.116). This enabled the community to be 'imagined', including people beyond one's immediate circle of acquaintances. It also demanded the standardization of the written form of the language, also an important homogenising force.

At least two major stages in which print media transformed China can be identified in the 20th century. One stage is at the turn of the 19th century when Liang Qichao saw the newspapers as a mechanism for convincing its readers of the benefits of reform (Harrison, 2001, p.117). As Liang Qichao wrote in 1912: "the establishment of the Republic of China was the result of a revolution of ink, not a revolution of blood" (cited in Judge, 1996, p.4).

A second stage which underlines the importance of print media in the formation of Chinese identity is during the 1930s war. Newspaper founders and journalists were aware of the important role that print media played in those

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nation was always there, indeed it is part of the natural order, even when it was submerged in the hearts of its members. The task of the nationalist is simply to remind his or her compatriots of their glorious past, so that they can recreate and relive those glories". For perennialists "National forms may change and particular nations may dissolve, but the identity of a nation is unchanging". For the modernist "the past is largely irrelevant; the nation is a modern phenomenon, the product of nationalist ideologies, which themselves are the expression of modern, industrial society". For post-modernists, "the present creates the past in its own image; modem nationalist intellectuals will freely select, invent and mix traditions in their quest for the imagined political community".

tumultuous years. Cheng, the founder of Libao newspaper, two days prior to the launch in 1935, stated: "If we want to establish a good country, we need to make all citizens understand their relations with the country"; later, calls for the national unity and national salvation of the country were often echoed in the pages of Libao (cited in Chin, 2014, p.415).

While a sense of identity existed, for instance, among some Han Chinese who showed resistance towards Manchu invaders (Duara cited in Ong, 2005, p.5), print media brought together otherwise dispersed views of ethnicity and identity. The threat of the war further helped the national cohesion. Chin is right to argue that "The heightening of national consciousness in the 1930s was the result of the promotion of anti-Japanese sentiment through printed media in the wake of national crisis, although one cannot dismiss the spontaneity of the rise of nationalism and interest in national affairs among the Chinese public in the face of imminent war" (2014, p.408).

"Constructivist" primordialists such as Geertz explain primordial attachments as "assumed givens (…) that stem from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, and following a particular religious community" (1973, p.259). The "assumed givens" rather than the imprinted biological "givens" specific to primordialists (Van den Bergh, 1987), enabled scholars such as Tilly (1997, p.501) to correctly point out that "Ethnic attachments *appear* primordial because they are based on certain assumptions or knowledge systems … [that] form a kind of cognitive substratum not only for affect but for most conscious thought". In other words, ethnic attachments are based on ideas, making them in some sense artificial, but ideas that are taken for granted to the extent that they become the virtually unquestioned foundations on which other beliefs are built. Thus, Tilly concludes that Geertz's "use of the term 'primordialism' [is] more in its sense of 'first in a series'…, in order to highlight the ways in which foundation concepts provide the basis for other ideas, values, customs or ideologies held by the individual".[16] It is this constructivist angle on primordialism that reinforces its value to the current discussions on nationalism. If referring strictly to anti-Japanese nationalism, placed in China's historical context of redefining itself as a "nation" at a time when it was under siege from Japan, the "assumed givens" are historical markers in the collective memory. Not only are they difficult to change because they are

[16] Smith (1995) makes a similar point when he accepts that groups can employ "ancient symbols" coalescing a nation in an effort to pursue various goals through time, but he stresses the importance of remembering that nations still have "navel".

based on a history, but they drove subsequent ideas and values that changed an empire into a republic, that triggered new political ideologies that guided the country in the following decades and defined "our" interaction with the "other".

A history of competition, of war and conquest between two states, makes positive and negative labelling of "us" and "them" extremely easy. Loyalty to "us", the nation and enmity for the "other" builds up in the presence of (perceived) fear and threat. Whitehead defines fear as "what we perceive as present is the vivid fringe of memory tinged with anticipation" (cited in Barbalet and Demertzis, 2013, p.171) and by Adam Smith (1809, p.58) as "a passion derived altogether from the imagination, which represents (…) not what we really feel, but what we may hereafter possibly suffer". "When two groups in close proximity have mutually exclusive, incendiary perceptions of each other, the slightest provocation on either side confirms deeply held beliefs and provides justification for a retaliatory response" (Brown, 2001, p.12-13). One's certainty of security, resources and status can easily become the others' uncertainty. This has been characterised in the international relations literature as a security dilemma (Jervis, 1978). The mistrust between China and Japan is so high that they exist in a security dilemma in relation to each other.

Threat perception produces group cohesion, in-group favouritism, and distrust towards others, a lack of intergroup communication and more importantly a willingness of individuals to accept centralised group leadership (Hale, 2004, p.469). The latter point is substantiated by Yinan He (2007a, p.51) who stresses that when elites "feel a strong sense of insecurity because of concerns about their power status or national cohesion" they are likely to highlight the memory of conflict with the risk of impairing diplomatic relations.[17] From this perspective, disseminating fear can be a valuable source of legitimacy for those in power. However, this can only be in the context in which "us" vs "them" are "assumed givens" and more importantly they are "assumed givens" for everyone, including the elites, as explained next.

If for Smith (1994, p.18-19) "[h]istory is no sweetshop in which its children may 'pick and mix'", Suzuki further complements this view by raising an essential point: "[h]istory is more than a 'toolkit' that can be rationally utilised by the political elite, and states are moral agents that are deeply affected by history" (2007, p.23). To further expand on this point, this thesis argues that

[17] Yinan He draws on Liah Greenfeld and Daniel Chirot who in their study of "Nationalism and Aggression" (1994) use the examples of elites in Russia, Germany and certain Arab countries to explain how "proud, patriotic, deeply shamed and insecure" feelings led to a nationalistic propaganda and an aggressive foreign policy (2007, p.51).

instrumentalists too easily dismiss the power of bottom-up nationalism because it tends to be labelled as "emotional", which often sits in binary opposition to the assumed "rationality" that surrounds the political elites. However, as Turner writes, it is the very "*interaction between cognitive and emotional capacities* that makes rationality and memory possible on a human scale" (Turner, 2007, p. 37, original emphasis).

Yet, emotions are still associated mostly with social movements which is "further evidence of their continued ghettoization and the perpetuation of old dichotomies." (Heaney, 2013, p.245). Elites are rarely described as emotional, unlike the "unruly", "emotional" and "irrational" masses. Similar to political parties who use emotions to mobilise people to vote and who need to distinguish themselves from others, in a non-democratic state like China the government garners its legitimacy from the public that it appeals to, among others, by friend-foe dichotomies, marked by emotions. Elites cannot remain untouched by these images that they put forward and they may become ingrained and taken for granted. Emotions are "foundational to the making of judgements and to how we accord value to entities in the world" (Nussbaum cited in Heaney, 2013, p.245). Therefore, by taking a purely instrumental approach to nationalism, one wrongly assumes that elites operate somehow outside this emotional frame.

From the instrumentalists' perspective, the emphasis placed on mass sentiments was criticised for ignoring the role that elites and intellectuals play in the formation of nationalism. But this thesis adopts Connor's approach, who argues that "the essence of nationalism is not to be sought in the motives of elites who may manipulate nationalism for some ulterior end, but rather in the mass sentiment to which elites appeal" (Connor, 1994, p.161). Whilst the mass sentiment to which elites appeal may not be the only "essence" of nationalism it is important not to neglect the fact that elites' autonomy in using nationalism is constrained.

Overall, despite the differences exposed among primordialist, ethnosymbolist and instrumentalist theories, only by taking them all into account can a complete picture of nationalism be created. As Hearn argues, these theories can be bridged by "recognising that cultural groups differ in the strength and richness of their cultural tradition and even more importantly in the strength and richness of traditional institutions and social structures" (2006, p.86), in other words "power and culture should be twin tools in the analysis of nationalism, not alternative approaches" (2006, p.117). In the context of this thesis, elites' power and collective historical memory should be a complementary rather than an

alternative approach to analysing Chinese nationalism, in the same vein that nationalism encompasses both top-down and bottom-up perspectives.

Based on the "dual nature of nationalism", constructed both top-down and bottom-up, this thesis adopts Gries' view on nationalism defined as a mobile process shaped by history, culture and international context (2004, p.19), in which "both the party elite and popular nationalists participate in nationalist politics, and both emotional and instrumental concerns drive their behaviour" (2004, p.87). The motives of the elites and the way they manipulate "nationalism" should not be separated from the sentiments to which they appeal when analysing anti-Japanese nationalism in China. Similarly, nationalist feelings are driven by a collective memory of oppression and humiliation, a real historical memory complemented by partly fictive memories depicting the CCP as a "collective national hero" fighting Japan and unwilling to surrender its sovereignty once again; these feelings find life both in the Chinese elites and public. It is ultimately the interaction between these factors and actors that define anti-Japanese nationalism in China today.

Constructivism and structuration theory

So far this thesis has argued that neither instrumentalism, primordialism, nor ethno-symbolism can be reduced to the other. Wendt's constructivist theory of international politics along with Giddens' "theory of structuration" provide a more comprehensive contribution, because neither material and social factors can be reduced to the other, in the same way in which neither structure or agency can be reduced to the other.

For constructivists, objective facts about the world, for instance military power or trade relations, are important in understanding state behaviour mainly due to their social meaning. The focus is hence placed on the social context in which meaning forms, based on history, ideas, beliefs and norms. Three main principles underpin Wendt's social theory of constructivism: 1) social knowledge - "people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them"; 2) social practice - "the meanings in terms of which action is organized arise out of interaction"; 3) identities and interests - "identities [and interests] are produced in and through 'situated activity'" (1992, pp.396–7). State and non-state actors all operate based on the same constructed "meaning" of the world around them. Partly because of this focus on identities, beliefs and ideologies, Constructivists also stress the role of non-state actors more than other theoretical approaches do. NGOs, for example, can alter state

behaviour or preferences through rhetoric, lobbying, persuasion, and shaming (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Moreover, as Wendt writes, "actors learn identities and interests as a result of how significant others treat them" (1999, p.171); the perception of in-groups vs out-groups, underpinned by collective memory, can hence determine state's behaviour.

> "Group beliefs are often inscribed in "collective memory", the myths, narratives, and traditions that constitute who a group is and how it relates to others. These narratives are not merely the shared beliefs held by individuals at any given moment (though they depend on those beliefs), but inherently historical phenomena which are kept alive through the generations by an on-going process of socialization and ritual enactment. It is in virtue of such memories that groups acquire continuity and identity through time. As long as individuals see themselves as having an allegiance and commitment to the group, collective memories will be available as a resource for mobilizing collective action (…) [and] can help explain patterns in aggregate behaviour" (Wendt, 1999, p.163).

Placed in the context of anti-Japan Chinese nationalism, elites and activists' actions alike derive from the social meaning these actors acquired over time about their own position within China and in relation to Japan.

For constructivists, agency and structure are mutually constituted; agents can influence the content and effects of structure through the way they act. If Wendt argued that the meaning states ascribe to anarchy is developed through the interaction with other states, I would argue that the meaning Chinese state and non-state actors ascribe to nationalism is the consequence of interactions among domestic actors and with other foreign actors. Through actions and practices, the meaning of "nationalism" against Japan can be maintained or questioned and reframed.

Wendt was initially inspired by Anthony Giddens's (1984) influential "theory of structuration" which maintains that neither agency nor structure can be reduced to the other, both being equally important. Agency and structure are underlined by a dual ontology in which it is the interaction between the two that reproduces social structure and behaviour. The term 'social structure' includes "the *patterning of interaction*, as implying relations between actors or groups; and the *continuity of interaction* in time" (1984, p.62). More simply put, "society only has form, and that form only has effects on people, in so far as structure is

produced and reproduced in what people do" (Giddens & Pierson, 1998, p.77). For instance, rules cannot exist without the agency of action for people, and people's agencies recurrently strengthen those rules. Nevertheless, structure places rules upon people, thus limiting their personal agency for action, but their motivations for action are then positively defined within that structure. Therefore, in the Giddensian framework, structure is both constraining and enabling to the actions of people; it is this interactional relationship that recreates structure. Structure is not a static concept within which we can study social behaviour, but rather a dynamic and ongoing process. In Giddens' framework, individuals have the power and resources to create, reproduce and transform social structures. Power is defined as the ability to make a difference (Giddens, 1984, p.16) while resources "are the media through which power is exercised" and they both vary across individuals. The unequal distribution of power and resources means that structures and systems can accommodate different forms of social change and a variety of state and non-state actors.

In this sense the formation of contemporary anti-Japanese nationalism in China is a constitution between bottom-up and top-down forces, social behaviour or behavioural elements of nationalism are reproduced through the interaction between these two forces in a similar manner in which agency and structure interact in Giddens' structuration theory and Wendt's anarchical structure.

2.4. Nationalism-policy linkage

The second much debated question in the literature is if nationalism, particularly outward oriented feelings of nationalism, affects China's policy making. The type of nationalism a state employs may indicate different policy preferences and hence state behaviour. Within the Chinese context, there are two main camps which dispute the type and role of nationalism, and its influence over China's foreign policy.

One camp argues that the role of public Chinese nationalism in China's foreign policy is exaggerated. Downs and Saunders' claim that the Chinese government is more likely to risk domestic dissatisfaction by not fulfilling nationalistic demands, rather than jeopardise good bilateral economic relations with Japan in the interests of maintaining economic strength (1998/1999). Wiegand (2009) also claims that regime stability and the maintenance of economic relations outweigh the role of nationalism in foreign policy. However, both studies accept there is a contradiction between China's simultaneous pursuit of economic and nationalist policies, and its balancing act when dealing with

Japan. One of the main pillars on which the government built its legitimacy is the ability to drive China's development and modernisation, but without becoming dependent on other states. This has historical resonance for most Chinese who perceived the Qing dynasty as too weak to defend China's borders. "Crucially, the promise of economic benefits, and the requirements of foreign policy requires China to maintain a much closer relationship with the US and countries like Japan than many of those in the popular nationalist camp would like" (Seckington, 2005, p.28). This approach, however, assumes a "rational" use of history by elites who would presumably be operating outside the "history" and "emotion" frame, hence why it glosses over China's internal complexities and intricate meanings of nationalism.[18]

The other camp sees popular nationalism as a constraint on the Chinese government's space of manoeuvre and its ability to design and implement policy (Gries, Steiger and Wang, 2016; Tang W., 2005; Fewsmith and Rosen, 2001). Other observers go further and claim that mass Chinese nationalism is a xenophobic and aggressive driver of an increasingly reckless Chinese foreign policy because of the Chinese government's willingness to satisfy nationalist requests (Ross, 2009; Ross, 2011). The rise of this view developed as a result of several domestic changes such as the increasing interest of the government to take the pulse of the public[19] and the pluralisation of the public discourse and policy making. NGOs and public opinion (Fewsmith and Rosen, 2001) are heard more often by policymakers than they were in the past. Even astute observers of Chinese nationalism began to recognise the government's trend of being more sensitive to public views. Suisheng Zhao changed his view over China's foreign affairs from claiming that China's foreign policy is chiefly characterised by pragmatism (2004) to admitting the fact that "it has become increasingly reluctant to constrain the expression of popular nationalism and more willing to follow the popular nationalist calls form confrontation against the Western powers and its neighbors" (2013, p.536).

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[18] The broader literature on nationalism and foreign policy is also limited, while more has been written on the link between public opinion and foreign policy. In the US literature, Johnston (2006) identifies two strands related to the framework within which elites operate: 1) foreign policy makers themselves are influenced by public opinion; 2) decision makers are influenced by their apriori normative belief in the legitimacy and desirability of public opinion as an input in decision.

[19] For Hao and Su (2005, p.35) the power of popular voice is evident now first through governmental actions who commissions surveys, and second, in the case of internal frictions over policies, "elite within the policy circle mobilises public support and opinion". One such attempt to show that the government is listening to the people's concerns when drawing policy was the "Direct Line to Zhongnanhai", an online message board where internet users can write to their political leaders (Moses cited in Hille, 2010).

Despite the existence of these debates, in fact only a few studies discuss the direct causal relationship between nationalism and foreign policy.[20] As Quasheng Zhao (2004, p.295) rightly points out, nationalism often appears as a secondary feature of China's foreign policy along with economic development and its quest for international power and influence, but it is actually rarely discussed directly in relation to foreign policy. This thesis recognises the difficulties of running such an analysis and it only provides the perspective of activists on the one hand and that of academics and researchers affiliated with relevant research institutions in China on the other, on nationalism-foreign policy link. In doing so it does not claim that this is by any means a comprehensive analysis on the matter, but it does however provide new insights into how these actors perceive their own power and capability in reproducing structures and in influencing social or state behaviour as Giddens' would put it.

As for the link between nationalism and domestic policy is concerned, the literature is very limited. While Suisheng Zhao (2013, p.553) writes that Chinese nationalistic discourses create more than just a sense of victimisation, they create a "sense of morality and righteousness" in external affairs, this thesis argues that insufficient attention is given to what type of "sense" the nationalistic discourses creates at the domestic level. If nationalism is banally entrenched in daily rituals and discourses (Billig, 1995), then nationalism eventually shapes political cultures, defined as a source of "ideologies, beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions and institutions that govern political behaviour and structure the political system" (Stephens, 2010, p.125). But in turn, political cultures create a set of expectations within which leaders have to act (Stephens, 2010, p.125). Katzeinstein (1996) further argues that these collective expectations or norms do not only define identities, but also prescribe behaviour. The effects that nationalism, through norms, can have at the societal level within the Chinese domestic realm is another contribution that this thesis makes to the literature.

In recent years, two books have systematically and empirically scrutinised the nationalism-foreign policy link and hinted at the domestic level effect – the books by James Reilly and Jessica Weiss. The next section presents these two

[20] The rich literature on Sino-Japanese relations (Taylor, 2013; Drifte, 2003; Rose, 1998; Lam, 2006; Howe, 1996; Hilpert and Haak, 2002; Dent, 2008) generally offers a comprehensive overview of Sino-Japanese bilateral relations varying from historical divergences, disputed security and regional order competitions to more unifying economic ties. However, only recently has more attention been given to the role of Chinese nationalism and public opinion in Sino-Japanese relations.

works which offer starting points in developing the analytical framework proposed in this thesis.

2.5. Analytical framework

By drawing largely on Reilly's study and to a lesser extent on Weiss' study, the current analytical framework is developed. This section first starts with an extensive introduction and a critical assessment of Reilly's work, which is then followed by a briefer assessment of Weiss' study. Only then the analytical framework proposed in this thesis is introduced and each of its five phases is explained.

James Reilly's *Strong State, Smart Society* (2013) offers an analytical framework on the role of Chinese public opinion in China's foreign policy, on which this thesis mainly draws. Reilly does not actually discuss nationalism as such, but he makes numerous references to nationalism; in the Chinese case and particularly in the context of inter-state territorial disputes with Japan, public opinion becomes highly nationalistic. It has to be remembered that the CCP initially came to power through the promise of unifying and protecting the country's territorial integrity, hence a nationalistic public standing up against Japan on matters of sovereignty is to be expected. The role of the CCP could be challenged at its very core if it fails to protect the country's sovereignty.

Reilly's framework first assesses the factors that activate and mobilise the "wave of public opinion", i.e. state-led, society-led, and externally-driven. He then moves on to investigate the reaction of the authorities. Public mobilisation can be met with tolerance, signalled by accepting popular activism and media sensationalism or with opposition manifested through repression and persuasion. However, if authorities tolerate the public mobilisation, Reilly goes on to analyse the impact that this has on foreign policy by looking at changes in the negotiation strategy, official rhetoric, elite discourse and policy discussions. The wave is stopped by authorities when the costs for domestic stability and the government become too high.

This analytical framework provides valuable interpretations of China's public opinion and leadership decision making, but it differs from the proposed framework of this thesis in several significant ways.

To start with, Reilly's main theoretical concept is that of "public opinion" and not "nationalism"; the terms can be interchangeable in certain contexts to the extent to which they are triggered by similar factors and they require a state response. Nonetheless, the concept of nationalism conveys a more complex

meaning; nationalism runs high not only among the public, but also among the elites and their advisers. Their opinions and views are informed by the same variety of factors as put forward by primordialist, instrumentalist and sociologists' perspectives. In other words, while Reilly's work centres on understanding public opinion and the government's responses, this thesis focuses on understanding discursive interactions between the elites and non-state actors.

Moreover, in order to understand the Chinese leadership's decision to react either with repression or to be tolerant, there is a need for a more in-depth look at the differences among the elite domestic actors, predominantly between the chauvinist military personnel and civilian personnel, as well as among Ministers who may have conflicting ministerial interests.

Furthermore, this thesis takes an interest in both bottom-up manifestations of anti-Japanese manifestations and government strategies when responding. "Boycotts" were one of the most common manifestations of public mobilisation during 2010 and 2012, but they are lacking from Reilly's analysis. Anti-Japanese boycotts in China have a long history as they came to prominence in the first part of the 20th century when China has been constantly boycotting foreign powers, particularly Japan, in defence of its sovereignty. One observer at that time noted that "anti-Japanese boycotts and demonstrations in China have entered a new phase, from the emotional, student-led uprisings begun in the May Fourth Era to calculated, KMT-planned programs that were not going to subside" (Shimizu cited in Brooks, 1991, p.383). This has led to conclusions that "the story of the use of boycott by the Chinese people is one of the most revealing chapters in modern economic history" (Orchard, 193o). But the emphasis should not be put on economic history alone because boycotts were one of the key marks of new nationalistic movements, along with demonstrations and strikes, which targeted Japan (Duus, xxiv, 1991). Boycotts were characterised by what Japan perceived to be "contempt of Japan" and "anti-foreign movements" (The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1932, p.4). Therefore, it is equally important to look at boycotts organised by protesters with or without government support, and at the government's response to such manifestations varying from media to institutional decision "management". Other general differences refer to timeline; Reilly investigates pre-2010 Sino-Japanese conflicts, but does not include the 2010 and 2012 incident over Diaoyu/Senkaku islands.

Weiss' book *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protests in China's Foreign Policy* (2014) thoroughly examines the reasons why the Chinese leadership facilitates or restrains anti-foreign protests. Through a cost-risk calculation, Weiss establishes the instrumental use of protests in attaining bargaining

advantages in international negotiations. She argues that it is irrelevant whether the protests are spontaneous or state-led, as long as the "deception" game is credible enough to constrain the opposing negotiator. This argument is problematic on a number of levels. First, her cost-risk analysis should take into account more seriously the nature of the protest. Second, the risk and cost calculations seem to be carried out under conditions of complete agreement among domestic actors, whereas this may not have been the case. Like Reilly, Weiss' analysis could have broken down domestic actors along their divergent views and motivations when carrying out cost-risk calculations. Third, protests are reduced to their instrumental role to signal resolve or diplomatic flexibility, but the question that remains is what 'patriotic protests' mean for Chinese nationalism and for China's domestic realm. Fourth, whilst Weiss discusses protests at large, she does not tackle "boycotts", and nor does Reilly, despite their prominence as public manifestations that accompanied most anti-Japanese protests. [21] Empirically, Weiss' case studies deal with anti-foreign protests, amongst which anti-Japanese protests occupy a large part; the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident represents one of the case studies approached, but the 2010 one is not discussed.

In contrast to Reilly and Weiss, who only partially touch on the concept of nationalism, the aim of this thesis is primarily to assess nationalism at all levels, from folk to elites, from triggers to implications both at the domestic and foreign level. Nationalism is analysed in detail through the perspectives of the 2010 and 2012 territorial disputes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands.

Framework

With the aim of answering the central question of this thesis, "What is the nature of anti-Japanese nationalism in China and how is it constructed" a five step analytical framework is developed: dormant nationalism, triggers of nationalism, expressions of nationalism, analysis of contemporary nationalism, and its potential effect on policy (see Fig. 2.1).[22] This frame was inspired by James Reilly's "wave of popular mobilisation", but was adapted to overcome the

[21] In the article "A wave to worry about" (2014), Reilly takes on 2012 events and discusses boycotts, but does not apply the same framework of analysis that he operated with in his book.

[22] Stages 1 and 4 are represented in a different colour because they are "inactive" stages, they are descriptive and analytical of aspects of nationalism; in contrast, stages 2,3 and 5 are considered to be "active" through "triggers", "expressions" of bottom-up nationalism and the state "response" and "effects" on policy.

limitations raised earlier in this chapter. Within each of the stages, the thesis interrogates the nature of both bottom-up and top-down perspectives on nationalism. This thesis takes a step forward and cross-examines the bottom-up and top-down perspectives through the lenses of primordialism, ethnosymbolism and instrumentalism, complemented by theories from sociology, in each of the five stages below.

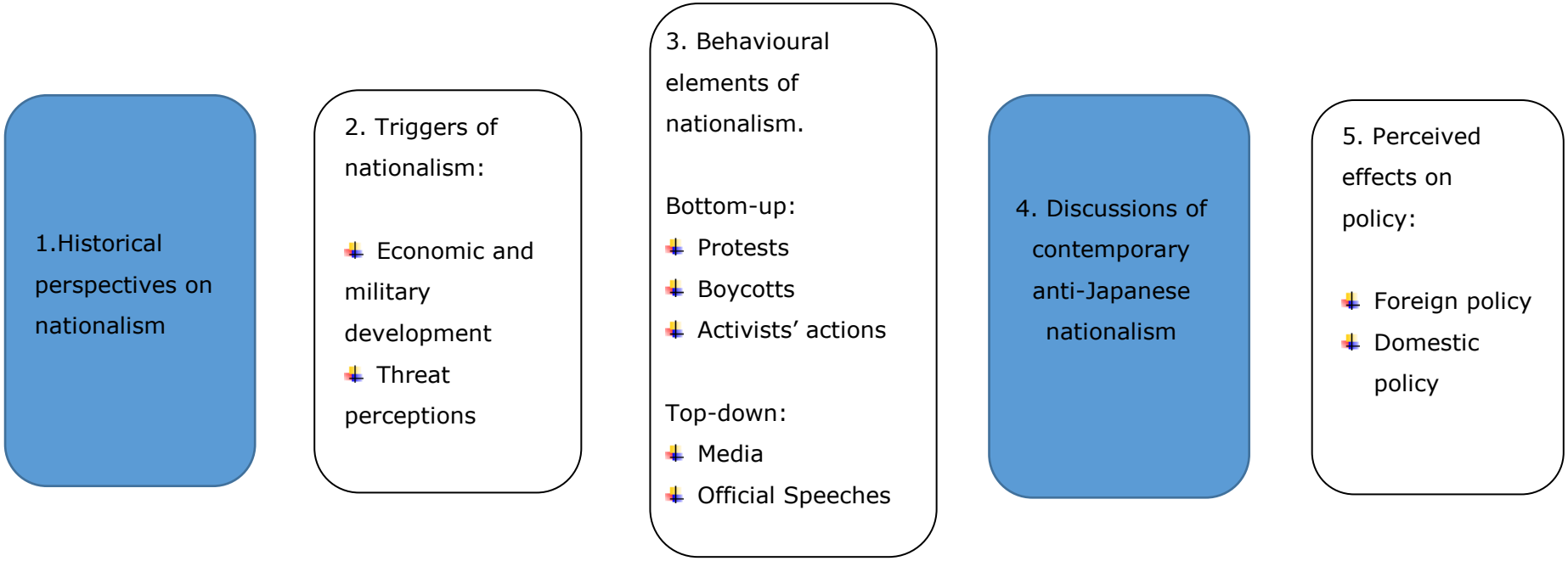

Figure 2.1: Analytical framework in five stages for analysing nationalism.

The first "dormant" stage refers to the formation of Chinese nationalism and the "stewing anti-Japanese feelings" which are not a CCP product, as is too often implied. Most studies of nationalism in the field of politics and international relations start their analysis from the 1990s, as nationalism is often seen as a post-1989 product of the CCP aimed at revitalising the legitimacy of the party (Carlson, 2009, p.23). By looking back at history it can be seen that anti-Japan nationalism is not a CCP "production"; a sense of nationalism strengthened through the 19th century and was subsequently used by intellectuals and officials prior to the CCP arrival to power. Nevertheless, it would be counterintuitive to overlook the effort of the CCP to alter and channel these anti-Japanese theme so that it meets both China's material and nonmaterial interests, from seeking economic benefits to overcoming historical humiliation and gaining international respect.

The second stage deals with the triggers that awaken the dormant nationalism. Several studies discuss the rise of nationalism in China. According to Whiting (1995, p.296) nationalism gains in intensity depending on: factional politics and leadership instability, global power shifts and external threats that impend the very survival of the state, nation and identity, and international negotiations. Moore takes into account other factors such as feelings economic and military development, historical humiliation, China's exceptionalism based on its formal greatness status, external provocations and the government's need to use nationalism to strengthen the regime stability (2010, p.302). By drawing on these sources, the following table was produced:

The triggers of anti-Japanese nationalism in 2010 and 2012 considered initially are divided into two categories, external and internal triggers, as shown in the table below.

Table 2.1: Triggers of anti-Japanese manifestations

External triggers	Internal triggers
(1) external provocations	(3) divided political actors
(2) regional actors	(4) activism from below
	(5) historical memory (humiliation and pride)
	(6) economic and military development
	(7) threat perceptions
	(8) securing Party legitimacy

Points (2), (3), (4), (5) and (8) do not classify as primary triggers for the reasons explained next. Externally, (2) regional actors in 2010 and 2012

remained generally cautious and divided, and avoided pointing fingers directly at China for raising tensions in the region (Biswas cited in Dominguez, 2013). They did not take a strong stance on the East China Sea dispute and chose not to interfere.

(3) Internally, whilst, factional politics in today's China are not as prominent as they were at the end of the Cold War when Whiting (1995) ran his research, divergences are still noticeable between liberal and conservative camps, or civilian and military actors. Disagreements among Chinese political actors inevitably exist, but the limited access to such information impedes an in-depth analysis of this trigger. This point is instead included in Chapter 6 "Contemporary discussions of nationalism" where it is used to offer a wider understanding of the meaning of anti-Japanese nationalism.

(4) Activists and NGOs were not a common sight during the 2010 and 2012 protests. One of the most prominent organisers of anti-Japanese protests and activities, the Chinese Federation for Defending the Diaoyu Islands (CFDDI), was not particularly active in either of the two years. Its members were closely monitored and constrained in their activities by local authorities (Interviews with activists, 2014).

(5) Historical memory does not bring much novelty as some Japanese officials have been visiting the Yasukuni shrine and making controversial statements throughout the last few decades, as it was shown in the previous section of this chapter. However, there was no other particular debacle that sensitised collective memory, in the temporal proximity of the 2010 and 2012 events. Actually, "in the late 2000s, historical disputes between the two countries gave way to concerns over territorial and economic interests as the most problematic in the public mindset" (Wang and Okano-Heijmans, 2011, p.145). Overall, mutual Sino-Japanese perceptions of each other, showed encouraging signs.[23]

(8) As shown in the following two empirical chapters, it is unlikely that anti-Japanese manifestations in 2010 and 2012 were mainly manufactured and driven by the government. This is not to say that Party legitimacy does not

[23] If historical memory is to be understood as feelings of humiliations and "losing face" (Moore G., 2014, p.233) that burden the present and the two 2010 ship collision and 2012 nationalisation of the islands are seen as Japan breaking former bilateral agreements, then historical memory played a role. However, given the positive bilateral relations at the time, they are not seen the most potent triggers of anti-Japanese manifestations.

exploit at times anti-Japanese feelings, but in these particular circumstances it does not appear to have been one of the main triggers.

The points discussed above all play, to an extent, a role in anti-Japanese protests, so they are not dismissed, they are just not ranked as high as (1) external provocations, (6) economic and military development and (7) threat perception. Several correlations can be found between (1) and (7) and hence cannot be analysed in isolation from each other. China's threat perception is related to the actions of Japan, and its ally USA to some extent, seen often as provocations and encroachments on China's rights. For this reason, the two triggers will be considered together under the headline of threat perceptions, after the section on (6) economic and military development.

Since the 1990, the shift in the balance of power changed. During the 1990s China's leadership might have wanted to prevent a surge of nationalism that could have jeopardised Sino-Japanese economic relations (Zhao S., 2004; Downs and Saunders, 1999; Wiegand, 2009), but after 2010, with China's rise as an economic power, there was less pressure to do so. As Suisheng Zhao (2013, p.553) also notes:

> A strident turn, however, has taken place parallel with China's growing economic, diplomatic and military muscle in the twenty-first century as the Chinese leadership has come to be more responsive to, and share more of, the views of popular nationalism in adopting tougher approaches to forcefully pursuing core interests.

The global power shift was accompanied by adjacent perceptions of China's self-role in the world and of other's view on China's new acquired role. As Jervis states "Perceptions are determined by other's pre-existing beliefs and images, thus actors interpret a state's act differently" (1982-1983, p.27). This is particularly relevant when discussing Sino-Japanese relations underpinned by rich historical milieu and deep-seated mistrust. Perceptions of threat are even stronger when groups define their own identity in relation to each other (Barth, 1969; Suzuki, 2007). The elites and the masses' perception of threat and balance of power contribute to the behaviour of top-down and bottom-up manifestations of anti-Japanese nationalism.

Behavioural elements of nationalism constitute the third stage of the framework. Given the dual nature of nationalism, the dynamic between top-down and bottom-up nationalism, two corresponding types of "expressions of nationalism" are considered. On the one hand, protests, boycotts, activists'

actions and the use of backchannels[24] represent the bottom-up forms of nationalism. It is these type of actors[25] and actions which are insufficiently addressed in the literature of Chinese studies.[26] On the other hand, through its ability to shape the nationalist discourse, state media[27] plays an essential role in informing and persuading the public, and is considered the main top-down "expression of nationalism". Other subtle forms of controlling the rise of nationalism with the help of various public institutions are also taken into account, as well as the sheer use of force through the deployment of police units to prevent or end protests. These two approaches to behavioural elements of nationalism, bottom-up and top-down, speak directly to the ethnosymbolist and instrumentalist. theories of nationalism. They can explain the type of unifying mission and identity that is powerful enough to motivate masses of people on the one hand, and why elites would exploit certain ideologies/concepts, on the other.

The contemporary discussions of nationalism, the fourth stage of the framework, has at its core the discussion from the first part of this literature

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[24] Glaser and Saunders (2002) identified six pathways think-tank analysts and intellectuals sometimes benefit from the use of backchannels: internal (*neibu*) reports, small group (*xiaozu*) policy meetings, informal consultations with policy makers, internal conferences, appearances in Chinese or Western media and publishing academic articles and books. But it is not only think tanks and analysts who make use of such means of communication, activists and journalists employ similar approaches in their attempt of making their voices heard by the "right" governmental body.

[25] Studies such as that of Simon Shen (2007) tackle the relevance of civilian actors, encompassing public actors, internet communities and university students to foreign policy, but falls short of recognising the importance of activists. Activists occupy functions which enable them, in some cases, to build invaluable networks within various government bodies; undoubtedly, a regular civilian striving for a cause could not have access to such financial and human resources, hence the label "*quasi*-civilian". In contrast to Shen (2007, p.36) who does not include activists and NGOs in the bottom-up category on the premises that they "lack a legitimate identity in the subject matter", they fit well within the main characteristics of what he calls "politics of public diversity"; NGOs compensate the government role, they are not formally recognised and they are involved or they force their way in the public opinion and government dialogue. Thus, activists and NGOs are fully considered when discussing bottom-up approaches to nationalism.

[26] Chinese activists leading anti-Japan activities have been perceived with some reluctance by some scholars who questioned whether they are state or grassoot actors. Interviews conducted with numerous activists, presented largely in Chapter 6 and 7, admittedly show the difficult position that these actors occupy in the Chinese domestic realm – persecuted by authorities, but dedicated to their nationalist cause to the point that they remain loyal to the Chinese Government in international disputes. Bottom-up and top-down approaches are not clear-cut applicable to these actors; their work is better understood within agency-structure frame where they can reproduce social stuctures.

[27] Media is also used to a lesser extent in a bottom-up process of pushing for change or simply attracting attention to a cause, reason for which it is only tangentially discussed from this perspective. According to activists' accounts, *foreign* media is more often used by them to voice their nationalism, to get the world attention and hence to put more pressure on the government to meet their own agenda (Interview with Li, 2014; Interview with Tong, 2014).

review, between top-down and bottom-up understandings of nationalism. Through state media discourse analysis and analysis of public official statements, a top-down portrayal of nationalism is recreated. To complement this view, a bottom-up perspective was provided by analysing the transcripts of interviews with non-state actors.

The last stage discusses the perceived effects of nationalism at the foreign policy level and at the domestic level. The effect of anti-foreign nationalism on foreign policy is difficult to measure due to the restricted access to policy makers. Instead of claiming to establish a causal-effect relation, this section assesses how various categories of actors *perceive* the effects of anti-Japanese nationalism on foreign policy. As for the effects of anti-Japanese nationalism at the domestic level, these can be identified in the norms created and imposed at the societal level. Nationalism becomes instrumental not only in the hands of the elites, but also in the hands of those society level actors who proudly call themselves Chinese "nationalists".

This five stage framework is used to analyse the Diaoyu/Senkaku case study during the 2010 and 2012 protests. Chapters 4, encompasses dormant nationalism and triggers of nationalism, Chapter 5 focuses on expressions of nationalism, Chapter 6 on contemporary portrayals of nationalism and Chapter 7 on the effects of nationalism on policy.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has offered a theoretical discussion of the notion of "nationalism" and its meaning in the Chinese context. The key debates in the literature have been raised mainly along the lines of whether (1) Chinese nationalism is historically and culturally embedded or it is the outcome of elites' manipulation, and whether (2) Chinese nationalism is on the rise. The current literature has a number of limitations, largely in the over-use of instrumentalist approach to understanding Chinese nationalism. Instead, this thesis opts for a more inclusive theoretical approach, in which "constructivist" primordialism and ethnosymbolism are given as much attention as instrumentalism. Theoretically, the thesis proposes bridging the gaps between these theories, particularly those between culture and history, and power, as well as those between emotion and reason. Practically, the thesis proposes an analytical framework that draws to a large extent on James Reilly's work and to a lesser extent on Jessica Weiss' work. The 2010 and 2012 anti-Japanese nationalism manifested in China is analysed in five stages. The first four stages: historical perspectives

of nationalism, triggers of nationalism, behavioural elements of nationalism and discussions of nationalism unpack the nature of nationalism in bottom-up and top-down perspectives, which are then analysed with the help of primordialism, ethnosymbolism and instrumentalism. The last empirical chapter on the perceived effects on policy selects elements from the three aforementioned theories to discuss both perceptions of human actors regarding foreign policy and cognitive structures regarding domestic societal expectations.

Chapter 3.

Methodology Chapter

This chapter introduces the research methodology used for analysing the formation of the dual nature of Chinese nationalism and its role in China's policy making. It starts by defining the methodological approach and by explaining how it guides data collection, data analysis and the development of theory. Subsequently, the use of case study and discourse analysis methods are expounded. The chapter ends with an evaluation of data and limitations that this research may face.

3.1. Methodological approach and its justification

The methodological approach is explained in two steps: case study design and case study selection.

Case study design

Case studies are widely used in social sciences as a "systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest" (Bromley, 1990, p. 302). A case study's "thick description", to use Clifford Geertz term (1973), permits a thorough analysis of the complex and particularistic nature of distinct phenomena. In order to do so, Easton (2010) recommends the usage of multiple sources of evidence. Sources characteristic to case studies are "interviews, observations, document and record analysis, work samples" (Gillham, 2000, p.13). Others like Yin (2009, p.13) point out the importance of "how" or/and "why" questions when investigating "contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident".

These criteria are met by the case study of the Sino-Japanese dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in 2010 and 2012, on which this thesis focuses. An exploratory and explanatory approach is taken into how anti-Japanese nationalism in China was constructed and manifested. Interviews and media analysis are the main methods used with the aim of analysing the phenomenon of "nationalism", that is the interaction between top-down and bottom-up forces. The research question is *What* is the nature of anti-Japanese nationalism in China?; but when unpacked, both "what" and "how" questions

are incorporated: *How* does the bottom-up nationalism manifest itself? *How* does the state respond to manifestations of nationalism, through *what* strategies does it direct nationalism? and *What* are the perceived effects of nationalism on policy? The "why" question is used to justify the "how" and "what" questions raised when appropriate, but does not take a front-seat in this research.

The single case study design of the Diaoyu/Senakaku islands was adopted for its uniqueness, revelatory and longitudinal features.[28] Prior to the 2010 and 2012 anti-Japanese events, only the 2005 anti-Japanese demonstrations sparked by history textbooks and Japan's bid to join the UN Security Council, were reported at length. The distinct nature of the anti-Japanese phenomenon in China is not well understood yet; thus, documenting this single case study "allow(s) researchers to immerse themselves in the uniqueness of real-life events" (Yanow, Schwartz-Shea and Freitas, 2008, p.3). Furthermore, by covering both the 2010 and 2012 events it is possible to run a longitudinal comparison, which helps account for change in the manifestations of anti-Japanese nationalism and the government's response to them. Last, "in a single case, it is both possible and necessary that a number of different causal explanations are put forward and researched. It is usually possible to collect data that enables the researcher to decide between alternatives" (Easton, 2010). The bottom-up and top-down approaches to nationalism taken in this thesis are two main explanatory alternatives investigated.

Case study analysis was conducted through qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews with activists, scholars, journalists and protesters. This would not have been possible without desk research, both before and during the fieldwork, on available primary and secondary data sources. Initial assumptions about potential findings were derived from secondary sources, which were dismissed or reinforced when discourse analysis was applied on primary sources such as *People's Daily*. Based on these assumptions and findings interview questions were drafted.

The collected data, both from media sources and interviews, was examined with the help of the computer assisted program for coding data, NVivo. This initially facilitated the coding process by automatically retrieving repetitive key words or themes throughout the articles. Writing memos and other annotations also helped identifying connections and keeping track of the

[28] Yin (2009, p.240) maintains that single case studies are relevant to analyse cases that may be extreme, typical, revelatory or longitudinal.

steps taken in the analytical process. The program proved particularly valuable when organising data, merging sub-themes into themes and quantifying words and idioms usage which otherwise may have been missed in the abundance of data. In addition, NVivo has assisted in representing fundamental constructs and themes as shown in the tabulated data and graphed findings. This contributed to an easier and more interactive presentation of data in the form of graphs, tree words and percentages.

Case study selection

The dispute between China and Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in 2010 and 2012 has been selected as the main case study for several reasons. The first and main reason took into account practical considerations; the case study provided new and rich data for analysis. The 2010 and 2012 dispute prompted extensive and lengthy anti-Japanese protests and boycotts, and anti-Japanese discussions in the media and online escalated. Citizens and elites participated together in anti-Japanese activities and discourse. 2005 also saw an outburst of anti-Japanese feelings, which offer good comparative material. All these provided rich data for analysis at a time when these events were still very recent and little had been written on them.

The second reason took into account several theoretical considerations which go hand in hand with the importance of the case study method in the context of Chinese studies and International Relations research. Given that Sino-Japanese relations are marked by historical grievances, which often involve sensitive sovereignty issues for the Chinese, the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands provided a good opportunity to investigate nationalism in relation to history and sovereignty. This link partly explains why manifestations of anti-Japanese nationalism in China erupted so strongly in 2010 at a point in time when bilateral relations were improving; it also provides grounds on which to question the previous prevailing assumption that such anti-Japanese reactions are largely directed by the elites. Anti-foreign and more specifically anti-Japanese nationalism in China is derived from historical events of territorial invasion, hence why it remains particularly sensitive to (perceived) territorial sovereignty infringement. As Suzuki notes, Japan as the "Other" augments China's self-perception of "victim" not only through their own shared history, but also in the wider context of China's interaction with the international society throughout the 19th and 20th century (2007, p.23); these interactions were marked by practices which often involved some form of territorial invasion. A simplistic way to illustrate this point is that the 2012 incident led to an eruption

of stronger national feelings than other past contentious issues between China and Japan such as the textbooks disputes[29], "comfort women" debates[30] and Yasukuni Shrine visits.[31]

The symbolism of territorial sovereignty is high in China and the perception of "weakness" by "giving in" to the other is important for both the Chinese and Japanese governments' legitimacy. It may also be controversial, but not unrealistic to claim that peaceful and stable domestic governance in both countries is dependent on their external relations with each other.

Territorial disputes not only capture the imagination of the public through historical lenses, but also through the interference of more actors in the dispute, as in the case of fishermen and activists who further intensify the conflict or fuel nationalism at home. As Jakobson (2012) aptly remarks: "outrage over Japanese history textbooks cannot ignite an armed conflict. But in the tense situation at present there is a genuine risk of a maritime incident". This small group of islets not only have a deep historical symbolism, but sit on natural resources and are strategically important. This has further complicated debates about the reasons behind both China and Japan's domestic agitation and their belligerent external actions in the region. After 2010, the conflict moved to a new level as it involved for the first time constant maritime deployment, and the US had become a more outspoken "observer" on the matter. A military incident could prove disastrous for China's domestic stability. This risk speaks to the importance of nationalism in policy making, raised as one of the subquestions of this thesis.

3.2. Discourse analysis

For this study, discourse analysis (DA) can provide a complex view on top-down nationalism. DA is applied on *People's Daily*, a national broadsheet and the mouth piece of the CCP; this analysis permits us to explain the

[29] The textbooks dispute started back in the 1980s when China accused Japan of "falsifying" history textbooks by not covering aspects such as the Mukden Incident, Nanjing Massacre and other war actions that would have shed a negative light on Japan.

[30] Comfort women is the name given to women who were forced into sexual slavery by the Imperial Japanese army mainly in China and Korea during World War II. Japan issued its first apology on the issue of comfort women in 1993 (MOFA, 1993), but some officials continue to deny it, while victims claim that "an apology unaccompanied (…) without a meaningful acknowledgement of responsibility also falls short" (Tolbert, n.d.).

[31] Yasukuni shrine is a controversial place because it includes war criminals who are worshipped along soldiers who have fallen in WWII; the Yasukuni Museum is also seen as highly biased through its positive presentation of Japan's history.

government's response to the anti-Japanese protests and the afferent manifestations of nationalism. In the sections that follows, DA is first defined, then justified as to why it is seen fit for the purpose of this research, before moving on to explain how discourse analysis is applied in this thesis.

DA justification

Discourse analysis is a research method extensively used in social sciences, hence the numerous different ways of defining and applying it. It generally examines and deconstructs the underlying meanings in discourses. According to Foucault (cited in Hall, 1992, p.291), a discourse is:

> [A] group of statements which provide a language for talking about - a way of representing - the knowledge about a particular topic at a particular historical moment...Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But...since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do - our conduct - all practices have a discursive aspect.

This definition already provides an initial hint into how discourses are created, by whom and for what purpose. Discourses exist and are embedded in various kinds of behaviour and individuals and regulations that go along with institutions such as media, politics, healthcare and others. Dominant discourses privilege those versions of social reality that legitimise existing power relations and social structures. Discourses are hence particularly important for those in a position of power because they are not only socially determined, but they also have social effects (Fairclough, 1989, p.19). Foucault, for example, remarks on the power of discourses to regulate people's conduct (cited in Hall, 1992). This perspective on discursive functions is extremely helpful in understanding whether the Chinese government framed the discourses in a way that encouraged people's participation to protests and boycotts; or on the contrary, textual absences deterred or tempered at least public manifestations?

Besides, discursive power does not only regulate or constrain behaviour, but also produces reality, domains of objects and rituals of truth. Discursive constructs should not be mistaken for independent individual interpretation of reality since they are "already a part of the wider cultural repertoire of discursive explanations, resources and maps of meaning available to members of cultures" (Wittgenstein cited in Barker and Galasinski, 2001, p.35). Wodak

et al. (2009, p.29) also point out that discursive practice is "a special form of social practice [which] plays a central part both in the formation and in the expression of national identity"; here national identity is defined as the "state, political, institutional, media and everyday social practices, and the material and social conditions which emerge as their results, to which the individual is subjected". If discourses are determined socially and construct reality and identity, then they can also shape people's memories (Fairclough, 1989, p.20). Reality and historical memory can be socially constructed through discourse.

A last function of discourses relevant to this thesis is summarised by Van Dijk (2006, p.115):

> The ideological polarization between in-groups and outgroups […] may also be systematically studied at all levels of text and talk, e.g. by analysing how members of in-groups typically emphasize their own good deeds and properties and the bad ones of the outgroup, and mitigate or deny their own bad ones and the good ones of the outgroup.

"[T]he Chinese nation in its confrontation with an invading imperialist Other" can lead to "a united social order" within China (Shih, 1998, pp.402-403). In the binary opposition of China-Other, where Japan is the "other"-ised front runner, this polarisation function is significantly relevant.[32]

Through the multiple functions that discourses have it becomes apparent why discourses are so informative in understanding Chinese nationalism; re-constructing reality, recollecting memories and maintaining social polarisations inform and guide behaviour, which explains why discourses are ideologically "the key mechanism of rule by consent" (Fairclough, 1989, p.28). Discursive functions are more trenchant in the context of media discourses, particularly in a non-democratic state where "the capacity of powerholders to exercise power depends on systemic tendencies in news reporting and other media activities" (Fairclough cited in Baker, 2006, p.72).

3.2.1. DA - material selection

[32] The US also remains a powerful "other" for China, both when considered on its own and in partnership with Japan. The CASS President and Central Committee member Chen Kuiyuan made clear China's view of the US who "will not give up their strategy of trying to contain China's sustainable development (…) it would be wishful thinking to believe, that by partnering with a neo-imperialist United States, Washington would leave China alone" (Chase, 2011, p.5). For more details on the Chinese public perception of the US see Chapter 4.

In order to get a top-down understanding of anti-Japanese nationalism in China, a close reading of Chinese diplomatic and official papers, press and verbal communication enables one to discern the perceptions of Chinese leaders (Liao K. and Whiting, 1973). Public statements can hence provide an idea about Chinese policies (Kane, 2004, p.101). However, what is said or published publicly may be designed to mislead and thus analysis on this type of data was carefully triangulated.

A comprehensive view of anti-Japanese nationalism in 2010 and 2012, required a large number of data was required to cover the entire period of the protests. A media source was most likely to provide the data required. In a non-democratic state, the importance of media is high because "the stake is more than 'mere words'; it is controlling the contours of the political world, it is legitimising policy, and it is sustaining power relations" (Fairclough, 1989, p.74). Thus, *People's Daily,* the Party's newspaper, is selected as the main source of analysis. First, the newspaper describes itself as "the most influential and authoritative newspaper in China" (People's Daily, n.d.) and it is considered to be "the single location where the central government and the Communist Party of China announce their respective policies and disseminate governmental, political, and economic messages to the public and the world" (Liu W., 2014, p.102). The newspaper was founded in 1948 and ever since has projected the viewpoint of the CCP, being considered a "barometer of the political climate of Chinese politics" (Liu W., 2014, p.102). Second, *People's Daily* has always had and continues to have the largest daily circulation of nearly 2.5 million copies (BBC, 2013a), at least according to official Chinese data. It also offers a wide coverage of events due to its association and partnership with *Xinhua*, the state news agency.

DA was conducted mainly on articles from the Chinese edition of *People's Daily* and secondarily from its English edition. The English edition was occasionally included in the analysis in order to provide a point of comparison, based on the assumption that the two editions are likely to purposefully convey different messages for their respective audiences, domestic and foreign. The articles were selected on the basis that they reported on the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute and the consequent anti-Japanese protests. The articles date from September to October 2010 and from August to September 2012. In September 2010 Sino-Japanese tensions grew after a Chinese trawler collided with a Japanese ship in the waters surrounding the disputed islands, which led to the arrest of the Chinese ship and its crew. In October 2010, demonstrations re-ignited across several cities in China. Anti-Japanese feelings peaked at

different times throughout these two months. During August 2012 only small demonstrations took place in response to two Japanese ministers and Abe's, then leader of the opposition, visit to Yasukuni Shrine. Shortly after, the Japanese Coast Guard arrested 14 pro-China activists after landing on the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. These events were only the incipient stage of the anti-Japanese protests that were to follow in September and spread across the country when Japan announced the nationalisation of the islands. The August and September 2012 incidents provide insights into the government management of the issue before and after Japan's nationalisation of the islands, and showed how momentum built up for large anti-Japanese manifestations.

The articles were collected using the online archive of *People's Daily*. The online platform was used to retrieve articles in their original print form; seeing the position of the news in the newspaper, and the presence or absence of the accompanying images was revealing to the importance attached to the topic. The key word used to conduct the search was "Diaoyu" under the time parameters of September-October 2010 and August-September 2012. Accompanied by a native Mandarin speaker, the researcher went through each article retrieved. Only those articles which directly addressed the Diaoyu/Senkaku island dispute from 2010 and 2012 were selected for analysis. Articles which only referred to the islands dispute in one line in the context of a different topic were excluded. As a result of this 87 articles were selected from the Chinese edition and 106 from the English edition of *People's Daily*. The articles selected from the Chinese edition were then passed on to a Chinese translator. Later on, all articles were coded first by hand and then by using NVivo; approximately ten categories emerged after coding the data. Some categories were further merged and led to several themes, which are analysed in detail in Chapter 5 and 6.

Discourse analysis was also applied on interviews conducted with Chinese scholars, activists and protesters. Due to the choice of running semi-structured interviews, for the reasons explained in the section on "Interview – format", it was more difficult to apply discourse analysis with the same high level of accuracy as in the case of media articles. Nevertheless, DA allowed the identification of several themes that were pervasive in most interviews. Subsequently, this enabled the comparison of themes popular in state media with those in academic and activist circles.

3.2.2. DA - format

In order to uncover the functions and power of media discourse, a systematic analysis of media text was required. Discourse analysis was used in this thesis following the steps proposed by Parker (1992):

(1) Identify types of topics and themes, both direct and indirect references, as well as items that are missed out but one expects to hear about
(2) Take into account that discourses are historically and culturally situated, but it still asks questions over how they arose, how they came to be and what institutions or actors were associated with their growth to prominence
(3) Analyse the way in which discursive constructions are used – for what purpose, by whom, to whose advantage and to whose disadvantage
(4) Examine the people and activities that discourses talk about, as well as the directions or inferences for the kind of actions that these discourses allow or prohibit

Since discourse analysis does not imply a rigorous linguistics and semiotics analysis as *critical* discourse analysis does (Fairclough, 1989), only a few grammatical elements were scrutinised: adjectives and verbs, which may indicate a strong and/or polarised discourse. Additionally, the ways in which professional media practices assist with the presentation of dominant discourses (e.g. editorial constraints, journalistic standards) were considered, especially given the extent of Chinese state control over media.

Overall, discourse analysis is mainly applied to *People's Daily,* the mouthpiece of the CCP, to expose one side of the key concept of the thesis "the dual nature of nationalism" - the top-down, instrumental perspective. DA is useful for understanding: 1) how China portrays nationalism, itself and Japan, and 2) how the Chinese government manages nationalist manifestations.

3.3. Interviews and secondary sources

If discourses analysis applied on state media provided the top-down perspective on nationalism, interviews and other secondary sources provided the bottom-up perspective; in this way, interviews addressed the other half of the dual construction and understanding of nationalism.

3.3.1. Interviews - justification

Ontologically, "people's knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interaction are meaningful properties of the social reality" (Manson, 2002, p.63) and can be accessed through interviews. Through the nature of the topic of this thesis, which holds at its centre the concept and social phenomenon of "nationalism", interviews are an essential source of information.

Interviews permit the analysis of the bottom-up approach to nationalism, that is, primarily the formation of nationalism as experienced and understood by protestors and activist; it is these types of actors who are outspoken speakers and active participants to an event that can trigger change. Because of the fairly low number of interviews with protesters and activists that were not evenly spread geographically, generalisation of representativeness cannot be made. However, these interviews were complemented by surveys and opinion polls, which indicate the beliefs and attitudes of public opinion. Surveys suggest that a large part of the population is interested and holds a strong opinion on the Diaoyu/Senkaku island issue and on Japan in general.

Academics, researchers, intellectuals and journalists also represent a large part of the interviewees pool, but their position is more complicated due to their affiliation to governmental bodies and cannot be simply divided between state actors and non-state actors or bottom-up and top-down forces (a more detailed discussion on the topic can be found in Chapter 6). They may sometimes express their own views or that of the institutions that they work for.

These actors all contribute in different ways to defining nationalism and shaping the way it manifests itself. Their influence over "negotiations" on the meaning or form that nationalism may take is not always visible and direct, but the participation in debates and the proposition and circulation of different ideas matter as much as actions.

3.3.2. Interviews – sampling

Interviewees were initially selected based on purposive sampling strategies and then by the snowballing method. The purposive sampling strategy is based on the pre-defined criteria for the selection of qualitative samples, that is, the selection of participants with shared knowledge or experience of the particular phenomena. The snowballing technique in which existing interviewees recommend other potential interviewees among their acquaintances also played an important role in this research. China in particular

is known for *"guanxi"*- a network of relationships providing support and cooperation to parties involved in any type of business. Access to some interviewees was achieved through the network built while on fieldwork in China, through the status of visiting scholar at Fudan University for over a month in May 2015, and of student of University of Nottingham with a campus in Ningbo.

The sample of interviewees included 20 academics and researchers, six activists, four journalists and 11 students and protesters (see List of Interviews, p.251). Interviewees were initially selected on the basis that they have taken part in, observed, covered or researched the anti-Japanese manifestations of nationalism over the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. Chinese academics from some of China's most prestigious universities were interviewed, including Peking University and China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing, and Fudan University in Shanghai. However, this initial selection criterion was sometimes extended, for instance, to academics who may not have focused their research particularly on the Diaoyu/Senkaku case or Sino-Japanese relations, but who work for institutional research centres or groups affiliated with public authorities, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and may hold specific policy making information. Regardless of their personal research focus, most Chinese academics express interest in Sino-Japanese relations and are astute observers of Japanese history and contemporary politics. Interviews with academics were particularly important not only for understanding the street manifestations of anti-Japanese feelings, but for gaining a wider sense of the "nationalist palette".

For similar reasons as those exposed above, journalists from *People's Daily*, as well as other Chinese and foreign journalists who write for Chinese newspapers were interviewed, regardless of whether they covered or dealt directly with the Diaoyu/Senkaku case study. Moreover, Chinese journalists, through the nature of their employment contract, are often forbidden from talking to foreigners about media protocols in China, so the circle of journalists that were going to grant me interviews had to be expanded. Gaining insights into the selection of "permissible" topics of research and the writing and editing processes involved in a media organisation was particularly important in evaluating the sensitivity of the Chinese government to Japan and social protests related topics.

The independent activists were selected from those who were involved in Diaoyu/Senkaku nationalist projects, largely from two partially overlapping organisations, China Federation of Protecting Diaoyudao (*Zhongguo Minhian*

Baowei Diaoyutai Lianhehui) and The China Federation of Civil Claims against Japan (*Zhongguo Minjian Duiri Suopei Lianhehui*). These organisations have been active since the beginning of the 1990s and have initiated and have been involved in a number of projects focused on Japan. The China Federation of Protecting Diaoyudao, in particular, has organised numerous protests, collected signatures for petitions, lobbied the government and sailed to the disputed islands. It is one of the most well-known non-government affiliated organisations in the field. In order to complement the activists' narratives, other street and online protesters and boycotters who participated in the events surrounding the Diaoyu/Senkaku events in 2010 and 2012 were also interviewed. Several Chinese students based in China and abroad were interviewed for gathering additional information into how the incidents developed.

All the respondents were contacted through academic links facilitated by the University or networks built over time, through friends who work at different institutions in China or through direct contact. All interviewees have offered their cooperation in accordance to ethical guidelines required by the University of Nottingham. In most cases the forms of consent were emailed along with the request for the interview, in both Chinese and English; only in three instances where communication took place via social networks, consent was requested at the time of contact. In a number of instances, interviewees preferred not to be identified and parts of the interviews were off-record.

Most interviews took place face-to-face, between June and August 2014 and again in June 2015 in Beijing, Shanghai and Henan Province. Protests were reported in all the three places and in Henan the researcher personally knew a network of people who actively participated in the protests. Offices, neutral locations and personal homes were the locations chosen by the interviewees.

A Chinese interpreter was present for all interviews conducted in Chinese. In most cases, the interviewees had limited speaking skills in English, but moderate listening skills which enabled them to intervene when they considered quality fell short of adequate interpretation. In other cases, the interviewees brought their own interpreters. In the few remaining cases, interviews were recorded and when in doubt I double checked the recording with the interpreter or even another native Mandarin speaker.

3.3.3. Interviews - format

Interviews can take many formats, but qualitative semi-structured interviews were selected for the purpose of this thesis. By not using a rigidly structured interview format, characterised by a set question format and questions order, semi-structured interviews allow for the "personalisation" of the interviews as the interviewer works "with a list of information required from each respondent" (Richardson et al., 1965, p.45). In return, the interviewee is provided with a substantial degree of freedom and of leading the interview, which gives "maximum opportunity for the construction of contextual knowledge" (Mason, 2002, p.64). And since interviewees are seen as subjects who continuously construct their world, authentic data is expected to be generated too (Silverman, 1993, p.116); rich descriptions of how they see the world and interpret events are expected. In this way the researcher gets the flexibility of digging deeper into unanticipated views that the interview might open up. For this reason, most of the questions had an open format. Such format can also challenge pre-conceptions that the researcher might have held prior to the interview and may open up new avenues of research.

Two other advantages deserve mention. First, semi-structured interviews are advantageous because epistemologically one can seek and generate data by talking interactively with respondents and to access their interpretation of their inner and external world. On the one hand, external reality refers to finding out what really happened, factually. In the Diaoyu/Senkaku case this can be exemplified by looking at the process of the protests per se and at the authorities' attitude manifested in various ways - the warnings or encouragements that the protesters received on their mobile phones, online or verbally, from various state agents and institutions. On the other hand, semi-structured interviews also amply report on internal reality, that is the motivations for taking part in protests, the meaning of nationalism in relation to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands for each person in part, the goals they hoped to achieve. Given that this thesis seeks to capture both internal and external worlds of the bottom-up nationalism, a social explanation and argument can be provided only through the richness of the data obtained through semi-structured interviews.

A second advantage of semi-structured interviews is that the interviewer can afford to establish and develop a good rapport with the respondents "who are more likely to come clean [cleaner] about sensitive issues" (Denzin, 1970, p.33). This is relevant specifically in the Chinese context, where the topic of nationalism and the government's response to it remain sensitive. Carrying out interviews on such topics requires establishing trust and a comfortable

situational context if access beyond "the façade" is to be gained. Running iterative interviews and snowball sampling helped earning some degree of trust among participants. For example, one of the key members of the Diaoyu Movement organisation was interviewed three times; also, most of the interviews with activists were secured through the snowball effect, by moving from one interviewee to another based on recommendations. In certain cultural circumstances, as it is the case of China, a good rapport can also be built by starting the interview on an informal note in which personal information are exchanged, and by being a sympathetic listener who avoids putting the interviewee in a critically defensive position. My personal identity as a Romanian, placed me in a neutral, even positive, position vis-à-vis the Chinese interviewees; this is likely due to the close relations that the Communist Romanian regime had with China pre-1989.

3.3.4. Ethical considerations in interviews

Two main ethics principles were taken into account when conducting this research: deontological ethics and consequentialist ethics. Deontological ethics "focus on the inherent rights of research participants, such as the right to privacy, the right to respect or the right to self-determination" (Murphy and Dingwall, 2007, p.239). Some of these principles are known as Kant's moral imperatives. For example, respect requires one to "act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means" (Kant, 1996, p.429). In this sense any distress, anxiety and embarrassment were sought to be avoided in all instances. Self-determination, or autonomy of participants and their decisions, from which principles of privacy and confidentiality are derived, were fully respected. Participants in this research were clearly informed about the content of the study and about the option of withdrawing from research at any moment.

Consequentialist ethical concerns, or the rightness or wrongness of the consequences of the researchers' actions, in the Chinese case and they have to be seriously taken into account. Topics related to the protests, Japan and the government's responses to it, just to name a few, are still delicate, while others are still restricted (Smith, 2004). Thus, special care was given to the protection of the respondents and the researcher alike and several measures were taken to ensure this. For instance, interview records and personal information were protected by encrypted audio files once downloaded

from the digital recorder, and a laptop accessible only by password. Data was securely archived and names were coded in transcripts and documents where sensitive issues arose and particularly where anonymity was requested by the interviewee. Chinese interpreters signed a confidentiality form designed by the researcher and were also verbally reminded, before and after the interviews, that they are bound by professional confidentiality, which also pertains to any materials received beforehand.

3.3.5. Secondary sources

In addition to *People's Daily* and interviews, a number of other sources, largely media and academic sources, were used. Media sources were used for two reasons. First, they provided rich details and multiple narratives over the islands dispute from 2010 and 2012. They reported, for instance, interviews with protesters and experts, observations from the ground and online comments analysis, all of which created a larger collection of materials that allowed the construction of a wider picture of the events. Second, by means of comparison with *People's Daily* content, the strategies employed by the Chinese propaganda and censorship system were identified.

Japanese newspapers such as *Asahi Shimbun* and *Yomiuri Shimbun* were used as sources because they were likely to provide wide coverage of events in which Japan played a central role. *Asahi* and *Yomiuri* are the two most popular newspapers in Japan with left wing, respectively right wing tendencies; by considering them both problems of media bias were minimised. The *BBC* known for its immediate coverage from correspondents based abroad provided a more impartial account of events than the Chinese or Japanese sources. The events surrounding the Diaoyu/Senkaku conflict were reconstructed by triangulating Chinese, Japanese and other foreign media sources. Sometimes articles were retrieved through Lexis Nexis, a monitoring news service, while at other times the online archive of the newspapers was used. Based on the same criteria used for the selection of articles from *People's Daily*, a sample of articles was selected from the same period also from Chinese regional newspapers across the country; the articles were retrieved with the use of the CNKI engine which includes any news, official documents and academic documents published in a print or online format. All these sources were indispensable in completing the picture of Chinese anti-Japanese nationalism.

Of course, among these primary source materials, i.e. media articles and interviews, on which the thesis relies heavily, academic books and journals also remained essential. Books from the fields of history, sociology and politics varying from Sino-Japanese ties to contending theories of nationalism set the initial background of this research. Other sources included: working papers and conference papers; White Papers, reports and official documents; and documents and petitions obtained from activists. All these sources expanded the understanding of the nationalism puzzle raised in this thesis.

3.4. Evaluating data

Qualitative methods are widely criticised for their lack of validity. This section highlights the difficulties encountered and the way in which they were overcome when evaluating data. It starts by taking on the concept of "validation" in the findings resulted from discourse analysis and in interviews. It then moves to a more general discussion of the "validity" of the entire research design.

Validation is the process of evaluating "the 'trustworthiness' of reported observations, interpretations, and generalizations" (Mishler, 1990, p.419). The drawbacks of using DA arise mainly from its interpretative nature, hence criticism of subjectivity and misinterpretations is widespread. However, DA does not make claims of truth, nor does it seek absolute accuracy. As long as it justifies "why certain interpretations of discursive events seem more valid than others" (Wodak, 2001, p.65), DA can be a valuable tool in elucidating hidden agendas and ideology in discourses. The "trustworthiness" of the findings from discourse analysis were enhanced through the wide number of articles analysed and by applying a systematic double-checked coding process. The articles were first coded by hand and afterwards were imported to NVivo. Once in NVivo the coding was re-done and then checked again before finalising the findings.

Critics of semi-structured interviews question the interview format on two grounds. First, critics shed doubt over the possibility of reconstructing external realities, meaning the true version of events, as they are seen as a collection of subjective views. A second issue appears in the social interaction within the interview that Dingwall (1997, p.56) calls "a dance of expectations". This refers to expectations, both on the part of interviewer and interviewee, that each of their actions and accounts are understood in the way they were

meant. The understanding is shaped by the expectation of what he/she would find normal in that specific context; this can continue until the parties realise that their communication is fractured by misunderstandings which, if identified, will require revisiting parts of the interviews, otherwise it risks leading to false accounts.

In response to critics, the "trustworthiness" of interview findings was ascertained by ensuring that several steps were taken. Interviews were recorded where allowed and transcripts were double-checked by interpreters. Interviews were quite lengthy and participants generally had sufficient time to offer thick descriptions and explanations to clarify meaning; they also had the opportunity to listen or view the interview on request or to retract content on the spot and/or later via email. More importantly, data was triangulated - "soliciting data from multiple and different sources as a means of cross-checking and corroborating evidence and illuminating a theme or a theory" (Rudestam, 2007, p.114). Qualitative data from different interviewees was compared, and pitted against, where possible, secondary data collected from documents and surveys. In several instances, where information provided off-the record in interviews was impossible to check, it was eventually dropped. Data triangulation proved particularly helpful in "purifying" the data selection and hence increasing its "trustworthiness".[33]

3.5. Limitations

While planning and conducting fieldwork in China, several limitations were encountered. A general limitation to research conducted in China is that data provided by the Chinese authorities is sometimes questionable, or not published. Finding demographic data on *People's Daily's* audience or an official

[33] Based on King, Keohane and Verba's (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry Research*, there are three main types of validation, internal, construct and external validity, to which a study should be subject to. *Internal validity* is concerned with justifying causal relationships and it only applies to explanatory and not to descriptive or exploratory case studies; for this reason, it is not particularly relevant to the research questions of this study. *Construct validity* deals with concept operationalisation. The concept operationalised in this thesis is "nationalism" and is defined and analysed systematically with the help of the 5-step analytical framework proposed. *External validity* refers to the generalisation of the findings of the study to another one which is generally judged by similarities between social conditions, time and place. However, qualitative research in general and single case study design in particular, investigate a specific phenomenon or issue within it, hence generalisations do not follow naturally. At most, researchers can expand and generalise theories (Yin, 2009, p. 10). Alternatively, systematic sampling, triangulation and constant comparisons with similar phenomena can be used (Leung, 2015). These three criteria were considered in this research as it has already been discussed in this chapter in the selection of interviewees, the triangulation of primary with secondary data, and the usage of 2005 anti-Japanese protests as a point of reference and comparison where adequate.

estimate number of anti-Japanese protesters, just to give one example, was not easy or credible. The lack of certain data did not obstruct fieldwork, nor did it eschew the findings, as data was cross-checked or dropped on a case by case basis.

Another expected and encountered limitation was the restrained access to officials, which is common among scholars working in the field of Chinese studies. Running fieldwork in the midst of Xi Jinping's cleansing campaign affected a large number of interviewees who were reluctant and less likely to discuss topics considered "sensitive". The anti-corruption campaign affected the lives of not only highly placed officials, but also of lower strata employees. Even discussing events related to Japan and 2-3 years prior to the interview time, made people cautious. In some instances, several academics and journalists expressed concern after the interview and asked for anonymity and part of the interview to become off the record. Likewise, focus groups were planned but due to concerns expressed by potential participants, they were not organised in the end. Focus groups were supposed to take place in the provinces of Shandong, Hebei and Henan where large protests took place; it was probably not coincidental as these areas suffered the most under the Japanese army and presumably collective memories were stronger there than in other parts of the country. Research difficulties arose from the moment contact was made online or via phone with some of the potential interviewees; in Shandong, for instance, even if the contact was made through a trustworthy common acquaintance, interviews were refused. In other instances, contact was attempted with student unions, particularly from universities in Beijing and Shanghai known for students' movements, but it was to no avail as emails remained unanswered and calls were not returned. Finally, some interviews were organised and snippets of information were collected, but this was a setback in comparison to the initial plan of getting a more wholesome picture of bottom-up anti-Japanese manifestations. Running focus groups in various provinces would have created the possibility of having a richer province based comparative analysis.

The limited access to some interviewees rang alarm bells about the encroachment of freedom of speech, but it did not cause significant doubt on the veracity of the information provided by other interviewees. Perhaps surprisingly, there is no clear research indicating that the fear of political persecution in China has a consequential impact on how respondents answer to political questions (Chen J., 2004, p.36). If anything, it was more common to have the sense that information was being withheld, rather than the sense

of being purposefully misled; at worst, this would limit, rather than eschew the findings.

Another difficulty that appeared during data collection stemmed from retrospectively assessing *retrospective* perceptions of events from 2010 and 2012; due to the similarity of the two Diaoyu/Senkaku events in manifestations of nationalism and sometimes in government's responses too, interviewees sometimes could not differentiate them in detail. When confusions arose, data had to be triangulated in order to reduce the potential for error. This also meant that a clear 2010 and 2012 comparative analysis was not always possible across the chapters.

An additional limitation is my lack of fluency in Mandarin, as a researcher, and the use of interpreters and translators, which may have affected to a minimal degree the current findings. In total, four interpreters were commissioned, two in each of my fieldwork trips; the long distance between Beijing and Shanghai where most interviews took place made it difficult to use the services of the same interpreter. However, several preventive steps mitigated the impact of using different interpreters on the quality of data gathering. Most interviews were done with the assistance of interpreters, while the rest were conducted in English. Where interpreters were used, subjectivity and bias in questions and answers may have appeared at times. However, even when recording the interviews, both the interpreter and I took notes which we compared at the end of the session. I transcribed the interviews and when necessary and the recorded version of the interview was available, I re-listened to it and made the necessary alterations. Transcripts were also checked by interpreters. In several other instances where uncertainty still loomed, the interviewee was contacted via email for clarifications. From a different perspective, interpreters were helpful in leading the way into protocols and cultural norms. Gaining the trust of the interviewee, given the presence of the Chinese interpreter, was sometimes eased and sometimes worsened. The interpreters' credentials were at times carefully questioned by interviewees and defended by me, while at other times my own credentials were questioned and had to be defended by the interpreters. Trust depended on nationality and/or personality and had to be taken into account in order to conduct successful interviews.

Regarding the media materials, articles in Mandarin were selected together with a native Mandarin speaker based in the UK, and then they were sent for translation. I commissioned one translator to carry out most of the translation work on the articles selected from *People's Daily.* In December 2015

the same translator selected and translated news from regional newspapers retrieved via CNKI, under precise instructions, a database I did not have access to. Even if occasional mistranslations appear, they do not pose serious threats to the results of the research. This is first due to the format of the discourse analysis applied on the media materials, which unlike critical discourse analysis, for instance, does not focus on linguistic particularities; instead, it looks mainly for repetitive notions which can be coded into themes or omissions of expected themes.

A general limitation of qualitative research is also worth mentioning: the personal and emotional bias of the researcher. Both the collection and analysis of data raise questions over the neutrality of the researcher. The researcher as self cannot allow him/herself to follow Francis Bacon's epigraph "de nobis ipsis silemus [we are silent concerning ourselves]", through the process of reflexivity it has to remove subjectivity about assumptions, feelings, choices, experiences and actions. By making conscious analytical choices, personal bias can be minimised (Galasinski, 1997).

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has introduced and discussed the choice of single case study design and selection as represented by the 2010 and 2012 Sino-Japanese disputes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and the afferent manifestations of nationalism in China. It has first explained why applying discourse analysis on articles from *People's Daily* was a suitable method for this study. Official discourses expressed through media means are significantly powerful in conveying tailored messages to audiences, especially in times of crisis. It has, therefore, highlighted the importance of discursive messages and of unpacking them systematically through a format that allows access into top-down perspectives of nationalism.

In the second part of the chapter, the focus concentrated mainly on primary sources of information. A series of interviews have been conducted to learn more about researchers, journalists, protesters and activist's views of nationalism, of Sino-Japanese relations and of Diaoyu/Senkaku disputes. Based on semi-structured formats, the reason for the usage of interviews as sources of information was justified in terms of its dual approach to nationalism, from both bottom-up and top-down perspectives. An acknowledgment of the limitations faced while drawing the methodological lines of this project and

while running fieldwork during tumultuous times in China, and the ways in which they were overcome concluded the current chapter.

The following chapter, represents the first empirical chapter of this thesis and discusses in detail the anti-Japanese nationalism in China throughout the last century and the triggers of nationalism that made possible the manifestations seen in 2010 and 2012.

Chapter 4.

Dormant nationalism and further triggers

"We are born in history. This is an attempt to escape it...
What I forget comes back to me in dreams.
Cuts me open like a knife...
Mother? Motherland? Comrade."

(Theatre Play cited in Schwarcz, 1994, p.64)

China and Japan's thriving economic and cultural exchanges at both governmental and non-governmental levels have not altered nationalist feelings towards Japan significantly. Japan's exports to China hit a new record high in 2014 (Masaki, 2015), coming second after the US, while Japan's imports are predominantly from China (JETRO, 2015; OEC, 2013). In 2014, Japan's tourism industry was swamped by a record high number of Chinese tourists of a 140 percent year-on-year increase (Kennedy and Ruan, 2015) and over 60 percent of Japan's international students are Chinese (Clavel, 2014). There is also a surging number of various Sino-Japanese NGOs which are expected to improve bilateral relations (Vyas, 2011, p.137). The list of such positive trends go on, but they only tell half the story. At the same time as these positive indicators, never before have people in both China and Japan held such negative views of each other (see Fig. 4.1). The other half of the story lies in history and more recent events that triggered a new wave of anti-Japanese feelings in China.

Yongnian Zheng argues that one has to "dig in" to the origins of Chinese nationalism to understand it (1999). Why? Because history is key in the formation of ethnicity and nationalism. When looking at China's history at the *fin de siècle*, embroiled in wars with foreign powers, the Chinese had to readjust their self-perception of cultural supremacy and their perception of others. Deprived of its territories and humiliated, threat perceptions created both group cohesion and negative ascriptions for the "other" (Hale, 2004, p.469). Japan's lengthy presence on the Chinese territory from 1931-1945 transformed it into the main "other against which the Chinese people defined their identities" (Shirk, 2007, p.154). The "lineation of an ingroup which must necessarily entail the delineation from a number of outgroups" is part of the ongoing process of identity formation (Neuman, 1996, p.142). These feelings of nationalism were already starting to unify and bind pockets of the Chinese population, before the

CCP tapped into it. Identity is based not solely on history, but also on the continuous interaction between social groups "us" and "them" (Barth, 1969, p.198) which has not been all positive for China and Japan in the years that followed the war up until today and hence "the othering" has not lessened. Today some sense of threat remains, partially based on the past and on current interactions, and partially based on a state instrumentalised nationalism.

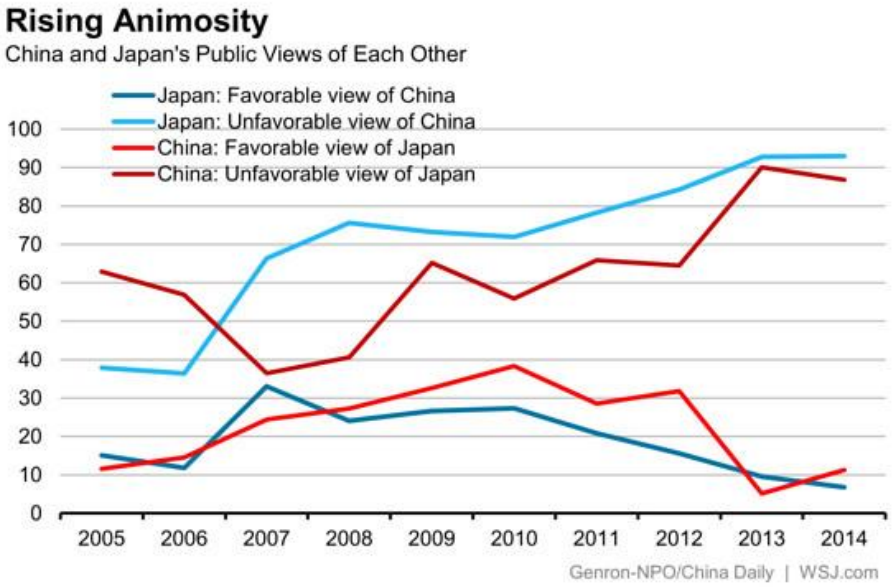

Figure 4.1: Rising animosity (Fujikawa, 2014).

Rising animosities may not necessarily equate to a rising nationalism though and are likely to be influenced by crisis in bilateral relations, underpinned by deeper historical roots and domestic triggers. As Johnston's recent study shows, Chinese nationalism appears constant rather than rising as many tend to suggest (2017)[34]. However, while the trend of "Perceptions of Chinese Identity Difference with Japanese People" has remained steady from 2000 to 2015, the "Percentage of Respondents Perceiving Maximum Negative Difference with Japanese People" increased over 2000s and levelled off post-2010 (2017, p.24). The lack of decline in animosity still requires the same questions to be addresses – what explains the formation, construction and maintenance of the anti-Japanaese nationalism in China?

This chapter expands on the first two stages of the analytical framework: historical perspectives and triggers of nationalism, behavioural

[34] The study is based on a Beijing sample only.

manifestations of nationalism, contemporary discussions of nationalism and effects of nationalism on areas of domestic and foreign policy. The structure of the chapter is split accordingly. The first part provides a historical perspective of the role of Japan, including the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, in the formation of Chinese nationalism. The second section explains the triggers that led to an increase in the intensity of Chinese nationalism, in relation to both the 2010 and 2012 incidents surrounding the disputed islands.

The first section of this chapter aims at explaining the role that Japan played in the formation of Chinese nationalism by tracing the history of the Sino-Japanese conflict. The question addressed is: "How was anti-Japanese nationalism formed and constructed, from the First Sino-Japanese War until today, especially from the 1990s to 2012?". An overview of 1894-1949 is relevant in appreciating that anti-Japanese feelings existed long before the CCP took power. After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) by the CCP in 1949, Sino-Japanese relations often fluctuated and so did the CCP's attitude towards Japan. It was only in the 1990s that China began to be more commonly labelled "anti-Japan" particularly due to Jiang Zemin's launch of a new educational campaign (Zhu, 2008, p.183). However, anti-Japanese nationalism is not a new phenomenon in China. It has long been "dormant" and part of the wider narrative of anti-foreign nationalism before it took a new turn in the 1990s when Japan became a prominent part of the rhetoric. Therefore, the entire period from the end of the 19th century up until today is worth investigating for understanding the twists and turns of anti-Japanese nationalism in China.

The chapter's narrative of "dormant nationalism" is continued in the second part by focusing on the domestic and external conditions in which nationalism bloomed in 2010 and 2012. Undoubtedly the collision between the Chinese fishing trawler and the Japanese Coast Guard in 2010 and the nationalisation of the islands by Japan in 2012 were trigger points in their own right, but why did they lead to such an eruption of animosities and manifestations? Based on the literature several triggers of nationalism are addressed, among which are China's economic and military development, and China's own perceptions of fear.

4.1. Historical perspectives

Many studies and articles regard Chinese nationalism, including attitudes towards Japan, as a recently manufactured phenomenon to serve the interests of the Party. Carlson (2009, p.23) critically remarks:

> Virtually every study of Chinese nationalism published over the last decade has agreed that on the heels of the suppression of the student-led protest movement in the spring of 1989, and the subsequent collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Beijing intentionally worked to manufacture a particular strand of nationalist sentiment that positions the CCP in the role of rescuing China from its past humiliations.

These studies are problematic because they overlook the older roots of anti-Japanese nationalism and its significance among the people prior to the Chinese government's "instrumentalisation" of nationalism. Furthermore, elites as well as the masses, are restricted by their national identities; they operate in a historical and social framework which is not completely of their own making, hence they cannot be said to be solely influenced by their interests.

The three sections that follow provide a provisional temporal and historical benchmark for Chinese nationalism towards Japan from the turn of the 19th century until today by taking into account both historical facts and narratives, state-led campaigns and the masses' contributions to nationalism.

4.1.1. Nationalism and Sino-Japanese relations pre-CCP

China's downfall was complete in the last years of the 19th century when Japan defeated the Qing dynasty and forced it into accepting the Shimonoseki Treaty of 1895. The Treaty, involved territorial concessions to Japan, including Taiwan, the Liaodong peninsula and a number of islands in the East China Sea. In the years that followed, the weakened Qing dynasty was removed from power through the 1911 revolution which temporarily transformed China into a Republic. Sun Yat-sen (1924), the leader of the revolution, emphasised the importance of Chinese nationalism and called for the rise of national consciousness and the removal of all forms of imperialistic invasion.

In 1915, in the context of WWI and an incipient Chinese Republic, a feeble Chinese government unable to oppose its more powerful neighbour, succumbed into accepting 21 Demands, which provided Japan with numerous privileges. Among the demands, yet again, new territories were relinquished to

Japan, including Eastern Inner Mongolia, Southern Manchuria and Shandong, the latter of which had been seized from Germany. This time, these demands contributed significantly to the build-up of anti-Japanese feeling; they also activated a mass emigration of Chinese students from Japan, whose return to their homeland increased bitterness towards Japan (Hunter, 2014, p.53). In 1917 China declared war on Germany, hoping to claim back Shandong after the war and to invalidate Japan's 21 Demands. In 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles, China, despite being on the winning side, felt betrayed by the Allies, which agreed to transfer the jurisdiction of Shandong province from Germany to Japan. US President Wilson admitted later that it had given Japan "what they should not have" (Greyson cited in Zhang Y., 1991, p.72). At the same time, it emerged that in 1918, when China was fractured by warlordism and torn by corruption, Duan Qiriu's government[35] had signed a secret deal with Japan for a loan over the construction of a railway in Shandong. It was then that the Chinese government came under wide public criticism for internal political power and territorial fragmentation, and for its weakness of standing up against imperialism and injustice (Saich, 1990). This sparked student-led protests in what became known as the May 4th Movement. In China's modern history, the roots of "anti-foreign", predominantly "anti-Japanese" feelings can be found in this "injustice".[36]

The anti-Japanese feelings between 1915 and 1920 were captured in Callahan's description: "There were patriotic mass movements to commemorate the popular opposition to the Japanese demands: rallies, boycotts, 'societies of national humiliation', and activities by overseas Chinese

[35] Duan Qiriu was a warlord who became the Premier of China from 1916 to 1918 and continued to be significantly involved in Chinese politics until 1926.

[36] Anti-foreign feeling can be traced back at least to the Opium War (1839-1860), but the Versailles Treaty and the May 4th are significant for understanding the role that "foreigners" played in the construction of Chinese identity and nationalism. A British diplomat wrote in 1920 a report to Earl Curzon describing these events: "the humiliation that China received in Paris greatly affected China's pursuit of a westernised national identity", it "alienated many Chinese intellectuals from the west", so China became a country "without roots or external support" (Xu, 2001, p.117). Regarding, anti-Japanese feelings alone, in a speech given in 1937, Chen Duxiu, scholar and founder of the CCP, argued that anti-Japanese feelings have "a long historical meaning (…) from Li Hongzhang's Self-Strengthening Movement [statesman who wanted to strengthen China vis-à-vis the concerning modernisation undertaken by the West and Japan in 1860s] to Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao's Wuxu Reform [a series of reforms proposed by Chinese intellectuals, prompted by the 1895 Shimonoseki Treaty, and aimed at consolidating China's power], from Sun Yat-sen's Republican Revolution to the Northern Expedition" (cited in Ching, 2012, p.714). In his words "the anti-Japanese war is not based on temporary emotion or national vengeance, and definitely not fought for empty phrases such as justice, humanitarianism or peace. Instead, it is revolutionary war of the oppressed nation/people against imperialism (…) in order to complete independence and unification" (cited in Ching, 2012, p.714).

merchants and students" (2004b, p.210). The impact that these events had on China's view of Japan was so profound that for the next two decades Chiang Kai-shek wrote daily in his journal of the need of "wiping out national humiliation" (Wang Z., 2012, p.231).

Approximately a decade later, new anti-imperialist fervour rose during the Northern Expedition (1926-1928), a campaign for unifying China and bringing it under the control of the KMT.[37] Foreign properties and consulates, including those of Japan, were assailed and the Japanese consul was almost assassinated. In May 1928, Japanese and KMT troops clashed in Shandong as the Japanese military was trying to take control of Manchuria as "no Japanese leader was willing to accept Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria, precluding an understanding with Jiang [Chiang Kai-shek]" (Cohen W., 2000, p.16). After this clash, it was the KMT government that initiated the first universal anti-Japanese educational program in China (Hughes, 2008 p.246). Throughout the years that followed, "[t]he repeated defeats and setbacks of the KMT troops did not invite substantive criticism concerning the government's capacity for leadership. The regime specifically called on the citizens to resist Japan by building a "Great Wall of people's hearts." Further wartime losses seemed ironically to consolidate the regime's legitimacy" (Shih, 1998, 422). Resisting Japan became a theme often used by the KMT to bolster its morale against Japan, as well as its public legitimacy in the power struggle against the CCP.

The Manchurian incident in 1931, also known as Mukden after the city with the same name, marked a new point of reference in Sino-Japanese history and anti-Japanese animosities, still commemorated today. Under the pretext of an explosion along the Japanese-controlled South Manchuria Railway, the Japanese army advanced and occupied Manchuria where it established the state of Manchukuo. Japan struggled to control and manage a Chinese nation that rejected its interference. Boycotts of Japanese goods and calls to stop working in Japanese factories were so powerful that Japanese "business leaders portrayed the boycotts as 'acts of war without military arms' and 'amazing barbaric acts without parallel in other nations of the twentieth century'" (Fletcher, 1989, p.77). Popular culture also started reflecting the China's acrimony towards Japan. "As the threat from Japan intensified, the Nationalist government encouraged patriotic song writing and supported the public performance of song to buoy national spirit and to increase national resolve"

[37] Since the beginning of the 1920s on and off conflicts broke out between the CCP and KMT which only ended in 1949.

(Pietz, 2015, p.111). The anti-Japanese theme was mirrored in the name of one of the most celebrated groups "Singing for Resistance against Japan" and in the name of songs such as "Protect the Huanghe" (*Baowei Huanghe*) from 1939, with patriotic lyrics about Chinese heroes who stood up against the Japanese invasion. Music had a core advantage. It reached all strata of society from peasants to intellectuals, from the countryside to the cities, and could be accessed by almost anybody. Musicians and educators set up music groups to revitalise the national spirit (Ho W., 2006, p.441). Whether it manifested in education, art or in business and workplaces, the anti-Japanese feelings ran high. From the Japanese perspective at that time, according to a richly documented survey conducted by the Press Section of the War Department, Japan carried most of the brunt of China's antagonism towards foreign powers: "it was sentimental at first, but grew into a conviction. It changed from sporadic to organised activities, from a local to a national movement" (Motosada, 1932, p.2).

WWII and Japan's invasion of China ended in 1945 with huge costs for China. For Rana Mitter (2013b, p.301) the suffering Japan caused in the war constituted the resolute moment for the formation of Chinese nationalism:

> The war against Japan, which saw some 15–20 million Chinese deaths and 80–100 million refugees, was the crucial moment in the formation of Chinese nationalism in the twentieth century. No other event forced into focus so strongly the question of how the nation should be defined.

The very nature of nationalism in China and its formation can be clearly traced back at least to the First Sino-Japanese War and throughout the first part of the 20th century as Japan continued to maintain a strong presence in China. The national humiliation that China endured over those decades not only created the conditions for the recognition of the "Chinese ethnie" in relation to "others", but also of a strong Chinese nationalism. As Wang Zheng comments, "China's unique national experiences – both China's chosen glory over its ancient civilization and its chosen trauma resulting from the century of humiliation – have played a crucial role in shaping Chinese national identity" (2012, p.225). Through the second part of the 20th century and even today, China has continued to be shackled to its past "national humiliation" (see Chapter 6); this charged historical memory was manifested in different ways as explained in the next section.

4.1.2. Anti-Japanese theme under CCP

Japan's interference in China's political affairs during the first half of the 20th century legitimises to an extent Chiang Kai-shek's usage of anti-Japanese themes. However, after the establishment of the PRC in 1949, the way in which the anti-Japanese theme continued to be used by the CCP, especially after the 1990s, suggests that it was partially intentional and partially in reaction to Japan's own actions.

After the WWII was over, the CCP-KMT conflict resumed, but by 1949, the CCP gained the upper hand and pushed the Nationalists out of the Mainland. Chalmers Johnson argues that "the communist rise to power in China should be understood as a species of nationalist movement" intrinsically bound with anti-Japanese sentiments (1962, p.ix). The anti-Japan theme was appropriated by the CCP and, except for some interruptions, with some variations continued until today.

The CCP's management of national history and of Sino-Japanese relations changed throughout time. In the years that followed WWII, China started rebuilding its links with Japan on a conciliatory tone. In 1954, Zhou Enlai, then the Chinese premier, emphasised that the last 60 years of history between Japan and China should be relegated to the past and the thousands of years of peaceful cohabitation should triumph (Reilly, 2009). In 1972 the Joint Communiqué officially re-established diplomatic relations between China and Japan. For a decade there was no mention of any war atrocities and those who raised them were criticised by the Chinese authorities for "stirring up national hatred and revenge" (Yang D., 1999, p.858).

This conciliatory trend changed in the 1980s. In 1982, China accused Japan for the first time of "historical amnesia" for publishing incomplete history textbooks (He Y., 2013, p.236). Yinan He (2007a, p.54) explains this change in the context of the Party disunity in which Deng Xiaoping was trapped over "the open door policy"; in order to appease the conservatives, known for being staunch critics of Japan, Deng had to take a strong stance towards Japan's book revision that happened to erupt at that time. Domestic policy and stability were more important than maintaining good relations with Japan, hence the conservatives' views towards Japan's past had to be met. By 1989, with the decline of communist regimes around the world and related ideology in China meant that China was in search of new grounds on which to base its legitimacy. Therefore, the 1990s debuted with a new "patriotic education" introduced by then leader Jiang Zemin.

By providing various examples from the Chinese patriotic education Wang Zheng makes a compelling case for the centre stage role that "education on national humiliation" has taken and how it imbued all levels of life. One such example makes reference to the teaching guidelines of the high school history courses which clearly states the angle that should be taken on history:

> Chinese modern history is a history of humiliation that China had been gradually degenerated into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society; at the same time, it is also a history that Chinese people strived for national independence and social progress, persisted in their struggle of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism, and was also the history of the success of New-Democratic Revolution under the leadership of the CCP (Wang Z., 2008, p.792)

In another example, Wang Zheng highlights how students applying to university, whatever the major, were required to sit a politics exam which covered "historical national humiliation". Being familiar with "history" was also essential in employment for "Party members, multilevel employees of state agencies or state-run organizations, military officers, and soldiers [who] are all required to be familiar with CCP documents and its leaders' speeches; furthermore, government employees were required to set up permanent ''leading groups'' to coordinate the work of this patriotic education" (2008, p.793). "China's embrace of globalisation has aligned once fractious elites behind the banner of shared economic interest (…) [which] has provided the government with ample resources to buy the loyalty of the intellectual and economic elites", Zheng writes (2012, p.236). The wider public was co-opted in this "educational programme" through tourism which included many of the patriotic education bases in top recommended scenic spots (2008, p.797). While Zheng finds "the special effort made by the Chinese government, since 1991, to construct memory sites and use them for ideological re-education(…) unparalleled", drumming up Chinese nationalism has to be distinguished from anti-Japan nationalism in China. Looking at both the domestic and international condition in which these changes happened is relevant in understanding why Japan became an important part of the patriotic education campaign and beyond.

In 1992, new Chinese history textbooks for both middle and high schools were published, and modern and contemporary Chinese history became a required core course in high school. Unlike previous textbooks, the victory

against Japan was attributed to both the CCP and KMT, and not just to the CCP (Wang Z., 2008, p.791). Consequently, the focus shifted from CCP's struggle against KMT's heinous capitalism and corruption to "those foreign nations that had invaded and humiliated China in the past", especially Japan (He Y., 2003).[38] Emphasising the CCP-KMT united front was "key to China's strong stand against Japan" (Coble, 2007, p.402). This brought with it another shift, from the "victor narrative" to the "victim narrative" (Gries, 2005). The CCP was changing their tunes on identity and nationalism.

All these changes led many scholars to rightfully claim that the narrative against Japan became "a source of political capital by the Party elite with varying degrees of intensity" (Hughes, 2008, p.248). However, besides legitimising the Party ideology and unifying the nation, it is important to note that the change in the government's recount of history, with a focus on Japan, was the result of a conflation of two other factors: the desire to reunify with Taiwan which implied the rehabilitation of their founding father Chiang Kai-shek; and the need to reduce US and Japanese power in East Asia by vilifying them (Mitter, 2003, p.121). Likewise, Callahan believes the patriotic education aimed at channelling the 1989 students protests in the domestic realm to foreign problems "A patriotic education policy was formulated not so much to reeducate the youth (as it was in the past), as to redirect protest toward the foreigner as an enemy, as an external Other" (2006, p.186). In this context, Yinan He is justified to say that the "anti-foreign aspect of the [Chinese] nationalism was [somewhat] an unintended outcome of the history propaganda" (2007b, p.12); this also explains why so many Chinese scholars, as elaborated in Chapter 6, do not perceive Japan as the deliberate target of the Chinese government propaganda machine.

Today, the Chinese government continues to be accused of conducting anti-Japanese activities, but it is not alone; a variety of actors ranging from institutions and individuals also carry out anti-Japanese activities. New state funding has been recently made available to emphasise China's "War of

[38] The change of history textbooks was just one aspect of a wider anti-foreign national campaign, within which Japan played an important role. For instance, the Ministry of Broadcasting and Ministry of Culture launched a joint art (political) programme of "a hundread books and films" chosen by the Party and aimed to stimulate "*aiguozhuyi*" or 'love State-ism'" (Ford, 2015, p.206). Considerable attention was also given to reinstating public symbols through programs that rehabilitated and constructed museums, memory halls and other cultural and historical sites. In 1995, "the Ministry of Civil Affairs announced that [...] 100 sites were selected as the national level 'demonstration bases' for patriotic education", out of which 20 were dedicated to the Second Sino-Japanese war (Wang Z., 2008, p.796). Jiang Zemin's focus on Japan's atrocities also led to the compilation of dozens of archival volumes (Coble, 2007, p.405).

Resistance" against Japan (Denton, 2007). This triggered further criticism that China's anti-Japan campaign is top-down driven. When geographical proximity permits, students are taken on school visits to a number of these memorials; even primary school pupils are reported to have visited Unit 731, the site of Japan's wartime human experimentation program, as part of their educational "learning" of "how to love your country" (Interviews with Chinese student A, B, 2014). At university level, another example of anti-Japanese thematic is recounted by Daniel Bell, Professor of Politics at Tsinghua, one of China's most prestigious universities:

> [A]ll graduate students at Tsinghua are strongly encouraged to participate in the singing competition intended to commemorate the December 9, 1935, anti-Japanese (invaders) movement led by Tsinghua students. The activity is not compulsory, but participants get extra points relevant for scholarship equivalent to writing one scholarly article (Bell, 2008, p.219).

The importance of "anti-Japanese" history is also reinforced every year through public commemorations tapping into collective memories. This is the case of September 18, 1933 Mukden incident, mentioned earlier, when a plot was engineered by the Japanese military commanders to allow their troops to occupy Manchuria. History remembrance is never put to rest and on this day, every year, "Nationwide, sirens wailed in more than 100 cities around the country (…) to observe the 80th anniversary of Japan's invasion of China" (Wu and Liu, 2011). In 2014 alone, two new national days were introduced to commemorate the anti-Japanese war. "Victory Day" on September 3 commemorates Japan's surrender in the "War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression", and December 13 commemorates the Nanjing Massacre. In 2014, President Xi and the entire Politburo Standing Committee participated in the new Victory Day celebrations in Beijing (Tiezzi, 2014). Such remembrance days are "the cultural ciphers through which meanings are assigned to phenomena and attachments made between people and things" (Geertz, 1973, p.216) which lock China and Japan in the shadow of WWII.

At an individual level, over half of the Chinese public struggles to come to terms with what they perceive to be an unjust past still covered up by the Japanese government through the lack of "proper apology" (The Genron NPO, 2014a). The "war in the past that China and Japan fought" represents the main reason (recorded at around 70 percent and over during 2010-2012) why China

holds a negative impression of Japan, followed by "history issues" such as denials of "war time aggression" (recorded at around 40 percent and over during 2010-2012) (The Genron NPO, 2012). Among those more vocal are Chinese activists who lead NGOs dedicated to seeking compensation and apologies for victims affected by Japan's WWII crimes or by Japan's denied germ warfare.[39] Others who experienced the War choose to express their feelings towards Japan through weekly orchestra performances of anti-Japanese war songs, just as they once did during WWII, in public locations such as the busy Beihai Park in Beijing.[40] Anti-Japanese feelings have become clustered in numerous such ongoing "public projects".

Now that China's position vis-à-vis Japan has been reviewed, the picture of the role that Japan played in China's identity formation would not be complete without looking briefly at Japan itself. China and Japan are both engaged in an active-reactive process, hold mutual animosities towards each other and both maintain history alive; all these together had repercussions on the direction that nationalism took.

Almost five decades had passed since the end of WWII until 1993 when Japan apologised for enslaving Chinese women in Japanese army brothels, and then in 1995 when Japan made a broader apology for its "colonial rule and invasion". Japan has since repeatedly apologised, to the point that recently, at the 70th commemoration of the end of WWII in the Pacific theatre, PM Shinzo Abe expressed "profound grief" for all the victims of the war, but also stated that generations "who have nothing to do with the war (…) should not be predestined to apologise" (Abe, 2015). Nevertheless, both China and Korea noted with disappointment Abe's avoidance of making a clear apology and suggestion that future generations should not be predestined to apologise for wartime actions (McCurry, 2015). China has long refused to accept Japan's apologies, claiming that they are insincere, prompting many to wonder if "Japan's war apologies will ever satisfy China" (Suzuki, 2015). Apologies are nullified when Japan's top officials make controversial statements; they create an ideal breeding ground for anti-Japanese feelings in China. For instance, in

[39] For more details, see Wang Xuan's project http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2016-07/07/content_26004798.htm and other similar initiatives http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2003/09/19/2003068395.

[40] While on fieldwork, I have met one such music group that plays every weekend in Beihai Park in Beijing; every other weekend the repertoire includes anti-Japanese songs from the war time. The orchestra has over 30 members, most of them now elderlies who have lived through Japan's occupations. They still attract people in their hundreds at their performances.

2007, Abe, backed by his Cabinet, triggered controversy by downplaying "comfort women" (Onishi, 2007). In 2012, he even expressed indirect support, along with Ishihara, the mayor of Tokyo, for Nagoya's mayor who claimed that the "Nanjing massacre has probably never happened" (The Asahi Shimbun, 2012a). Only a year later similar issues re-emerged when Yoshihide Suga, the cabinet secretary, stated that Abe would endorse the 1995 apology, but may review the 1993 one (The New York Times, 2013).[41] Japan's officials cannot seem to reach a common ground over the past.

In addition to the "apology" issues a form of patriotic campaign has also been underway in Japan. Even before WWII the school curriculum was filled with militaristic views and represented "a major factor in socialising the great majority of Japanese to support the aggression enthusiastically" (Ienaga, 1993-1994, p.117); this made textbooks, in the years to come, a constant target for criticism. One of the first textbook controversies which strained Sino-Japanese relations was published in 1982 and came under heavy criticism for "rewriting history". The change of the word "aggression" with "advancement" when describing Japan's invasion of China, combined with only a vague mention of the Nanjing Massacre victims were at the core of the criticism (Beal, Nozaki and Yang J., 2001, pp.181-182); "the most striking change was the near total erasure from [2000-2001] textbooks of the comfort women issue that had been introduced in the early 1990s" (Selden and Nozaki, 2009). Perceived as "cherry picking" convenient facts while omitting others and constantly changing attitudes over history with every Cabinet reshuffle, Japan has attracted further criticism from victims of the war, activists, and the wider public. Besides "textbooks", repeated visits to Yasukuni shrine by Japanese officials have constantly fuelled tensions between Japan and neighbouring countries. Japan's recent move to change Article 9 of its Constitution, which restricts Japan's use of force, has also attracted much criticism from China and South Korea.

Unlike the European cases of reconciliation between Germany and France, and Poland and the Czech Republic (Gardner-Feldman, 2010), China and Japan have not agreed yet over their common past. There is little understanding over mutual grievances, and despite some attempts to confront the past in joint commissions, as they have not produced yet significant results that have been documented. Leadership in both countries has been inconsistent

[41] In the 1993 declaration, also dubbed the "Kono document", Japan acknowledges and apologizes for the "administrative/military personnel directly took part in recruitment" of comfort women; Abe stated that he has the backing of 60 percent of public opinion for revising the Kono statement (Sekiguchi, 2014).

and has come under strong domestic pressure, which has limited the role that governmental and non-governmental institutions could play in solving Sino-Japanese disputes. Meanwhile, the international context is fuelled by strategic competition and not bound by an Asian identity (Lan, 2010), which makes the past more likely to remain a stimulus for free-flowing nationalism and political agendas.

Overall, throughout China's modern history Japan has constantly played a major role, whether as a grabber of spoils of war, as a target of Chiang Kai-shek war-time campaign and hence unifying referent for the Chinese nation, or as part of the CCP's plan to further bolster popular support for its rule and its need to react to Japan's actions and statements. Nevertheless, the Chinese government's emphasis on the necessity to remember history sits in stark contrast with the Chinese government's cover up of its own "mistakes" in history, such as the Great Famine and the Tiananmen events. By failing to provide other points of historical comparison, Japan's negative image continues to remain situated at the centre of the formation of Chinese identity and nationalism.

4.1.3. Diaoyu/Senkaku islands dispute in historical perspective

Several books and articles (Suganuma, 2000; Manicom, 2014; Shaw, 1999) present detailed accounts of the history of the ownership of Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. The purpose of this section is not to take sides; both China and Japan have been locked in this dispute for so long that "what ultimately matters is not what is but what people believe is" (Connor, 1994, p.93). This section traces chronologically the dispute between China and Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands from the first Sino-Japanese War in 1984-1985 until the dispute escalated over the nationalisation of the islands in 2012; the purpose being to highlight moments and features when anti-Japanese nationalism erupted.

In 1895 China was defeated by Japan to which it ceded Taiwan and other adjacent islands, among which were supposedly the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Japan denied acquiring the islands as spoils of war, instead it claimed possession of the islands as part of the old Ryukyu Kingdom, better known today as Okinawa. The islands were mostly forgotten until 1951 when through the San Francisco Treaty the US gave executive powers over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands to Japan. China, however, has never recognised this Treaty because according to the Potsdam Proclamation the San Francisco

Treaty had to be approved by all the five powers and neither China nor Russia signed it.

Fast forwarding to the 1970s, the first Chinese official claim over the sovereignty of the islands was made in 1971. The timing of this claim brought a lot of speculation and was quickly linked to a UN report from 1969 which alleged that the area surrounding the islands might hold oil and gas resources. Yet, at the same time the US was negotiating the Reversion Act with Japan, which was returning administrative rights of WWII territories back to Japan, hence this may have been China's last chance to contest the ownership of the islands. With the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations in 1972, the two prime-ministers Zhou Enlai and Tanaka agreed to shelve the dispute over the islands; this was only recently disclosed by British archives after decades of denial from Japan's side (The Asahi Shimbun, 2015). The diplomatic relations between China and Japan were further consolidated in 1978 through the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, when it became clear that neither of the two countries wanted to derail bilateral relations because of a "rocky snag". Several Japanese participants recognised that "there was a 'tacit understanding' (*anmoku no ryōkai*) between Japan and China to shelve the territorial issue" (Drifte, 2014). This is not to say that the two countries forwent their claims to the islands. Deng Xiaoping famously asked for the postponement of this divisive issue: "Our generation is not wise enough to find common language on this question [of the islands]. Our next generation will certainly be wiser" (cited in Suganuma, 2000, p.138).

Up to the 1980s Sino-Japanese relations were largely carried out by officials and saw little involvement of non-state actors, particularly in China. By the 1990s non-state actors became active participants in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. A Japanese Nationalist group Nihon Seinensha, which in 1971 had built a lighthouse under ambiguous circumstances,[42] applied in 1990 to the Maritime Safety Agency to have the lighthouse recognised as an official navigation marker. This move triggered strong criticism from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China, leading Japan to back down (Pan, 2007, p.74). In July 1996, the same Nihon Seinensha group landed on the islands to repair the lighthouse after it was destroyed by a typhoon; despite the Japanese government attempt to dissociate itself from the group and disapprove of their actions, the ire of those

[42] Some claim that this was done without the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' approval, but with that of the Ministry of Transport instead (Manicom, 2014, pp.45-46); this is indicative of the domestic problems that this islands raise for Japan.

in Taiwan, Hong Kong and China was ignited once again (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1996). September 1996 marked the first sailing to the islands of Chinese and Hong Kongese activists, which came at the cost of one activist's death by drowning, to whose funeral thousands attended in Hong Kong (South China Morning Post, 2012). The following month, a record high of 49 Hong Kongese ships sailed to the islands where they planted the flags of Taiwan and China (Smith, 2015, p.214). After these initial voyages and protests, the activists' involvement on both sides intensified which kept the islands in the public eye.

In 2005 relations between China and Japan deteriorated. The Japanese Coast Guard's purchase of the Diaoyu/Senkaku lighthouse was just one of the disputes included in new controversial textbooks published in Japan. Japan's bid for a UN Security Council seat was opposed by China and a visit to Yasukuni Shrine made by a number of Japanese officials also soured relations. The following five years were irresolute; sometimes China and Japan moved towards agreements on joint drilling around the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, while at other times preferred the deployment of survey ships around the islands as a symbolic mark of their territorial sovereignty.

2010 culminated with the collision between a Chinese fishing trawler and the Japanese Coast Guard in the proximity of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Unlike the customary protocol[43], on this occasion Japan did not deport the Chinese crew, instead the crew were detained under the accusation of illegal breach of Japanese sovereignty. The Chinese government turned the argument on its head and insisted that the Japanese detention of the crew was illegal as Japan was the one that breached China's sovereignty. As a consequence, China suspended a series of relations at diplomatic, economic and cultural level. The Chinese government's stance, backed by the public, was clearly summarised by Wen Jiabao's words: "China will never give in or compromise on matters including national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity" (Tsugami, 2013).

September 2012 marked a new low in Sino-Japanese relations after Japan nationalised the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. The Japanese government expressed interest in buying the islands in July 2012 to avoid their purchase by the Tokyo Municipality, led by the right-wing nationalist Ishihara. Particularly the right wing officials and their supporters consider that China is impinging on Japan's Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in East China Sea and have

[43] For more see Chapter 6.

repeatedly called on the Government to take a stronger stance on the issue. As Gregory Moore writes, "Noda and his supporters did not want Ishihara to hijack Tokyo's relations with China by provoking China" (2014, p.229), reason for which they decided to purchase the islands. Some might wonder how such a contested territory was in the hands of a private owner in the first instance. Jin Yongming, an International Law expert from the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences has explained this in detail:

> The transfer of public property to private property was complicated. In 1895 the Japanese government held an internal Cabinet Decision which included two islands - Diaoyu and Huangwei (which is an affiliated island of Diaoyu island). After 1895, on June 14th, Koga [the private owner of the islands] made an application to the Japanese government to lease the islands. In 1896, the Japanese government approved his application for 30 years, which gave him legal rights over the islands until 1926. During these years he had to pay no fees. In 1926 Koga made another application, he wanted to extend and pay for the lease. In March 1932 - Koga`s second application was approved and Diaoyu islands were sold to him, so they were transferred from public to private ownership. In 1972, Koga transferred his rights over the property, South and North Small islands only, to Kurihara [a private citizen]. Then, in 1978, the Diaoyu islands were also transferred to Kurihara (Interview with Jin, 2014).

The September 2012 events were precipitated by the landing of several activists from Macao, Hong Kong and China on the islands on August 15. The Chinese government complained to Japan against the detention of the activists while small groups of people in several cities in China took to the streets in protest. The activists were released soon after and the controversy died down. However, demonstrations picked up quickly on September 11 when Japan purchased the islands. On September 13 China submitted at the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) the baselines of the territorial sea of Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Meanwhile, bilateral tensions rose and on September 15 a fresh wave of protests erupted in 85 cities in China and in several cities abroad (Global Times, 2012). Three days later, with the commemoration of the Mukden incident, the protests intensified. The Chinese government deployed two PLA Navy frigates to the waters surrounding the

islands, and also announced a curtailment of its relations with Japan at various levels, including the celebration of 40 years of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations. On September 25, 2012, the Chinese government published the first White Paper outlining China's claim to the islands.

Through this review of China's history and Sino-Japanese relations, it was shown that Japan played a central role in China's formation of nationalism throughout the last century. Set into the context the contemporary spat over the islands, it was noted how an increasing number of non-state actors became involved in the dispute; this is further discussed in Chapter 7. The next section explains why the 2010 and 2012 events triggered such an outcry in China.

4.2. Triggers of nationalism

So far it has been shown that anti-Japanese nationalism has fermented in the background from the end of the 19th century. Whilst history provides invaluable insights, it cannot alone account for the rise of nationalism because nationalism evolves both in a domestic and international context (Zheng, 1999). The fishing trawler incident in 2010 and the nationalisation of the islands in 2012 were obvious trigger points for the blazing anti-Japanese manifestations that followed, but why did these manifestations gain intensity so quickly in the first instance? Based on the literature on nationalism in China (Whiting, 1995; Rose, 1998; Reilly, 2013), a number of factors are considered as potential triggers for the 2010 and 2012 anti-Japanese feelings. After a careful evaluation, as explained in the Methodology Chapter, two triggers are examined in detail here- economic and military development, and threat perceptions.

4.2.1. Economic and military development

China's improved economy, and consequently its military capabilities, have fuelled contemporary Chinese nationalism which appears increasingly confident both at state level and non-state level actors. China's development is particularly relevant to the long history of competition and animosity with Japan. In 2010, this competition reached a new peak when China overtook Japan's GDP, stripping it of the "number 1" title in Asia for the first time in modern history and making China the second largest economy in the world. What does this new development mean for China's anti-Japan nationalism?

On the background of a very well sustained economic growth per GDP, above eight percent for the 2000-2010 decade (World Bank, n.d.), the 2010

achievement marked a milestone in a decade in which China amassed sufficient economic power to flex its muscles. Tang Qinfang sees China's achievement in the context of Sino-Japanese competition and hence directly relates it to Japan's demotion from "number one in Asia"; she explains the change as a "shock" for Japan which found it difficult to accept the new ranking, and as a "great power" feeling for China (Interview, 2014). These economic achievements prompted scholars to remark that "another fear [or reason for not wanting to become number one world economy] is burgeoning nationalism, which could be fuelled by China's number one status in the world economy" (He K., 2014).

China's economic performance rejuvenated a sense of greatness (Interview with Lian, 2014; Interview with Tang, 2014), increasingly visible not only at the popular level, but also among elites and intellectuals. Back in the day, during the rapid economic growth of the 1980s and 1990s a similar trend was noted by Suisheng Zhao that "built up Chinese intellectuals' self-confidence in their tradition and awakened national pride (…) [and led] to the emergence of a nationalistic discourse among academics" (1997, p.739). Quansheng Zhao also remarks that in 1980, "China's concern about Japanese militarism was rooted chiefly in domestic developments, namely rising nationalism amongst Chinese intellectuals and other circles of Chinese society" (1998, p.8).

In *Unhappy China*, a 2009 best-seller and display of extreme nationalism, Song Xiaojun et al. describe their wider vision for China "with *Chinese national strength growing at an unprecedented rate*, China should stop debasing itself, recognize the fact that it has the power to lead the world and break away from Western influence" (cited in Li L., 2009; emphasis added). This book came out during the backdrop of the 2008 financial crisis when China had the chance to show its economic prowess to the world. This is best summed up by Gao Xiqing, President of China's Investment Corp (CIC), one of China's state owned investment funds, who explains China's view about the crisis and its increasingly important role in the world:

> People, especially Americans, started believing that they can live on other people's money. And more and more so. First other people's money in your own country. And then the savings rate comes down, and you start living on other people's money from outside. At first it was the Japanese. Now the Chinese and the Middle Easterners (Moore H., 2008).

China's economic power appeared stronger than both the US and Japan's creaking economies and it did not shy away from exposing it. The boost of confidence that the Chinese gained is reported by Aaron Friedberg (2011), once a Deputy Assistant for US National Security Affairs and Director of Policy Planning:

> Since the start of the 2008–09 financial crisis many Chinese strategists have reached the conclusion that the United States is declining, and their own country is rising much faster than had previously been expected. *Belief that this is the case has fed an already powerful strain of forceful, sometimes belligerent nationalism* that appears to be increasingly widespread, especially among the young (emphasis added).

In reference to Japan's economy, Wu Di, a member of the Research Centre on Transnational Corporations, under the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, authored a paper in which he recommended the Chinese government to adopt a waiting strategy; he suggested that by buying itself time, Japan's economy will collapse due to its "terminal illness of economy" and its claims to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands will eventually subdue (Bassan, 2013). This view that Japan is a "sickman"[44] which cannot be "contagious" goes against Koo's claim (2009) that economic relations are the seminal stabilising factor in Sino-Japanese relations. China's self-confidence in its economy may indicate that the economic factor is not be as important anymore for its bilateral relation with Japan. Quite on the contrary, contemporary Chinese nationalism is rising, and not declining, along with the growing Chinese power (Yu B., 1999, p.197). Prof. Xiao Gongqin makes a similar point:

> China's growing economy is actually supporting national feeling, not decreasing it. Political elites' nationalism is growing and it is beneficial for the Chinese government to enhance its authority (…) Chinese nationalism has a long term effect on the legitimacy of the Party rule because China used to be a victim [and now is no more] (Interview, 2015).

[44] The specific usage of "the sickman" is ironic as the metaphor has subtle connotations – at the turn of the 19th century Japan referred to China as the "sickman of the Far East" foreseeing its end as inevitable, it was preparing to carve its territories up (Scott, 2008, p.152).

When looking at the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents alone, China's feeling of economic power was again reflected in the belief of the "intangibility" of its economy. Chinese researchers from the International Trade and Economic Institute, under China's Ministry of Commerce, have expressed minimal concern over China's interdependency with Japan in light of deteriorating bilateral relations. In the midst of the 2012 crisis, one researcher, Mei Xinyu, hit the nail on the head: "China will lose less than Japan if economic and trade wars have to be our choice" (Xinhua, 2012a). The deputy director of the institute, Jin Baisong, maintained a similar tone arguing that economically China has the upper-hand:

> [A]n analysis of two-way trade and investment suggested that Japan was more reliant on China for economic health than vice versa and that China was in a much better position than Japan to afford a loss of exports (…) [China] has the capability to impose sanctions on other countries now that it is the (world's) second largest economy, has the largest foreign (exchange) reserves and is the largest exporter and second largest importer (cited in Richardson, 2012).

The change in China's attitude in response to the 2010 and 2012 events is more noticeable when compared with similar past events. Craig's findings from 2005 display concern among Chinese researchers and elites about the importance of maintaining good economic relations with Japan (2007, p.73); in 2005 China had not yet reached the development and confidence of the years that followed. Yongnian Zheng (2008) captures this well:

> For over a century, Chinese nationalism has been based on the idea of 'a hundred years of shame' and 'putting right the shame' has been the aim of that nationalism. But now that China has achieved its goal of 'enriching the country and strengthening the army', even though it still has plenty of problems left to solve, the task of building a nation-state is far from finished and a new form of nationalism has appeared.

Moreover, China's "confident nationalism" based on its economic and military development is also summed up in the words of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson (People's Daily, 2010a); he stated in a press conference that China has quietly "swallowed" bitter pills from Japan for a long time and

that now it is time to stand up against it and make it "taste some of its own medicine". The *PLA Daily* also vowed "absolutely no concession" on the issue of Diaoyu/Senkaku nationalisation; it urged the Japanese government not to misjudge the situation as today's China is no longer the China of the First and Second Sino-Japanese Wars: "Long gone are the days when the Chinese territory could be grabbed only by an unequal treaty" (Xinhua, 2012b).

Since China has achieved a great power status, the Chinese public also seems less willing to tolerate "disrespect" from other countries and challenges to its territorial sovereignty (He L., 2009, p.57). Economic power is easily converted into military power. Surveys indicate that on average 86 percent of Chinese believe the PLA has the capabilities to take the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and the proportion does not change much "even if the US was to intervene", staying at the high level of 73 percent (Chubb, 2014). These statistics speak to the ability of China's economic and military power to shape a more confident nationalism. This comes against the backdrop of the 63.3 percent of Chinese who expressed 10/10 agreement that China is right in its claims over Diaoyu/Senkaku, and over 90 percent supported the government's handling of the dispute (Chubb, 2014). Convinced by its "just" moral claims and backed by economic and military power, a more confident nationalism is shaped.

China's increased capabilities and its desire to settle the cards for the past injustices, shape once again its identity and reveals the role that it wants to occupy in the international system.[45]

Official documents such as White Papers which usually "serve as an element of China's strategic messaging" (Chase, 2011) also help understanding of China's self-perception. Unlike previous papers, the 2010 Defence Paper offered a glimpse into China's perception of its security environment; it describes a changing international balance of power towards a more multipolar world, yet characterised by intense competition for economic strength, international status, military competition and international order. It is clearly China's own rise that led to the move from a unipolar to a multipolar world through the competition that it engaged with Japan for regional hegemony and with the US for global hegemony. China's expectations are incompatible with the West's "prejudice" and "mistrust" against it and vice-versa. This point is

[45] Post 2012 this was crystallised in a new credo defined by "China's dream" and "national rejuvenation". These ideological concepts were first mentioned by Xi during a tour of an exhibition of China's past humiliations at the National Museum in Tiananmen Square, where he referred to the "rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" as the "greatest Chinese dream" (Forde, 2013).

closely linked with the following section focusing on threat perceptions.

4.2.2. Threat perception

The threat perception to the Chinese nation-state is the second significant factor that triggered and fuelled anti-Japanese nationalism in China. External threat perceptions have long existed in China and today they are still visibly present among the Chinese public and elites. "To understand nationalism and national security (…) it is necessary to understand national insecurities. In other words, Chinese nationalism is not just about celebrating the glories of Chinese civilization; it also commemorates China's weakness" (Callahan, 2004b, p.202). China's threat perceptions lingering from the past, as well as those anchored in the present, matter. China's own perception of outside threats is inappropriately often neglected in the literature and global media in favour of other states' threat perceptions of China.

The Chinese perception of the outside world contours identities and it sets the parameters of defining the self and the other. "National identity emerges in how the policy making elite perceives and articulates the image of China in its relations with the outside world" (Whiting, 1995, p.296). The purpose of this section is not to make judgements over the threat imposed, but to identify the threats perceived from inside China about Japan and its alliance with the US and how they are connected with nationalism.

According to Liebman's study, "nationalism [in China] would be a less potent issue were it not for foreign threat" (2007, p.368) and "threats to the *territorial integrity* of the state which the government appears to be *losing* to a foreign power is a very potent trigger for nationalist outbursts" (2007, p.360) (original emphasis). Suisheng Zhao (2014, p.35) explains the perceived threats to sovereignty in light of what could be called a "restoration of justice":

> Chinese people see any problems China faces with Western powers and neighbours over sensitive issues of sovereignty and security as caused by them and certainly not by China and have little patience with the complaints and calls for China to compromise on these issues.

On a similar note, Wang Jisi, one of the most renowned IR Chinese scholars, remarks that "Chinese citizens' interest in IR is significantly higher than that of

Americans because it is related to 'the very survival of the nation'" (cited in Repnikova, 2014).

The 2013 Genron-NPO survey, which is likely to reflect the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident because the survey was conducted in summer and the island dispute took place in September, reveals that 70 percent of Chinese believe that the US poses the greatest military threat, followed by Japan at 50 percent. The perceived threat from Japan is explained in view of "the waning sense of remorse and apology for the war of aggression" at 69.9 percent, of "the Japanese have occupied Diaoyu and the surrounding islands and do not acknowledge the territorial dispute" at 56.6 percent, and of "the Japanese National Defense Program Guideline considers China its potential enemy" at 47.7 percent (The Genron NPO, 2013). A year later the same survey shows that China's threat perception of the US dropped by 12 percent while that of Japan increased by five percent (The Genron NPO, 2014a). Three main reasons explain China's insecurity and threat perception from Japan. 58 percent of the respondents accused Japan of an "attempt to besiege China on a military front in cooperation with the United States"[46], followed by 52 percent who raised "Japan's lack of a proper apology and remorse over the history of invasions of China" and 52 percent who claimed that "although it effectively occupies the Diaoyu Islands, Japan does not recognize the territorial dispute".[47] In other words, the most threatening cause is the US-Japan alliance[48], followed closely by historical and territorial issues.

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[46] Another reason of concern for China, linked with the US-Japan alliance, was Japan's ratified constitution; it registered a significant increase in the polls from 4.7 percent in 2013 to 14.5 percent in 2014.

[47] Though not considered the main trigger for mass nationalism in this thesis, in interviews numerous concerns were expressed over Japan's refusal to face history, expressed through Japanese textbooks, politicians' denial of comfort women, and visits to Yasukuni shrine (Interview with all Protesters, 2014; Interview with Pan, 2015; Interview with Guo, 2015; Interview with Tang, 2014). Asked about the future of Sino-Japanese relations if historical hatred continues to be emphasised, Mrs. Meng, coordinator of CFDDI, replied: "China does not want to hang on hatred, but Chinese people cannot bury it. Germans would punish any fascist publication straight away. But under Abe, imperialism is resurrected, this is the seed of conflict" (Interview, 2014).

[48] Japan's alliance with the US has always been perceived as a hindrance to China. In November 2011 Clinton announced the "US pivot" to Asia, which was seen by many Chinese as an attempt at countering China's growth. In April 2012, the US-Japan alliance was amended "to promote bilateral dynamic defence cooperation, including joint training, joint surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, and joint and shared use of facilities" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2012). As some analysts and pundits observed "This would mark the first time that US and Japanese troops routinely train together for combat operations and would dramatically deepen the connection between those forces" (Spitzer, 2012). In China's eyes, a powerful alliance was strengthening around its borders. Threats to the nation state were reflected in numerous interviews with researchers and academics conducted for this thesis. It was not uncommon to come across claims

Christensen observed during interviews with Chinese analysts' that they "fear the US power much more than Japanese power, in terms of national intentions (…) [although they] view Japan with much less trust and, in many cases, with a loathing rarely found in their attitudes about the United States" (1999, p.52). Similar views emerged in interviews conducted for this current research; the US was often seen as the only genuine competitor to China in an almost appreciative manner, while contempt defined more often the respondents' views towards Japan (Interviews, 2014, 2015).

This is not much different among the military who appear to share the public concern of a serious threat coming from Japan: "in internal policy debates, the PLA is the hyper-nationalistic guardian of claimed Chinese territorial sovereignty and is the institution charged with enforcing these claims" (Shambaugh, 1999b, p.52). The pulse of the PLA perceptions of threat has not been taken recently; older publications dating from the end of the 1990s and mid 2000 provide some comprehensive views, but not much has been written since. From Shambaugh's personal account of running interviews with PLA personnel it is gathered that there is a uniform shared mistrust about Japan's "militarist" intentions (1999b, p.68-69):

> The anti-Japanese sentiment one encounters among the PLA at all levels is palpable. Distrust of Japan runs deep, transcends generations, and is virulent among the generation of PLA officers in their forties and fifties. Japan stimulates an emotional reaction not even evident in anti-American diatribes. In conversations with PLA personnel, Americans are regularly subjected to the view that the United States is naïve to consider Japan as an ally or a partner, and they often counsel the United States to be wary of Japanese intentions and military modernization.

Other scholars who have analysed the publications of the PLA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and economic institutes highlight that China's perception of threat from Japan continued to grow from 1986 until 2006. As seen in the image below, the threat perception was fairly similar across three sectors, PLA,

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that the US in particular hopes for China's collapse; US was accused of taking advantage of mass protests such as those in 2010 and 2012 to infiltrate their own instigators with the aim of purposefully disturbing internal stability and leading to the collapse of the nation-state (Interview with Anonymous, 2014; Interview with Li, 2014).

MFA and Economic sector, with oscillations that eventually even out in time, although the PLA holds a slightly tougher view of Japan (Sasaki, 2010, p.566).

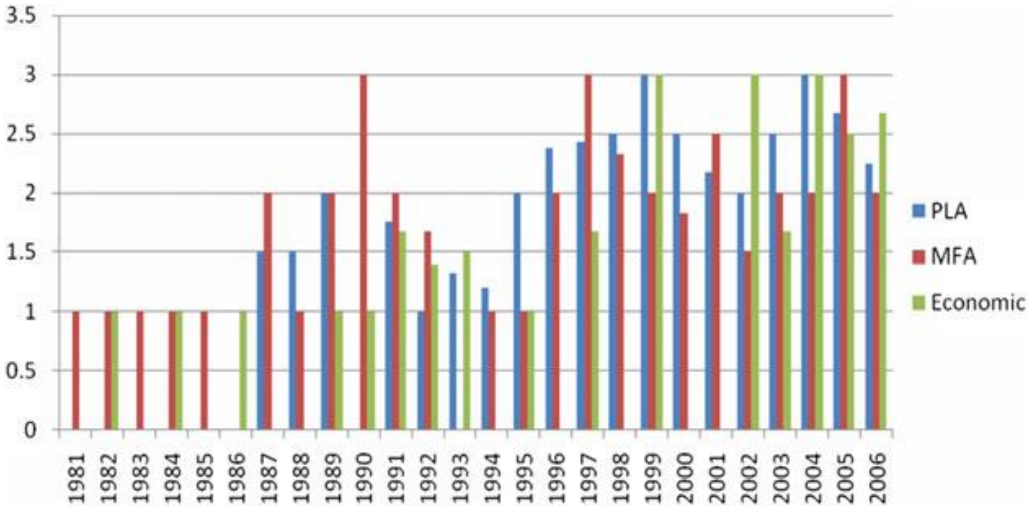


Figure 4.2: Average level of threat perceptions by sector

(Source: Sasaki, 2010, p.567).

Given that at the international level things have worsened if anything, as argued in the beginning of this "threat perception" section, there is a likelihood that PLA views have further hardened.

Overall, this section on "Triggers of nationalism" has highlighted the importance of economic development in building a confident nationalism and the ever present perception of external threats among members of the public, researchers and officials. Post 2010, Chinese discourses mark a turning point in China's positive self-perception of economic power. Meanwhile, threat perceptions are party based on history, but also on current issues over territoriality, Japan's "remilitarisation" and its alliance with the US, history meanwhile the perceived threat from Japan, built on historical narratives and contemporary developments alike, worsened over the years particularly in light of Diaoyu/Senkaku island dispute.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to investigate the role that Japan has played in the formation of Chinese nationalism over the last century, but particularly during the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute. In order to reach this aim, first a historical overview was provided starting with the Sino-Japanese war 1984-1985 up to the present day. The first question of this chapter was "How was anti-Japanese nationalism formed or constructed, from the First Sino-

Japanese War to today, especially from the 1990s to 2012?". In response, the idea of a "dormant nationalism" was put forward. Chinese nationalism has been built robustly around Japan prior to the CCP's arrival to power; in fact, nationalism is most likely the by-product of the Japanese invasion during the Second Sino-Japanese War. In other words, nationalist manifestations during 2010 and 2012 needed little incentive from the government as issues of territorial sovereignty, even the small Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, have a strong resonance with the public. Nevertheless, as detailed in the first section of this chapter, territorial sovereignty, at least since the PRC's inception, has been essential for the government's legitimacy.

The second question of this thesis was "What were the triggers that awoke this dormant nationalism in 2010 and 2012?". Drawing on the literature, a number of triggers were taken into account, but it was found that China's economic and military development and increasing perception of a Japanese threat were amongst the most important. Liao wrote that China's history, through a century dominated by the imagery of victimisation and incomplete sovereignty, became the norms ingrained in the Chinese identity (2013, p.543), so much that these feelings appeared primordial; this narrative has slightly changed, there is a sense confidence in China's ability to stand up against its former "aggressor" to protect its sovereignty.

While this chapter presented and analysed the factors that sparked and the background that triggered anti-Japanese nationalism, the next chapter discusses the behavioural elements of nationalism during the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents and the strategies used by the government to respond.

Chapter 5.

Behavioural manifestations of nationalism during the 2010 and 2012 events

> "*[Nationalism] is like cheap alcohol. It gets you drunk after only a few shots and makes you hysterical. It makes you speak loudly and act rudely … but after your drunken rampage you are left with nothing but an awful headache the next morning*"
>
> (Murakami cited in McCurry, 2012)

After having explored the background of Chinese nationalism and the triggers that led to the contemporary rise in anti-Japanese feelings, this chapter moves into the third stage of the proposed analytical framework. It discusses the bottom-up behavioural elements of nationalism during the 2010 and 2012 anti-Japanese protests and boycott campaign and the top-down coping strategies. The questions that it tackles are "How was anti-Japanese nationalism behaviourally manifested in 2010 and 2012?" and "What strategies did the authorities employ in response?". Providing answers to these questions is important in addressing the issue of whether nationalism was spontaneously manifested at the grass-roots and for understanding the direction in which the government wanted to lead nationalism.

On the one hand, bottom-up actors represented here by an actively engaged Chinese public resorted to protests and boycotts of Japanese goods to make their voice heard and to toughen up the government's policy towards Japan. Given China's history of youth movements (Wasserstrom, 2005), students were noticeable participants to 2010 and 2012 events too and campuses were monitored by authorities. Activists known for their vocal stance against Japan, such as China Federation for Defending Diaoyu Islands (CFDDI) were prohibited by the authorities during the 2010 and 2012 events to engage in any anti-Japanese activities. For this reason, the analysis is extended to other anti-Japan examples outside the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents, to illustrate other methods that actors can resort to in order to make their pleas known to officials. Attempts to sail to the islands, as well as public petitions and lobbying the government, in addition to staging protests and boycotts, were all tools used to manifest anti-Japanese nationalism.

On the other hand, the top-down responses, as voiced and enforced by

the government and other public institutions, varied from region to region. The only constant in their approach was the media control over what was allowed to be published. An analysis of media content and strategies along with officials' statements, particularly in 2010, indicates not an attempt to inflame nationalism, but to tame it down. Sometimes, the strategies employed by the government were a direct response to a bottom-up manifestation, but at other times they were an initiative taken to prevent further escalations or unwanted courses of action; officials did not want to lose control of China's foreign policy. In contrast, 2012 reveals a wider coverage of the Diaoyu/Senkaku incident in the press, a more divided view among officials and a more tolerant attitude towards the public manifestations of nationalism.

Questions over the existence of bottom-up manifestations of nationalism as in the case of the 2010 and 2012 protests stem from the idea that the Chinese government has the capacity of controlling even the minutest form of dissent. The conventional wisdom claims that since the government could have controlled the protests and did not do so, it must have tolerated and even encouraged them. What is often neglected in this logic is that "maintaining" and "protecting" what is perceived to be Chinese territorial sovereignty, as the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are, is pertinent *both* to the Chinese public and their leaders. Through state media the Chinese government attempts to guide and instrumentalise anti-Japanese nationalism, but as exposed in this chapter, the non-state actors also articulate anti-Japanese nationalism which sometimes corresponds with that of the government and sometimes it does not.

The structure of the chapter is divided into three main sections: an analysis of protests, then boycotts and then activists' actions such as online petitions and informal channels; in each part, the bottom-up manifestation is followed by authorities' responses, first in relation to the 2010 events and then to 2012. Interviews with activists, supported by secondary sources, provide the bottom-up perspectives. Discourse analysis on media articles provide the top-down responses; the references to behavioural manifestations (as well as the absence of them) are revealing and are indicative for what purpose and to whose advantage discursive constructions are used by the state through media.

5.1. Protests

Street protests were one of the most visible ways through which the public expressed discontent about Japan's actions - in 2010 elicited by the

arrest of the Chinese captain by the Japanese authorities and in 2012 elicited by Japan's nationalisation of the islands. The protests were the controversial focus of debates in the media and academia about whether they were driven by top down or bottom up forces; a more nuanced approach towards the former forces, would raise questions over the extent to which the Chinese authorities encouraged, tolerated or reprimanded the protest.[49] Reports of foreign correspondents were mixed, while articles published by the Chinese media and Chinese scholars were limited.[50] The discussion on protests in this section is split into two parts, each reflective of the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident. This is followed by media strategies and other governmental strategies employed to deal with the bottom-up protests.

5.1.1. 2010 Protests and Authorities' responses

After the arrest of the fishing trawler captain in September 2010 protests started to emerge in several Chinese cities, a reminder of the last significant protests from 2005[51], though this time on a smaller scale. Protests were staged in major cities, slogans were shouted and Japanese flags burned, reminding Japan that "Diaoyu/Senakaku islands belong to China". As expected, September 18 saw a surge in protests due to the annual anniversary of the Mukden incident; "Never forget 9.18," and "Get the Japanese out of the Diaoyu Islands" were common scenes in front of the Japanese Embassy in Beijing and across the country (Kyodo, 2010). Customarily, the police is on high-alert on this date and in response authorities tried to avert the protests by removing protest related messages and closing down websites of known organisers

[49] Older sources, prior to 2010 incident, indicate that the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands have always been treated with extreme care by the authorities. Deans remarks that in 1996, *People's Daily* hardly published any news directly related to the islands, sign that the government wanted to play it down; some of the military publishers accused the Japanese government of a great conspiracy, but domestically it was all played down (2000, p.124). Suisheng Zhao (2004, p.274) mentions a leaked document from the CCP Central Propaganda Department according to which "[a]ll news reports and commentaries on the Diaoyu Islands shall take a uniform stand and be approved by the relevant central authorities and be issued by *Xinhua* News Agency and published in *People's Daily* and other major national newspapers". The current findings show that this approach has not changed for a decade.

[50] Three Chinese scholars I interviewed (2015) and who prefer to remain anonymous have disclosed that there is little or no research on "protests", "anti-Japanese nationalism" and "Diaoyu islands" in China; these topics cross the red lines drawn by the government, which makes researchers weary of approaching them.

[51] 2005 protests took place on a wide scale in relation to history textbook disputes and Japan's bid for a seat in the UN Security Council.

(McDonald, 2010). Even the nationalistic state owned newspaper, the *Global Times* reported that the Chinese government "downplayed them [the protests] by removing internet posts about gatherings and tightening security in some cities" (Ji, 2010).

Similar demonstrations continued throughout September, but by the start of October protests were already dissipating and the Chinese government was "calling" on Japan to mend bilateral relations. The Japanese PM Naoto Kan reciprocated by saying "there is a need for both countries to work calmly in deepening our strategic, mutually beneficial relations" (BBC, 2010a). Unexpectedly though, in mid-October demonstrations "spread" across the country once again. From hundreds to thousands of people were reported to protest in dozens of cities including Lanzhou, Baoji (Bodeen, 2010), Chengdu and Wuhan (AP, 2010), Xi'an, Chongqing (Global Times, 2010b), Deyang, Chongqing, Changsha, Nanjing, Zhengzhou (Ji, 2010) and many others over two weekends on October 16-17 and 23-24. As many as 10,000 protesters were reported in Mianyang, Sichuan province, alone on October 18 (Xiao D., 2010). Not much attention was given to this last wave of nationalism which raises questions over its occurrence given that it took place over a month later from the peak of the incident in September.

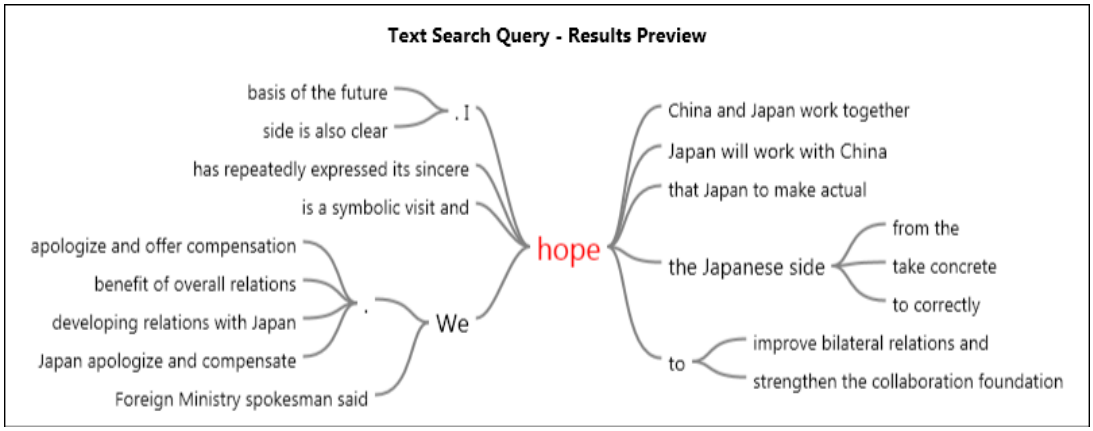
Four events can be traced close to the date of these late October protests which may explain what triggered them two weeks after the problems seemed to have settled. First, several anti-Chinese protests took place in Tokyo prior to mid-October (BBC, 2010a). Second, on October 9, though reported by Xinhua three days later, an aerial inspection around the islands was carried out by Japanese lawmakers (Xinhua, 2010). Third, on October 20, 70 lawmakers visited Yasukuni shrine (Global Times, 2010c). Forth, and less mediatized, on October 14, the opposition party represented by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and supported by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government filed a complaint with Google, exhorting it to delete the Chinese name "Diaoyu" from its mapping service (Ogura, 2010). Most likely, the October anti-Japanese protests were a response to these actions; largely driven by the masses. Three pieces of evidence support the argument that these protests were driven by bottom-up forces.

From the beginning of the September incident any form of anti-Japanese protests was met with subtle resistance from the Chinese government. "Talking about "Incident", Jiang Yu [Foreign Ministry's spokeswomen] stressed that we should remember history, learn from history, on the basis of the future. I hope the Japanese side to correctly understand and treat the past history, take

concrete actions to adhere to the road of peaceful development" (People's Daily, 2010b). Most of the Chinese officials' statements continued along these lines of "solemnly reiterating" China's right over the islands and "urging" Japan to reconsider its actions with the "hope" that Japan will come to better terms.

China's desire to overcome the Diaoyu/Senkaku island issue was repeated through expressions of "hope", 16 references in 13 articles analysed in the discourse analysis (out of a total of 25) were recorded. A snapshot of the usage of "hope" in the 2010 Chinese edition is presented in the word tree below, Fig.5.3, which is the result of a simple text search query in NVivo. Media analysis discloses a positive narrative in China focused on improving Sino-Japanese relations. In the first days after the boat collision, September 9-11, 2010, Sino-Japanese relations maintained a normal degree of diplomacy. However, only three days after the arrest of the captain the Chinese started using a more aggressive language which "urgently summoned" Japan to "immediately correct" its mistakes. Once the captain was released, the language softened and the rapprochement of Sino-Japanese relations was emphasised. The government appeared to be interested in normalising the relationship and not in swelling up protests.[52]

Figure 5.1. *People's Daily* language of hope



Second, one illustrative example comes from Xi'an, on October 16, 2010, when 7,000 students marched in protest to Japan, they became engaged in

[52] The government's desire to keep the lid on the 2010 incident can be noticed even by just looking at *People's Daily* front page. For example, in 2010 only once a Diaoyu/Senkaku island related news occupied the front page, while in 2012, from 10 to 19 September, 11 news appeared on the front page.

hours long negotiations with the authorities who tried to persuade the protesters to break up; only after this event the universities in the city imposed a ban on students leaving the campus for two weeks until the protests calmed down (Tong and Lei, 2014, p.129). Protests appeared to be spontaneous and took the authorities by surprise.

Third, on October 19, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ma Zhaoxu repeated his appeal from October 16 stressing that "patriotic fervour should be expressed legally and rationally" (Kyodo, 2010). *People's Daily* also did not cover any of these protests, but it published one article on October 26 which stressed the utmost need to maintain social stability, implying that it is through development and hard work that China can fight off "hostile foreign forces" (Guo Q., 2010); this signalled that anti-Japanese protests had to come to an end. Police forces were mobilised in the attempt of bringing closure to this issue: "Japanese television footage showed uniformed and plainclothes Chinese police watching closely and in some cases ripping down banners and escorting people away from the demonstrations" (Bodeen, 2010).

In a nutshell, these late October protests were most likely the result of bottom-up actions in reaction to Japan's actions and which did not particularly correspond to the government's agenda.

Top-down strategies employed in the press, such as omissions, are noticeable when further analysing media articles from both September and October 2010. The collective action of "protesting" was censored from the *People's Daily*, the newspaper recording only one mention during August-September 2010 (see Fig. 5.1).

These Chinese media blackouts are more notable when comparing the Chinese media with foreign media reports. On September 17, 2010, the BBC wrote "There are unconfirmed reports of anti-Japanese demonstrations in China including Shanghai, Nanjing and Guangzhou this weekend. Security around the Japanese Embassy in Beijing has been stepped up" (BBC, 2010b). By October 18, 2010, Japan's PM Kan remarks that thousands of protesters have taken to the streets in various Chinese cities and calls for calm and non-violent behaviour (BBC, 2010a). Yet, the Chinese edition published only one article on this matter – it vaguely referred to the fact that "Anti-Japanese protests recently broke out *in a few* Chinese cities" (Guo X., 2010; emphasis added).

At a closer analysis, it is not only the protests that were omitted but also any discussion of issues which could have fuelled the protests. For example, the day after the captain's release, Beijing demanded an apology and compensation from Japan for the captain's "illegal detention". On September

27 the claim was rejected as "groundless" by Tokyo who made a counter-claim for damage done to its patrol boats, later estimated at a total of ¥14.29 million (Hagstrom, 2012). While *People's Daily* reported China's demands for compensation on September 26 (2010c), not once does it mention Japan's refusal and its own demand for compensation.[53] Japan's refusal to pay would have only been seen as a sign of weakness to the Chinese side.

Given the above, the scarcity of the news and the Chinese government's prompt response in dealing with protests, it is reasonable to contend that the government was keen on taming nationalist protests. This line of argument is further substantiated by other results of the media analysis which show that *People's Daily* preferred instead to highlight the government's active engagement on the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands; the suspension of provincial and ministerial level bilateral contacts, and the postponements of events and conferences even at non-state level. The potential of further public turmoil was turned around by reassurances that the government was standing up for China's core interests and for its people.

5.1.2. 2012 Protests and Authorities' responses

When looking at the 2012 events, it is important to note that it was not only September, the month of the nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, but also August which was marked by smaller events related to the same disputed islands. The events surrounding the disputed islands in the months prior to the nationalisation, particularly from August, were closely followed, both at state and non-state actors level; meanwhile data from interviews and surveys was triangulated. Together they indicate that protests were a bottom-up manifestation of nationalist feeling, not solely a top-down measure.

Only two years after the 2010 events, anti-Japanese protests were reignited by Japan's nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Along with

[53] This does not come as a surprise. In 1999, when the US bombed the Beijing embassy in Belgrade, Shen writes "more problematic for the nationalists was that the $28 million America offered as compensation to China – for the bombed embassy and loss of lives – was not only less than what was expected, but was also partially offset by a sum of $2.87 million that the Chinese government was required to pay for the broken windows of the US Embassy in Beijing as a result of the demonstrations" (Reuters, 1999 cited in Shen). Shen concludes that "Although rarely mentioned in the mainland media, the Chinese agreement to compensate for the broken windows was far from a nationalist move" (2004, p.127).

the anti-Japanese protests from 2005, the 2012 protests remain (according to some estimates) two of the largest protests China has seen in the last decades (Kyodo News cited in Moore M., 2012). After Japan's announcement of the islands' purchase on September 11, anti-Japanese protests erupted across China. A staggering 24 percent of the 1000 Chinese citizens surveyed said they had participated in them (VOA News, 2013). This figure may sound staggeringly high, but since 79 percent of the Chinese respondents thought Japan's nationalisation of the islands was "incomprehensible" (VOA News, 2013), it is likely that they felt compelled to say that they took part in protests because they believed they should have or because they had to fall in line with what is expected from a "good nationalist" (see Chapter 7).

However, it has to be remembered that prior to the nationalisation of the islands, anti-Japanese feelings were already animated in China. On August 15, 2012, a group of Chinese activists who had landed on the islands were immediately arrested and days after deported back to China. By the evening of the arrest day, "The Diaoyu topic became one of the top three of Sina Weibo's most popular discussions with more than 9.1 million posts discussing it" (Liu and Liang, 2012). Only two days after, a group of Japanese activists and officials also landed on the islands. These events prompted small protests in China, but the magnitude could have been much larger had they been officially sanctioned:

> A 38-year-old shop owner in Dongguan said he received a chat group message a week ago calling on people to demonstrate yesterday. 'But the activity was cancelled four days ago after more than 20,000 people signed up for it. The organiser feared it would be out of control', he said, adding that many still showed up despite the cancellation (Lau, 2012).

Despite such restrictions being put in place, the protests still erupted in over 23 cities in China. The police were deployed in fairly large numbers to prevent the spread and/or the escalation of the protests. For instance, security officers sometimes were stationed overnight to prevent crowds from gathering the next day, they blocked roads, prevented the crowds from growing, seized brochures beseeching Chinese investments on the islands, while online authorities removed internet images and postings about protests (The Asahi Shimbun, 2012b). In a similar manner to 2010, the Chinese press provided minimal coverage of the August protests. These state reactions, complemented by foreign reports of the events, indicate that the Chinese authorities were

determined to prevent the intensification of the anti-Japanese protests in August.

August 2012 acted as a springboard for the protests that were to follow in September. The nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in September was the most substantial decision taken over the islands by any of the two contenders, China and Japan, since Zhou and Tanaka's agreement to "shelve" the dispute. It inevitably gathered much larger and more vocal anti-Japan crowds, and a change in the authorities' approach. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Japan's move was seen by most Chinese as a threatening unilateral action closely correlated with Japan's "militaristic" past, over a territory that supposedly was "shelved". Consequently, after the nationalisation of the islands several thousand people blocked the area surrounding the Japanese Embassy in Beijing. Demonstrators were split by police into smaller groups of one to two hundred and at least 20 such groups were reported to have swarmed the streets nearby; these groups threw rocks, bottles and displayed banners reminiscent of Japan's aggression during WWII (Johnson I. and Shanker, 2012). According to other estimates, in front of the Japanese embassy in Beijing alone, there were 10,000 protesters and 1,000 police officers maintaining order (The Asahi Shimbun, 2012c) and as many were reported in Shanghai and Shenyang (The Asahi Shimbun, 2012d).

The public protests which appeared to have started as an emotional outburst of nationalism in August and that the authorities tried to cut short, were now not only much wider, but appeared to enjoy some occasional tolerance from the authorities. There were mixed reports over the role that police officers played in these newly fired up protests. According to Asahi Shimbun, while initially, the police presence warded off violent crowds, on September 15 it reported for the first time that the police was passively watching how 10,000 protesters in Changsha, Hunan province, were storming a mall (2012e). The increase in the number of violent incidents is captured by lawmakers close to PM Noda: "we expected this level of demonstrations but the violence and damage to Japanese companies went beyond what the Chinese government could control" (Sieg, 2012).

Soon after, an incident that targeted a CCP facility may indicate the tipping point when media and officials changed course and impelled restraint. On September 17, in Shenzhen over 2,000 protesters collided with armed police who fired tear gas into the crowd after a CCP facility was attacked (Minemura and Koyama, 2012). On this day for the first time since the nationalisation incident *People's Daily* called for restraint by stressing the importance of

"civilized and lawful [patriotism] [which] are the essential qualities of every citizen". To ensure compliance, "censors blocked videos and search terms related to the demonstrations" (Earp, 2013). This incident is highly illustrative of the risks that large anti-Japanese protests carry in China.

Due to the proximity of this incident to the Mukden commemorations on September 18 it is difficult to ascertain that the attack on CCP facility was the tipping point for the authorities to decide to put an end to anti-Japanese manifestations. It may have been that in preparation for the Mukden commemoration, an already highly symbolic day for Chinese nationalists, the authorities decided as a precautionary measure to tighten security and quell protests. By September 19, foreign correspondents reporting from Beijing seemed to also agree that protests were better controlled by an increasing number of police determined to prevent the chaos and damage from the previous days (Osnos, 2012). One such example comes from the Beijing public security office who informed citizens via phone text messages that demonstrations in front of the Japanese embassy were banned; as a consequence, no groups of protesters gathered in front of the embassy on that day, and as a preventive measure subway trains skipped the nearest station to the embassy throughout the day (Hayashi and Yoshioka, 2012). The government was sending a clear message – the protests had to stop.

The bottom-up nature of these anti-Japanese protests was be questioned on two grounds. One is related to the police involvement as agitators, rather than preventers of anti-Japanese feelings and activities. Some claimed to have seen "plainclothes police officers acting like regular protesters and leading the demonstration" (The Observers, 2012). Recorded police announcements made at a protest in Beijing were often quoted as evidence for police interference:

> Japan has violated China's sovereignty. It's right for you to express your opinion. We share your feelings. The government has made it clear that they won't sit there and watch our territorial sovereignty be violated. We should endorse the government and support the government. We should express our patriotic fervour legally, rationally and orderly; obey the laws and regulations; do not take drastic actions; do not affect the social order (Ramzy, 2012).[54]

[54] Osnos (2012) from *The New Yorker* reported a very similar message.

Nonetheless, this message is nuanced. The government has to show understanding towards the protesters and their claim; it has to carry on its task of protecting the nation's integrity, upon which its legitimacy depends. At the same time, it also has to warn against stirring up violence, ensuring that the protests do not turn against the government, as seen in the Shenzhen incident above, and that "social stability" is maintained. In other instances, the undercover police presence at the protest maintained public order and ensured that the protests did not spin out of control: "A handful [of protesters] rushed past a police barricade but were quickly removed by plainclothes officers" (Branigan, 2012a). The authorities have to balance their response to protesters on a fine line between acceptance and restraint. Moreover, these examples indicate that different cities or local government took different approaches to protests and that there was little unified or coordinated action from the centre.

Another ground for challenging bottom-up anti-Japanese nationalism in China is usually related to the participants in the protests. Questions arose over the nature of the feelings of those who participated in anti-Japanese protests. Diamant (2012), writing in relation to the 1999 US bombing of the Chinese embassy, dismissed the Chinese anti-US protesters as "café latte nationalists", suggesting that many young urban Chinese mingled in the crowds because of curiosity, and they do not shy away from consuming US goods. The same logic was applied vis-a-vis anti-Japanese feelings, but this is a superficial reason to undermine Chinese nationalism which is primarily directed towards the actions of the Japanese government anyway and not towards everything else that Japan stands for.

Jessica Weiss also questions the bottom-up organisation of the protests based on the fact that activists had to negotiate with the police forces on the details of the protests they wanted to organise - the location, the time and number of protesters taking part in it (2014). But, filing for protest approval at the local authorities is not an exclusive procedure to China; besides, given that even less significant events can attract a large number of people, as shown by the 20,000 people who signed up to protest against the landing of the Japanese activists in August 2012, filing for protest approval is not unreasonable. Moreover, even if the authorities approved the protests it does not mean that they did so readily. Of course, it should be questioned who gets approval, at what point in time and under what circumstances, but this does not diminish

the nationalism that these activists or protesters generally nurture.[55]

Based on the interviews undertaken with academics, researchers and intellectuals, the general agreement is that anti-Japanese protests during 2010 and 2012 were a bottom-up reaction. 10 out of 16 believed that protests were a natural emotional outburst at the society level. Xiao Gongqin (Interview, 2015) sees the 2010 and 2012 protests as being organised by people out of their own volition and stresses that the government was concerned about the protests and did not encourage them. There are several reasons for which the government may have seen the protests as being risky. According to Ma Licheng (Interview, 2014) the government forbade the 2012 protests due to their fear that they will be turned against it by Bo Xilai's supporters.[56] Others stress the importance for the government of ending the protests not only because it was worried about domestic stability, but also because Sino-Japanese relations were running out of control (Interview with Lian Degui, 2014). From the other 6 out of 16 interviewees – five hinted at the bottom-up nature of the protests. Chen Zhimin implied that "the nationalisation of the islands was a blow to all Chinese" (Interview, 2015) which trigged street protests as a result; the government was unprepared for the nationalist outburst that followed (Interview with Gui, 2015). Likewise, Prof. Feng Wei cited the good Sino-Japanese relations at that time and the Chinese government's interest of maintaining bilateral relations on track rather than flaming anti-Japanese sentiments (Interview, 2015). Only one interviewee, Professor Pan from Fudan University stated clearly that in 2012 that the government was behind the protests, while he saw the 2010 protests as a bottom-up manifestation. Two other interviewees skilfully avoided answering the question. As for the interviews with activists and protesters, as expected, since they were in the middle of the protests, they are in unanimous agreement that protests are a normal and emotional expression of nationalism in Chinese society.[57]

So far the bottom-up aspect of anti-Japanese nationalism in China, both in 2010 and 2012 has been stressed. The next sub-section takes on media

[55] April 2005 protests were also not covered in the media due to the threat to stability and economy that they posed (Craig, 2007).

[56] Bo Xilai, an ousted Politburo member once tipped for top office in China, was convicted of bribery, embezzlement and abuse of power in September 2012. A month later the court rejected his appeal.

[57] Activists recognise that the government's policy towards them as organisers of protests is inconsistent. While they acknowledge that they may be instrumentally used for ulterior reasons, as long as they serve China's core interests they can come to terms with it (Interview with Li, 2014).

strategies employed in the Chinese print media, in detail, and online media, briefly, in response to protests.

5.1.3. Media strategies in response to protests

A less direct response to protests, in comparison to the police mobilisation described above, but which is nonetheless important for the direction in which the government wanted to guide nationalism, can be picked up from the strategies employed by the state media. The strategies gathered from the press in response to the unfolding events of 2012 are somehow similar to that of 2010; however, more examples are provided from the 2012 incident given its significance. The anti-Japanese manifestations were stronger in 2012, widely covered and the authorities were on a higher alert.

One point of discussion is the occurrence of key words such as "protests"/"demonstrations" (and derivatives) in relation to the "Diaoyu" islands dispute, shown in the table below.

Table 5.1: "Protests" and "demonstrations" in *People's Daily*[58]

	Chinese ed. 2010	Chinese ed. 2012	English ed. 2010	English ed. 2012
Demonstrations/ protests	1	2	5 (19) [59]	45 (48)

While in 2010 there was one single mention of "demonstrations" or "protests" in the Chinese edition, the English edition acknowledges the protests in 19 vague references and five direct ones. The 19 references are considered vague because most of them do not discuss street protests, they just point towards expressions of strong objections; one such recurrent phrase is: "the

[58] References are counted per article, so even if more than one reference is found in one article it is still counted as one.

[59] In the English edition of 2010, out of the 19 references only 5 are specific references to street protests/demonstrations, the rest refer to how "the government and the people protest against Japan's decision". In the English edition of 2012, out of 48 references, 41 refer to street protests in China, 4 to street protests in overseas Chinese communities and 3 to the "government and people's protest". The Chinese press written in English displays more liberal tendencies because audiences matter. Authors often have their hands tight when writing in Chinese for domestic audiences, but they enjoy more freedom when writing in English for foreign audiences, even when published by a Chinese company (Interview with Guo, 2015).

government and the public protest against Japan's decision". The other five references are clearly made in relation to street protests.

When looking at the 2012 Chinese edition, two references to protests were identified. In a departure from its usual policy, the Chinese edition printed on September 18 a few words about the protests: "in *a lot of places* of our country, people especially young people spontaneously take to the street to protest against the illegal 'purchase' of Japanese government, to express their patriotism and to show the clear-cut attitude of Chinese people" (People's Daily, 2012a; emphasis added). Spatial descriptors and other details about the protests were left out once again. The other news reports on protests staged in Taiwan and by the Dutch Chinese diaspora (People's Daily, 2012b) were considered to be of more "public interest" than the ones in China itself; authorities made full use of their censorship powers. Again, the government was extremely careful about not mentioning and inciting any protests home.

The lack of reporting on the location or the number of protesters supports the analysis of King et al. (2010, p.1) on Chinese censorship,[60] which finds that negative comments towards officials are not necessarily censored, but collective actions are:

> posts with negative, even vitriolic, criticism of the state, its leaders, and its policies are not more likely to be censored. Instead, we show that the censorship program is aimed at curtailing collective action by silencing comments that represent, reinforce, or spur social mobilization, regardless of content. Censorship is oriented toward attempting to forestall collective activities that are occurring now or may occur in the future.

This only points in the direction of a government gripped by the fear of domestic social upheaval and instability. Japan can fuel this fear because it can capture the imagination of the people and elites alike. Given the poor Sino-Japanese relations and perceptions of threat from the years before as shown in the previous chapter, Japan posed even more risk to potentially inflame Chinese public opinion.

Various other elements that could have further inflamed the protests were once again banned. Writer Lang Yaoyuan claims that not even one

[60] The analysis was based on online post, but the principle of preventing and deterring "collective actions" seems to remain the same when looking at print media too.

publication in Liaoning Province "dared publish a citizen-produced 'protect the islands' advertisement"; in response, the *Liaoning Daily* said that it "must thoroughly adhere to Xinhua News Agency's manuscripts" (Henochowicz, 2012a). Moreover, the government's desire to exercise control over the media extended beyond its own state newspapers. The Tokyo-based Overseas Courier Service Co. told the English-language *Japan Times* that Chinese customs officials seized at least two entire October issues of Japanese newspapers delivered by air for distribution in China because they contained reports on the developing island dispute (Earp, 2013).

Participating in online discussion was another popular way of contributing to the Diaoyu/Senkaku debate for many citizens. Controlling is essential for a government interested in keeping the lid on information. Online analysis has shown that "the Diaoyu islands are China's" patriotic refrain, as Sina Wiebo's tenth-most common 'hot topic' of 2012", peaking after August 15 and September 11, 2012 (Carlson and Cairns, 2016 p.36). At a first glance the situation might appear slightly different for online platforms; they are generally credited to be more liberal than the print press as they can bring about "social revolution because the ordinary people assume the unprecedented role as agents of change" (Yang G., 2009, p.213). While this may be the case in some instances, even the online media does not have a long "shelf life" when it comes to crisis situations and sensitive topics, and when it can marshal a collective action. Inconvenient websites get closed down, key words and entire articles get removed minutes or days after they have been posted. This was the case during the 2012 anti-Japan demonstrations too.

The online censorship can be followed chronologically. The scale of the Diaoyu/Senkaku events and the censorship is well illustrated through an online search of key words. When looking up "Japanese Embassy" (日本大使馆 *Riben dashiguan*) on Sina Weibo, one of the most popular microblogging websites in China, over 1 million results were returned on September 15; the next day only a censorship notice could be found (Feichangdao, 2012). On September 18 multiple key terms were blocked on Sino Weibo: 'beating', 'smashing' and 'looting' (打砸抢 *daza qia*ng) and 'thug' (暴徒 *baotu*) – as protests turned violent, 'Liangmaqiao' (亮马桥) - the location of the Japanese embassy in Beijing and 'school closure' (封校 *feng jiao*) – as a number of schools were closed down due to the escalation of protests (Henochowicz, 2012b). Similar to the strategy used in newspapers both in 2010 and 2012, the key words blocked tried to cover the extent of the protests. A day after, on September 19 the "censored list" got longer and the following terms were added: 'anti-Japan' (反日 *fanri* and 抗日

kang Ri), 'smash + car' (砸 *za*+车 *che*), 'smash' (打砸 *daza*), 'protest' (抗议 *kangyi*), 'take a walk' (散步 *sanbu*) - first became a sensitive term in February 2011 with calls for a "jasmine revolution" inspired by the Arab Spring, 'demonstrate' (游行 *youxing*), 'assembly' (集会 *jihui*) and 'demonstration' (示威 *shiwei*) (Henochowicz, 2012c). What stands out from this collection of banned words is the government's concern for maintaining protests under control and preserving social stability.

To avoid any signs of "violence" and chaos being reported, on September 15-16, 2012 photos of the looting, smashing and anti-Japanese protests were also removed from Weibo (Henochowicz, 2012d). The photos the CDT got the chance to copy on their own website are indeed quite "inflammatory" reminiscent more of a violent uprising – a lit fire appears in the centre of a photo, surrounded by other burning shops, clouds of smoke that raise and crowds of people who march ready to engage in scuffles with police forces. It all looks more dramatic than it probably was, but one can see its "potential" of inviting others to join in the protests for anti-Japanese reasons or to express any other grievance they may have.

The above examples of omissions and blackouts suggest when it comes to sensitive issues related to Japan and collective actions, the media was strictly and carefully regulated by the Party. As an interviewee with years of experience in the service of the state media put it "international propaganda is very open, while national propaganda is very closed and controlled" (Interview with L., 2014); this also explains why the English editions had a wider coverage of events.[61] The print media is to a large extent controlled by the government and it is a platform for promoting the will of those in political positions of power. In the words of Zhou Yongkang, in 2010 the ruling Communist Party's top law-and-order official: "We must strengthen propaganda and opinion work to guide the public to voice its patriotic aspirations in a rational and orderly way according to the law, protecting social and political stability" (cited in Reuters, 2010).

[61] However, a controlled propaganda does not necessarily imply the existence of clear guidelines. The guidelines are purposefully vague and journalists are kept on their toes because they risk breaking the laws unknowingly. As a former Chinese journalist explains, social stability constitutes the "biggest confusion for a journalist (...) many young journalists work on the edge", without knowing if they will be accused or not of inciting to subvert state power (Interview with M, 2013). The same interviewee notes that social stability is used as an excuse, plausible for many, by the CCP to prevent journalists from making a contribution to what is supposed to be a public knowledge and the case of Japan is certainly a case in point. Journalistic efforts of pushing from below to open up the media system remain for many simply a "false hope of good journalism".

5.1.4. Other government responses

In 2010 and 2012, according to media reports, a significant number of protesters were university students, hence why educational institutions are always tightly monitored by authorities. A leaked official document of the CCP sent to schools and universities in China, highlights the authorities' take on the protests in 2012:

> We must quickly discover, diffuse and settle large-scale demonstrations and activities which seriously violate social order in which students are involved (...) Educate the masses not to believe or spread rumours and not to attend demonstrations that have yet not been approved (...) Enhance campus security with frequent patrols. Work with student management departments and student organizations at the departmental level to limit Japan-related protests on campus. At the same time, prevent outsiders from entering the campus to make contacts or incite activity (...) guide students and faculty to express their patriotic fervour rationally, lawfully and calmly (...) Closely control contents online and in text messages which have a tendency to incite students to organize Japan-related demonstrations and large-scale gatherings. Promptly block and delete contents on campus networks which attack the Party and the government, incite or plan mass demonstrations or exhibit radical or violent behaviour (CDT, 2012).

On the one hand, universities were identified as a potential source of anti-Japanese turmoil requiring close scrutiny, demonstrating that nationalism as a bottom-up force was a real concern. In addition, the government was uneasy about the potential for of anti-Japanese protests to transform into anti-Party attacks.

A similar directive was sent in 2010. I was teaching at a university in Henan Province when the dispute erupted. I was called into a departmental meeting along with fellow Chinese colleagues (I had never before been invited to such meetings) where the head of department read a directive received from the "higher authorities". It asked lecturers not to broach the subject of Diaoyu/Senkaku issue with students and to avoid any comments on Sino-Japanese relations in general.

Moreover, other similar approaches were taken by the authorities both in 2010 and 2012 regarding attendance at and the organisation of protests. In

2010, in some cities classes were extended and campuses were guarded, new online calls for protests were deleted (Bodeen, 2010).[62] As one student explained, "each school department passes on directives to lecturers who are in charge of several classes and who in turn pass their instructions to each class monitor" (Interview with Student K, 2013). These organisational structures facilitate a quick top-down communication of key directives. On the same campus, other classes were warned a day in advance by their headmaster via texts on their mobile phones not to participate or they would be disciplined (Interview with Protester C, 2013).

Despite the ban on participating in protests, teachers and lecturers took decisions at the individual level based on their personal level of bravery and nationalism. Some believe it is the duty of each teacher to "plant the seeds of patriotism and breed patriotism" (Interview with Protester G, 2014). As one university student recounted, his lecturer encouraged nationalism among his students:

> One of our history lecturers who hates the Japanese, criticized us [students] for not loving our country and he wrote a powerful poem on the board and he read it three times until he made all of us feel ashamed [that we are not marching]. He did not care about the school's rules because he really loves our country (Interview with Protester D, 2013).

This example underscores the tightrope that the government is walking; historical memories aided by the constant background of an anti-Japanese campaign cannot just vanish even when the government sends directives to rein in nationalism.

Some students sneaked out of their dorms and took part in several marches. Despite the warnings nobody was disciplined. This was seen by students as a tacit approval of their actions on the grounds that everyone is a patriot after all (Interview with Protester C, D, E, 2014, 2015). According to another student:

> They [the university] must tell us to obey the rule of university. In fact, the university supports us because it is about our territory. They did

[62] In most universities in China the majority of students reside on campus, which is fenced and guarded; the university can easily impose curfews and restraints on students if needed.

> not allow [us to participate into protests] just because of the policy (...) The government has to keep order (...) The island is a big thing, anyone in China will do the same thing, including the university (Interview with Protester C, 2013).

The fear of being disciplined or arrested was also overcome by the psychological feeling of belonging and empowerment given by the large numbers of protesters all across China:

> [S]o many people do that [protest] for our territory (...) we hoped that police will not punish us so excessively because they are themselves patriots sharing our cause, the cause of the protesters. Only really violent protesters who damaged private property were properly searched and investigated. Those who love our country should also obey the law (Interview with Protester E, 2014).

In order to avoid a police clampdown of their protest in the aftermath of violent demonstrations reported across the country, a protester in a provincial city reported that they carried placards which read "we just protest, we do not smash cars" (Interview with Protester D, 2014). As a consequence, five separate protests took place in this city in 2012 under the supervision of approximately 10 policemen who ensured that order was kept.

The management of protests varied from university to university and from province to province. For instance, in 2010, Zhengzhou, university students were not denied the right to protest. One student, on the contrary, described students as "the main force [behind the protests], they posted calls on to protest on the internet and addressed students from all across the country" (Interview with Protester F, 2014). In contrast, during the same period, Beijing Foreign Studies University was more watchful and displayed an exaggerated control over activities held within their premises. One interviewee recounted how during the semi-final of an international debating competition, the motion proposed for debate was that the "Diaoyu islands belong to Japan"; half-way through the debate "officials", suspected to be from the university's propaganda department, suspended the debate and asked for a different motion to be proposed before the competition was allowed to continue (Interview with A, 2014).

To sum it up, these examples from Chinese educational institutions cannot be generalised at a larger scale due to lack of data, but they are

illustrative of people's nationalism and of bottom-up initiatives of protesting, as well as of authorities' hypersensitivity to the risks that anti-Japanese protests can bring about. Additionally, a common understanding emerged from interviews with protesters. From their perspective, both them and the government had a common agenda – that of protecting the nation and the national interest. Even when prohibited from protesting, the need for preventing violence and instability is agreed and what matters most is that "after all we are all patriots", as interviewees often recited. Moreover, their narrations also showed that the government directives are reinterpreted by local educational and police institutions. In contrast, print and online media censorship remained a more rigid strategy throughout both 2010 and 2012 protests. Taken altogether, the bottom-up nature of protests were shown during 2010 and 2012 events; the only time the government showed some tolerance towards the protests was in the first 5-6 days after the 2012 nationalisation of the islands, while for most of the rest of the time they took a preventive if not restrictive stance.

5.2. The Anti-Japanese boycott campaign

Anti-Japanese protests were often accompanied by boycotts. Boycott campaigns are not new in China. In 1932, the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry published a fascinating synopsis detailing nine boycotting events from 1908 to 1932, under the suggestive title of "The Chinese government encourages and directs the Anti-Japanese boycott. The anti-Japanese boycott by China is tantamount to an act of war". Hence in 2010 and 2012 the calls to boycott Japanese goods, on online forums and during street protests, came as no surprise. Primarily boycotts are seen here as a mechanism of bottom-up forces to make their voices heard; nevertheless, the boycotts power can be strengthened by adding in government's weight through economic sanctions or can be weakened by limiting the propagation of the boycott campaign messages.

To start with, a comparison is drawn between the 2010 and the 2012 boycott campaign against Japanese goods, the latter had some degree of economic impact. Then, the management of boycotts by the government is discussed in order to shed light on how the Chinese government addressed these expressions of nationalism and why.

Bottom-up boycotts during 2010 and 2012

Boycotts are an easy way of expressing nationalism and discontent towards Japan for those interested in the Diaoyu/Senkaku debate. As one boycotter explains: "Many people boycotted Japanese goods and there was a debate on the efficiency of this strategy, but as someone who has a low social status, I have no better way of expressing nationalism, so I boycotted too" (Interview with H, 2014). And it was not just common people who took part in boycotts. Popular figures joined in too; by means of illustration, the well-known Chinese entrepreneur Chen Guangbiao, promoted the cause of Diaoyu/Senkaku ownership and indirectly of Japanese boycotts through adverts, public appearances and speeches which received constant coverage from domestic media and reached over 4.3 million Weibo followers (Wertime, 2014). He supported the boycotts by spending "nearly $800,000 on dozens of Chinese-made cars to give to people whose Japanese-brand cars were damaged" (Shanghai Daily, 2014).[63]

Estimating an accurate number of boycotters of Japanese goods is difficult, but an idea of the popularity of boycotts can be deduced from various sources. During 2010 and 2012, when a protest was reported it was often accompanied by calls to boycott through banners reading "Loving my China, boycotting Japanese products" (Bandurski, 2010). Boycotting was particularly popular in 2012 when "two-thirds of 1,000 Chinese surveyed said they were boycotting Japanese products" (VOA News, 2013).

Anti-Japanese boycotts can affect economic growth rates and economic behaviour. In 2010, boycotts were not powerful enough to affect Sino-Japanese trade. On the contrary, trade was business as usual, imports of Japanese goods into China rose by 36 percent and were the highest in five years, while exports from China to Japan also rose by 24.7 percent (Japan External Trade Organisation, n.d.). In 2012, unlike 2010, the effect of boycotts on the trade between China and Japan became more evident; exports to China

[63] In the midst of the protests, "boycotts" sometimes turned violent against Japanese products and even their Chinese users. Japanese branded cars were set alight and Japanese stores and restaurants were vandalised. Some authorities even took preventive measures of maintaining order by banning Japanese cars from the road: "The Huaihua Municipal Party Committee gives notice in the cable below that all brands of Japanese cars are barred from driving on the road from September 17 through 19. All units must park their cars in a safe location to guarantee protection! Those who do not take this warning seriously and who find themselves in an accident will have the party involved and the concerned leaders investigated for blame" (Henochowicz, 2012e). These types of warning applied to everything that was related one way or another to Japan, from factories manufacturing Japanese labelled products to Japanese restaurants. For instance, Uniqlo, a popular Japanese clothing store, closed 42 of its stores in China, and one branch displayed in the window a message reading: "We support the claim that the Senkaku [Diaoyu] islands are inherently China's territory" (Koh, 2012).

fell by 10.4 percent (Japan External Trade Organisation, 2013). Several industries were affected; according to the Head of Sony in China: "The spat plunged relations between Japan and China into a deep freeze and hit sales of Japanese goods in China" with an estimated recovery of "three business years after a dip in the current one" (Shirouzu, 2012). The automobile industry was hit the hardest registering a drop of 82.4 percent in exports from Japan to China in October 2012 and an overall 63 percent drop between September and December in comparison with the previous year (Japan External Trade Organisation, 2013). JPMorgan Chase & Co. also estimated that the drop in sales "may have cut Japan's growth in the latest quarter by about one percentage point" (Bloomberg, 2013).

Boycotts contributed to several changes on the market. "Nationalism around the issue [of Diaoyu/Senkaku islands] has resulted in lower demand for Japanese products in China and even Chinese firms sourcing products from Korean suppliers", said Nash, managing director at IHS Singapore, a multinational company that provides research and analysis to industries (Bloomberg, 2013). By the end of the year- the US replaced China as the largest importer of Japanese goods.[64] Changes were seen not only in Chinese economic behaviour, but also in Japan's behaviour: "last year [it] sharply reduced its dependence on chemical products from China, including rare-earth minerals, as Japanese companies diversified their sourcing to Mongolia and Central Asian countries" (Obe, 2013).

The government's response

The boycotts of Japanese goods were subject to the same treatment as the anti-Japanese protests– they were not covered at all in the Chinese edition of *People's Daily* in 2010 and 2012. In 2010 officials did not address the issues of boycotts. However, in 2012, boycotts became slightly more prominent in other media and significantly more in official discourses.

In the wider Chinese media, despite still a limited discussion on the topic, there was a sense of support for the boycotts. At the beginning of the protests after the nationalisation of the islands in 2012, the China's Central

[64] The spat over the islands should not be seen as the sole factor that brought this market change about. Professor Feng Wei (Interview, 2015) citing the Japan Bank for International Co-operation explains 4 reasons which account for the deteriorating Sino-Japanese economic relations: 1) 42 percent rise of labour prices and land price in China 2) 22 percent other foreign competitors 3) 26 percent difficult Japanese companies' communication with the Chinese government and Japanese yen depreciation 4) 12 percent political relations due to Diaoyu/Senkaku islands.

Television Channel (CCTV) halted the advertisements of Japanese products for two days as a sign of support (AP, 2016). Some newspapers publicly supported and even advocated "boycotting Japanese goods" in their coverage and removed advertisements of Japanese companies from their pages (Tang Y., 2012). In regional newspapers, several articles make references to contemporary anti-Japanese boycotts, all carrying a similar message: "boycotts are somehow too emotional but show our clear stance that the dignity of the Chinese people is inviolable" (Lin, 2012).[65]

One notable official voice discussing boycotts came from within the Ministry of Commerce; on September 13, 2012, at a news press briefing, Vice Minister of Commerce Jiang Zengwei justified the boycotts as an appropriate countermeasure for Japan's nationalisation of the islands: "If Chinese consumers, in a reasonable manner, express their positions and views against Japan's violation of China's territorial sovereignty, I think it is within their rights to do so and it is understandable" (Xinhua, 2012c). Jiang Zengwei's comment was not a slip of the tongue. A week later, on September 19, 2012, Sen Danyang, the Spokesperson of the Ministry of Commerce, reinforced the same point by saying that the "government will condone a consumer boycott of Japanese products" while he further called for Japan to take full responsibility for the damage of economic and trade relations between the two countries (Hayashi and Yoshioka, 2012).[66]

The government's approach in 2012 sits in contrast with the post-2005 protests when the political elites agreed that deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations would negatively affect China's economic and social reforms (Ming Pao cited in Craig, 2007, p.73). It was Bo Xilai, Minister of Commerce at that time, who called off the boycott campaign warning that it could hurt China as much as Japan (China Business Times, 2005). *Ming Pao* also reported that the Central Propaganda Department asked all Chinese news outlets to stop all reporting on protest activities, particularly the boycott of Japanese goods (Craig, 2007, p.73). In 2005 China was still building up its economy, while in 2012

[65] Only in 5 out of 19 article mention the word "boycotts"; 2 of them are simply descriptive and 3 of them carry this message of understanding, even of partially supporting, the protests. Of course not everyone agreed with the anti-Japanese boycotts. For instance, Liu Jiangyong, professor at Tsinghua University, supported China's tough stance on Japan, but did not see boycotts as a useful campaign in this sense (China Daily Europe, 2012).

[66] For more details, see Chapter 4 where China's confidence in its economic power is discussed.

maintaining good economic relations with Japan must have not been seen with the same sense of urgency.[67]

Also, unlike 2005, but the same as in 2010, in 2012 the Chinese government was accused of sustaining the boycotts by adding its own economic pressure on Japan (Reilly, 2013, p.18). Some of the accusations pointed at China's halting of rare earth mineral exports to Japan and prolonging import inspections unnecessarily (Yoshioka, 2012). In other instances, on September 17, 2012, the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Press and Publication which oversees publishers in the capital, summoned editors and told them they "should unify ideas and grasp a (political) direction", which was interpreted as refraining from releasing and selling books related to Japan (Hayashi and Okudera, 2012). Despite the fact that the Municipal Bureau denied these accusations, such statements gain substance as several others raised this issue. Cui Weiping (cited in Wochi Kochi, 2013), an author and professor at Beijing Film Academy, reported similar governmental restrictions and those who visited bookshops at the time noticed that Japanese writers were removed from stores.

In this context, curiously, the Chinese academic community was asked by the government to give talks in educational institutions on the harm of boycotting Japanese goods, both in 2010 and 2012 (Interview with Guo, 2013). While this action was in line with the government's attitude of "hope" of rehabilitating Sino-Japanese relations from 2010, it strikes one as odd in 2012 when the Ministry of Commerce was so outspoken in its support for the anti-Japanese boycotts. Li Xiushi, researcher at the Shanghai Institute of International Studies and Prof. Guo Dingping from Fudan University are some of those who, at the government's invitation, visited many communities, schools and police stations to give lectures on the importance of maintaining good Sino-Japanese relations; they warned against the damage the protests and boycotts can bring to China's job market, economy and social stability (Interviews, 2014). Li Xiushi sees this governmental initiative as necessary because "it is through basic education delivered to ordinary people that this kind of conflict [Sino-Japanese] can be stopped. The most important thing is to tell people the truth which Japan does not always do" (interview, 2014). This government's approach to turmoil is not new. In 2005 academics gave similar talks to several universities considered to be the epicentre of the uproar, while the Ministry of Public Security warned citizens against illegal protests (Shirk,

[67] No comments can be found from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the matter of boycotts; MFA is likely to have divergent interests from the Ministry of Commerce.

2007, p.218). To ensure that the message was clear, the Central Propaganda Department even conferred a special session chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to which 3,500 party, government, and army officials attended; the message conveyed was clear - in order for China to continue its development unabated, Sino-Japanese relations are important (Craig, 2007, p.70-71). In 2012, at the top of the government agenda was not the economic interest derived from Sino-Japanese relations, but domestic stability.

To conclude, two assumptions can be made. First, in 2010 and 2012 the government did not openly criticise boycotts in the media, often refraining from taking on the topic. For a short while it tolerated boycotts, in order to please protesters and to be in tune with the "national feeling". Yet, by organising lectures to soften the anti-Japanese spirits in China, the government was clearly concerned about the magnitude anti-Japanese boycotts could reach and the implication that it may have for anti-Japanese nationalism. Second, the vocal stance of the Ministry of Commerce in favour of boycotts is the first indicator of China's confidence in its own economic power, as substantiated in Chapter 4, and of a potential division of opinions among Chinese political elites, a topic which is discussed further in Chapter 6.

5.3. Anti-Japan NGOs and activists' actions

Chinese NGOs and activists working on Japan related projects represent another group of actors on the stage of Chinese politics. Some of them, as it is the case of The China Federation for Defending Diaoyu Islands (CFDDI), The China Federation of Civil Claims against Japan (CFCCJ) and Patriots Alliance, are usually very outspoken in expressing views and organising activities that target Japan. However, being part of an NGO that deals with Japan related projects is not easy due to the government's strict regulations. Their activities are further curtailed, as activists themselves explain in a series of interviews.

Generally, in China, social movements' existence relies not on the law, but on the government's benevolence, therefore developing close ties with citizens and companies at home or abroad is not an option for these organisations (Ho P., 2008, p.2). These rules apply to CFDDI and CFCCJ, two of the most recognised organisation in China working on Japan related issues. The former organisation has set up protests, signed petitions, lobbied authorities and sailed to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands (see Chapter 7); the latter organisation has been working particularly hard in obtaining compensation from the Japanese government for Chinese victims of WWII. As one of the

founders explains, none of the two organisations actually exist lawfully as an NGO; they were not allowed to register in China, so they registered in Hong Kong. As part of the "functioning agreement" between the organisation and the Chinese government, activists cannot be affiliated with other organisations. While they still have links with activists based in Hong Kong, Canada and the US, the government bans them from running joint meetings or projects (Interview with Tong, 2015). This rule is based on the same principle discussed earlier - banning joint actions or cooperation that may lead to collective actions are an area of "no go" for the government.

Asked about why they are allowed to function in the first instance, one of the founders believes it is the anti-Japanese ethos that shields the organisation: "Chinese people's hatred against Japan cannot be controlled by the government (…) it cannot throw all activists and patriots in jail, so we came to terms with each other" (Interview with Tong, 2014). Moreover, if it was not for the shared sentiment that both the government and the activists bear, their organisations might have otherwise been just another name on a long list of banned or closed down organisations, the director of CFDDI explains (Interview with Li, 2014). This mirrors the protesters' belief, expressed in the earlier sub-section on protests, that all Chinese are patriots, including the government, and by extension this often implies being anti-Japanese.

The government's response

While the activists claim success in some projects "undertaken to protect China's national interests", as detailed in Chapter 7, there are serious limitations imposed on their activities. In 2010 and 2012 these activists were expected to be at the core of organising anti-Japanese protests, but they actually had little involvement in them due to the government's stern monitoring. Some were placed under "house arrest" and others were permanently monitored by police which prevented them from organising or attending the protests; their website was also turned offline during symbolic dates such as September 18 commemorating the Mukden Incident (Interview with Tong, 2014; Interview with Activist N., 2014). Others lost their jobs and continued to be harassed along with their families by police officers in what they describe "pressure beyond belief"; their strategy of survival was to "hold on and persist" (Interview with Li, 2014). One of the activists who otherwise participated in the organisation's activities of defending the islands back in 2003-2004, recounts:

> During 2010 and 2012, I wasn't involved in any protest against Japan. In 2010, I went back to Zhejiang province, a fishing port in Zhejiang and all the hotels in vicinity were controlled by the police and no one was allowed to sail to Diaoyu Island. I wasn't able to be there on the spot when the protests against Japan were going on in Beijing and other cities as my presence was unwanted by the officers who were working for the local governments (Interview with Activist N., 2014).

Other activists or lawyers who supported CFDDI in their actions or simply the anti-Japanese movements more broadly got the same treatment from the authorities. In 2010, civil rights activists and lawyer, Liu Anjun, was warned against participating in protests by the Security Bureau; Zhang Hui, also a Beijing based activist confirmed that he too was followed by police as he went out on September 18 and reported that other activists were restrained to their homes or detained (Yu M., 2010). Similar reports emerged also from Guangzhou (Chinese human rights defenders, 2010) in what appears to have been a crackdown on potential dissent in cities known for having a centre of unrest.

The ban on their activities indicates that the government wanted to prevent an upheaval of nationalism and those who posed a higher risk of amassing demonstrators were banned from exercising any activity. Not only were they banned from taking part in protests, but also from adjacent activities. For instance, CFDDI was not permitted to travel to Japan and accept the invitation of a Japanese media outlet for attending a sit down discussion with Japanese Right Wing activists (Interview with Li, 2014). On a different occasion, an NGO funded by the children of WWII war criminals who call for improved China-Japan relations invited them to workshops in Japan, but their travel plans were annulled by the government (Interview with Li, 2014). Being on foreign soil and engaging with their counterparts meant that the Chinese government had no control over the media and things could have got out of hand (Interview with Activist N., 2014).

Other anti-Japanese accounts prior to the 2010 events help to further understand the government's approach towards anti-Japan activists over the years. An activist involved in a series of anti-Japanese projects for over a decade described the day of November 9, 2004, when Iris Chang, widely known for her book "*The Rape of Nanking*" in which she revivifies historical accounts of Japanese brutalities, committed suicide. She was much respected by Activist O. and his fellow activists, who gathered as usual in Beihai Park, one of the

main spots in Beijing, to mourn her death. To their surprise, police officers were patrolling all around the park and approached them. He explained that "it was during Jiang Zemin time and he used to keep a close eye on any events that could turn against the government. They were worried that sentiments could escalate" (Interview with L., 2015). Even Iris Chang's death must have been perceived as powerful and evocative with the potential of causing trouble in the form of a collective action that had to be stopped. Under the Hu-Wen administrations matters were laxer and the expression of anti-Japanese feelings was tolerated (Interview with L., 2015). In 2004, Tong Zeng also noted the new leadership have "a stronger feeling of nationalism than their predecessors, so we have more space to carry out our activities" (cited in Lam, 2006, p.216). Yet, this did not translate into more freedom during the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents.

Despite restrictions, these organisations are resourceful thanks to some of the status that their members enjoy among certain party officials. Back-channels were built in time through various positions that the members of these organisations held in the official state apparatus, through personal and professional links. This enables them to disseminate ideas in the hope that they would provoke debate or could influence actors. Messages and petitions are passed to political elites, through a mix of journalistic and political networking:

> We have some internal sources at different journals, for example, Xinhua. Some journalists who have close ties with the government write secretly and confidently to the top of the government (*neican).* We will write something and send it to the Central Committee of the CCP, the top of the government, and the Central Commission will ponder on these opinions; if they find these ideas good, they will order the Ministry to change the policy (Interview with Tong, 2014).

Due to the structure of the Chinese system where there is little space for civil society or public debate, activists are not left with many alternatives as they have no means of contacting the MFA, whose doors and phones remain unanswered (Interview with Tong, 2014). The government knows that Mr. Tong, one of the founders and leading figure of the organisation, represents many people and organises them, but still no official has ever approached him, except the local police who keeps a close eye on him (Interview with Tong, 2014). Since the government has never engaged the organisation in conversations and has never replied to these petitions, it is difficult to evaluate whether the

activists exercise any influence, or if their concerns even reach the intended political elites; nonetheless, activists are resilient and continue to pursue what they believe is their duty towards their nation.

Other ways to which the activists resorted to reach officials were attempts of direct lobbying. In 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2008 a Diaoyu activist, who is also active in other humanitarian fields, along with a lawyer friend, tried to submit a petition asking the Chinese government to stop any joint cooperation with Japan for exploring oil and gas in East China Sea. They approached several major national bureaus in Beijing, including the National People's Congress (NPC), but was stopped at the gate. These failed efforts took them to their next stop, the Central Military Commission (CMC) where they found an "open door". They went with the hope that "military leaders stand up and get involved when it comes to making decisions concerning China's sovereignty" (Interview with Activist N., 2014). They were right, this time their pledge was received. "As for petitioning CMC, it is not as difficult as a lot of people think, it is just that most people feel CMC is unapproachable!", the activist explains.

The petition put forward was well articulated and encompassed nationalistic views commonly circulated in the literature, media and online forums. In short, the Sino-Japanese joint sea exploration was found unacceptable for several reasons. First of all, the timing of announcing a joint cooperation was disadvantageous for China because it came at a point when Taiwanese activists were going long strides to protect the islands, hence the Sino-Japanese consensus would further alienate Taiwan from the Mainland. This is also a reflection on how inclusive of Taiwan, nationalism on the mainland is. Second, compromising on sovereignty based on the median line which "arguably satisfies Japan's greed at the cost of China's sovereignty and state interests (…) would be the most humiliating thing ever happens to the new China in the recent 60 years" - historical humiliation is once again highlighted. Third, "policymaking related to natural resources which belong to all people of China should not be a 'dark box' as it violates the Constitution" - an indication that activists strive for more than just antagonising Japan. The following paragraphs are too powerful to be paraphrased:

> However, the negotiation with Japan on the East Sea issue is done secretly in a dark case, which leads to strong disaffection from the public. Moreover, people's freedom of expressing opinions on the issue is blocked, and people's rights of assembly, demonstration and protest

> are deprived, even official media is required not to mention public opinion on East Sea issue, plus online information is censored and monitored. On the internet, East Sea issue has become the restricted zone. (All the articles that contain "East Sea" would be censored, only those that are in favour of the consensus could make it through the censorship). Many websites shut down because of this, (for instance, the website of the China Federation of Defending the Diaoyu Islands), countless online forum posts are deleted, numberless IDs and IPs are blocked, all of which suggest this "principled consensus" is undoubtedly against the will of the people. (And there is an easy way to support my theory, which is a referendum).
>
> Such drastic measures are taken to deprive people of their rights to know, to express their opinions, and to say things that are against concessions made towards to Japan. Such great state property owned by all the Chinese people is sent away as a gift to other countries, metaphorically, it's like the servant blinds the eyes of the master, gags his month, ties up his limbs, and then takes his property away with another robber. Definitely this is unacceptable for the Chinese people!
>
> The excuses we used to limit people's civil rights including rights of speech, assembly and demonstration are "for the sake of a stable society" and "sovereignty come before human rights". But now, our civil rights are limited when people are trying to use them to guard the sovereignty of the country, which means humans rights and sovereignty are both damaged; obviously, this is illegal and unreasonable, which may lead to self-destruction. If we "stabilize" our society like this, we are like keeping heading to an erupting volcano, or trying to stay in the lobby of a collapsing building (Interview with Activist N.).[68]

This petition provides a good example of "nationalism at work", emphasising concepts of "history" and "sovereignty", on the one hand and "civil liberties", on the other. Moreover, it highlights how fine and interconnected the line between complaints against the Japanese and Chinese government is.

The government was worried of fuelling further the discontent in China, which is why the activists were kept under supervision; the main risk that they pose is that they have the necessary connections, finances and psychological

[68] The NPC petition was provided by Activists N. during one of the online interviews.

resilience to gather a bigger crowd than the officials would like to see. So whereas the government tolerated to some degree protests from the masses, it certainly did not encourage those who could have raised the risk level domestically. Nonetheless, the restrictions imposed on activists did not stop them from carrying on with their work in relation to Japan. They continue to push for compensation on behalf of Chinese WWII victims against Japan's government and private companies. In an attempt to raise further awareness of Sino-Japanese history and their demand for compensation at an international level, their latest project involves the publication of hundreds of letters (both in Chinese and translated in English) collected from the Chinese who were victims of Japan's Army.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the tools at the disposal of non-state actors that can be used to express nationalism and the government's response to such behavioural manifestations of nationalism.

Protests and boycotts in both 2010 and 2012, but predominantly during 2012, were widespread across the country. Whether it was students, activists or the wider public, the actions they mounted highlighted the bottom-up nature of anti-Japanese nationalism both in 2010 and 2012. The government's response to the 2010 incident was softer on Japan and tougher on the domestic protesters, while in 2012 the government appeared to be more tolerant and willing to reinforce the tougher stance of the public towards Japan, at least for a short period. When digging deeper, however, protests and boycotts received minimal coverage, some universities were urged to confine students to their campuses, likewise activists were banned from taking part in any anti-Japanese manifestation, while scholars were asked to lecture on the importance of Sino-Japanese relations. These measures signal that the government was worried about anti-Japanese feelings erupting further and about the collective opportunities that may have created for other protests. To sum up, there is no conclusive evidence to show that the Chinese government encouraged anti-Japanese nationalism with a sole unified central policy.

Another point to remember is that these bottom-up and top-down forces should not be understood as being in total opposition to each other. The government has rarely used massive force against protesters and has always taken a vantage point by reprimanding violent protests while accepting other anti-Japanese manifestations; through this approach the government gathered

legitimacy in the eyes of the Chinese public. When the government takes an anti-Japanese stance, even if it is by tolerating rather than encouraging such manifestations, protesters and activists perceive China's core interests as being protected and rally their support behind the government, as further discussed in Chapter 6.

The chapter that follows moves on from behavioural elements of anti-Japanese nationalism to discussions of anti-Japanese nationalism depicted from both top-down and bottom-up perspectives.

Chapter 6.
Contemporary discussions of nationalism

> *"There is the 'patriotism' of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler, and there is our own patriotism. Communists must resolutely oppose the so-called 'patriotism' of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler [...] China's case is different because she is a victim of aggression. For us, defeatism is a crime, and to win the era of resistance is a duty we cannot shirk. For only by fighting in defence of the motherland can we defeat the aggressor and achieve national liberation"*
>
> (Mao cited in Kane, 2004, p.103)

The above words of Mao from 1938, when China found itself in the midst of a civil war and was at war with Japan, are still pertinent when looking at contemporary Sino-Japanese relations and anti-Japanese feelings in China.

After providing an account of how nationalism was constructed throughout the last century in China, what triggered the 2010 and 2012 escalation in anti-Japanese feelings, how nationalism was behaviourally manifested bottom-up and how the authorities responded to it, this chapter continues to explore the ways in which anti-Japanese nationalism is discussed in contemporary China. The question is "How was anti-Japanese Chinese nationalism discussed in relation to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in 2010 and 2012?". The discussion is based primarily on discourse analysis on the *People's Daily* which provides the top-down perspective, on interviews with Chinese activists which provide the bottom-up perspective, and on interviews with Chinese scholars which complement the two views. Unlike the previous chapter, instead of focusing on behavioural manifestations of anti-Japanese nationalism, it is the very content of anti-Japanese nationalism that is the object of research.

The assumption that the anti-Japanese nationalism in relation to the 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident was purely orchestrated by the Chinese government is a misunderstanding of what nationalism means in China today. Elites cannot remain immune to the "anti-Japanese campaign"; parts of the Chinese political and military elites have ingrained key concepts of "territoriality" and "sovereignty" in a similar manner in which the public has. Their understandings of anti-Japan nationalism are compared with those of

intellectuals, academics, researchers, activists and protesters in order to provide an opportunity for assessing whether such interpretations of anti-Japanese nationalism mirror each other.

Two main findings came to the fore of this chapter. The first finding is that the government emphasised anti-Japanese nationalism by focusing on history, territorial sovereignty, and enhancing mistrust. The link between nationalism and sovereignty and history is a significant finding because it is often presumed in the literature, but rarely supported with empirical evidence, obtained here through the analysis of top-down and bottom-up perspectives, which mirror each other.

A second finding reveals a "unified" form of anti-Japanese nationalism; while respondents had different understandings of what "nationalism" is, understandings of "anti-Japanese nationalism" were very similar. The novelty of the finding rests in that "nationalism" generally appears to be dichotomised, between loyalty to the Party and loyalty to the nation; however, when identifying an external enemy as in the case of Japan, not only does Japan earn the same negative connotations in both bottom-up and top-down accounts, but it also unifies people under the rule of the Chinese government.

The structure of this chapter derives from the two arguments exposed above. It starts with a discussion of nationalism based on state media, as well as views of the Chinese political and military officials, collected from other secondary sources. The second part reconstructs definitions of nationalism based on interviews by protesters, activists, researchers and academics. Through discourse analysis on both state media and interviews transcripts, the features of anti-Japanese nationalism can be compared.

6.1. Top-down perspectives on nationalism

The top-down analysis of nationalism is based on articles published in *People's Daily*, as justified in the methodology chapter. Discourse analysis is employed with the aim of providing an appreciation of the type of nationalism promoted in the media and the different strategies used to do so.

The main question discourse analysis on *People's Daily* helps answering is: "What type of nationalism does the government portray in relation to Japan?"; the sub-question that follows is: "What rhetoric hides in the state-led nationalist discourse, and what rhetoric is kept out from the public sight?". The answer to these questions are provided in four sections. First, it identifies the most common themes associated with nationalism/patriotism, while it also

raises awareness about themes that are lacking; second, it discusses polarised "us" (China) vs "other" (Japan) images; third, it explains how an inclusive language galvanises anti-Japanese nationalism; finally, officials who approached the topic of anti-Japanese nationalism have been included as they can provide direct insights into perceptions among elites.

6.1.1. Common themes in *People's Daily*

87 articles were selected from People's Daily on the basis that they included references to "Diaoyu islands" and that they were published within the periods of September-October 2010 and August-October 2012 when the Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents occurred**.** All the 87 articles were scrutinised and coded and organised into themes. Some themes were based on expectations from informed reading and they were actively sought for, while others were themes that became noticeable due to repetitive textual patterns and were retrieved by running a frequent word search in Nvivo as shown in Table 6.3. These key words were suggestive of the most popular themes that were to be coded, an extensive list of which can be found in Table 6.4. Based on this discourse analysis, the main findings are twofold. First, the Diaoyu/Senkaku incident was interpreted through the lenses on three main themes, which are closely correlated with nationalism: sovereignty, history and mistrust. Second, the interpretation of the islands incident bolster two of China's images, that of a victim, as well as that of a victor.

Table 6.1: Among the 50 most frequent words retrieved in the sample of *People's Daily* articles, Chinese edition

Frequent word	No of references
Sovereignty	234
Illegal	82
History	73
War	69
Law	63

Table 6.2: Themes by number of articles in the sample of *People's Daily* articles, Chinese edition

Per article Chinese ed.	2010 (total 25)	% of frequency per article 2010	2012 (total 62)	% of frequency per article 2012
Japan's illegal actions	14	56%	49	79%
Territorial sovereignty	14	56%	46	74%
International law	1	4%	31	50%
History War	4	16%	29	47%
Mistrust	3	12%	15	24%
International opinion	1	4%	9	14%
Humiliation	0	0	4	7%
(Street) protests	1	4%	2	3%
Victim	0	0	1	2%
Civilisation	0	0	0	0
Boycotts	0	0	0	0

The unit of analysis for each of the themes was closely related to the name of the theme. The "Japan's illegal actions" theme included a variety of words and phrases surrounding the "illegality" of Japan's actions vis-à-vis the disputed islands; "illegal detention", "violation and flagrant challenge", "severely invaded" and "invalid unilateral moves" are such examples. The "territorial sovereignty" theme includes references to "territory" and "sovereignty" in the context in which China claims the Diaoyu islands to be its sovereign territory. "International law" is about China's invocation of international treaties and conferences in defence of its claim over the islands, such as Potsdam and Cairo Proclamations. "History-war" formed one theme because history was mentioned only in relation to the first or second Sino-Japanese war. The "mistrust" theme required particular attention when analysing due to its subtle meanings and broad range of phrases, rather than

words, that it included. Some illustrative examples are: "Listen to what Japan says and, the most important is to watch how Japan does it (…) Although Japan has expressed several times that they will have a new point of view to regard the development of China, yet, the old thoughts are still haunting" (People's Daily, 2010c) or "Nevertheless, judging from the timing, background and the goal of the exercise, this statement has something unspoken" (2012h). The "international opinion" theme included references to "international society", "the world", "Asian countries" that China calls to almost as "witnesses" of Japan's illegal actions towards its territorial sovereignty; this is also linked with China's desire of maintaining a positive external image. For example, "Japan has been refusing to admit its mistakes on the Diaoyu Islands issue, it makes more mistakes instead, which makes the international society see its wicked intension of deliberately making troubles and have the world worried about which direction Japan would go in the future" (2012i) and "Chinese people have the freedom to express their patriotism feelings fully, which also tells the world that Chinese people have the righteous power to love peace and fight an invasion" (2012a). The "Humiliation" and "victim" theme refers to the words per se and their derivate; however, these themes have a deeper meaning and can derive from the "history-war" and "mistrust" themes as discussed on pp.145-147. "Street protests" theme included all synonyms of street protests such as demonstrations, marches. The "Civilisation" theme also included search for "culture" and "empire", along with phrases suggestive of China's glorious past of "5,000 years of history". The "boycotts" theme solely searched for the noun and verb "boycott".

Another way of looking at the dominance of the themes above is by considering the number of references each theme received throughought the articles (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Key themes by number of references in the sample of *People's Daily* articles, Chinese edition

	2010	**2012**

History	8 (in 4 articles)	74 (in 29 articles)
Territorial sovereignty	59 (in 14 articles)	135 (in 46 articles)
Japan's (illegal) actions	40 in (14 articles)	154 (in 49 articles)

Table 6.4 suggests that the themes that are extremely popular in the literature of Chinese nationalism such as "humiliation" [69] (i.e. a century of humiliation of invasions and occupation), "victim", "great civilisation" (i.e. China's 5000 years of civilisation) are visibly present in the 2010 and 2012 discourses from *People's Daily*. China's past "humiliation" appeared only in 2012 in four articles. China's great past and civilisation as a feature of nationalism, hardly returns any findings for "civilisation" and related words. "Civilisation" was retrieved in one article, but attributes usually associated with its former "greatness", for example "glory" and "pride", only appeared in two articles. The lack of direct evidence to themes does not mean that they were absent, indirect references were made through other themes such as history and mistrust, as discussed in the sections below.

Other themes which are notably absent are "boycotts" and "protests" for which hardly any references, direct or indirect, were recorded; their absence from *People's Daily* pages is equally important, as already explained in Chapter 5.

After coding all the media articles, the top five main themes identified are: *Japan's illegal actions, territorial sovereignty, international law, history and war, and mistrust.* The themes are not clear cut though and they sometimes overlap. For instance, history is often used to refer to Japan's "fascist past" in order to justify contemporary China's mistrust towards it. International law is about historical treaties used to support China's claim over the islands or to highlight Japan's illegal nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku territory. Japan's illegal actions and China's response of issuing threats can be subsumed under the mistrust category. Therefore, the five themes are clustered into three categories: territorial sovereignty, history and mistrust.

[69] Callahan, for example, argues that "the discourse of national humiliation shows how China's insecurities are not just material, a matter of catching up to the West militarily and economically, but symbolic" (2004, p.202). Nathan and Ross (1997, p.34) view Chinese nationalism "powered by feelings of national humiliation and pride".

Each of these themes that help framing the meanings of nationalism from the top-down perspective are discussed in the following analysis.

Territorial sovereignty

Territorial sovereignty was the most popular theme coded in the Chinese edition of *People's Daily* with altogether 234 occurrences in 87 articles in 2010 and 2012, which makes it the centrepiece of the top-down articulation of nationalism. Inevitably, in order to justify its claims over Diaoyu/Senkaku sovereignty, historical accounts were prevalent. Phrases such as "China has undisputable sovereignty over the Diaoyu islands since ancient times" were extremely common in what appeared to be a standard template for most articles. These mentions acted as a constant reminder that since "ancient" and "immemorial times", Diaoyu islands have been part of China's "sacred" and "inherent" territory. Subsequently, international treaties were used for the same purpose. Through each of the Shimonoseki Treaty, and WWI and WWII Peace Treaties, the *People's Daily* explains how China was "unjustly" stripped by numerous territories to the dissatisfaction and frustration of the elites and public alike.

Sovereignty has long been at the centre of Chinese policy. On the one hand, territorial sovereignty is deeply connected with China's history of invasion by foreign powers. History taught China the importance of asserting territorial sovereignty (Kim, 1994, pp.13-14). On the other hand, it is also closely linked to the Party's greatest achievement of the territory of China and the people, under its command (Sandby-Thomas, 2011, p.101). By continuously presenting territorial sovereignty as a paramount national interest, this idea has become a defining part of anti-Japanese nationalism in China. Sovereignty has been so internalised by the Party that it became part of the state's identity "around which nationalist ideas, sentiments, and practices can be mobilized" (Guang, 2005, p.497). *PLA Daily* sums the importance attached to territorial sovereignty best, immediately the day after Japan's nationalisation of the islands: "the Chinese government certainly would not trade its own security and territorial sovereignty for peace" (2012).

History

History, the second most popular theme coded, can be hardly separated from sovereignty; history reinforces China's domestic collective memory and remains essential to the formation of Chinese identity and nationalism.

However, it is not the reference to history alone which is of interest here, but the way in which it is used. History does not directly stress China's humiliation as much as many may expect, but instead it targets Japan by condemning its militaristic past which China sees resurfacing in the present. The focus is on Japan's active actions, not on China dominated by the hopelessness of a victim. To illustrate this point more clearly, a few examples are provided from *People's Daily* 2012. The day after the nationalisation of the islands, on September 12, 2012, the newspaper published an article suggestively entitled "Japan needs to stop playing with fire":

> Japan were an utter disregard to the history, reality and the consensus reached by former leaders, underestimation of the Chinese government and people's resolve and capability of guarding China's territory and sovereignty, more importantly, a flagrant challenge against the victory of the world's anti-fascist war and the post WWII international order (Zhong, 2012b).

The focus is on Japan breaking the legacy of history and international laws, and betraying the postponement consensus that Deng and Tanaka had reached in the 1970s over the islands. More importantly perhaps is that while China's suffering is somewhat implied from this accusation, it is side-lined in comparison with "people's resolve and capability of guarding China". While the two cannot be separated as such, the emphasis placed on the latter is relevant in understanding China's self-image in relation to Japan and its perception on the East China sea dispute.

Most *People's Daily* articles follow this pattern of mixed victor and victim theme, but with the focus on the former. Rarely are descriptions of Japan's actions getting more vivid, but even when they do, the focus is still on Japan, not on its effects on China as a victim: "half a century ago, Japanese militarism caused frightful calamities during the Sino-Japanese War. To this day, Japan still sticks to the false view of history, it not only glorifying the past, but refuting its crimes" (2012e). By directing its criticism to Japan, China does not necessarily victimise itself as references to humiliation are not common; instead it regularly reminds the audience about China's development: "the era of China bullying is long gone" (People's Daily, 2012d). There is a sense of a victor narrative which stimulates patriotic feelings of pride at home, while it indirectly warns Japan that it will not "tolerate" being subjugated again. This is a continuation of the "national humiliation" theme, but with a "victor" twist.

China's narratives of history have changed over the years between two enduring themes, that of the victim or humiliation and that of the victor and great power. During the Maoist era, roughly from the 1950-1980, a "victor" narrative dominated the retelling of China's history from the Opium Wars onwards. This "highlighted the heroism of the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist masses in throwing off their chains and repelling the invaders" (Gries, 2007, p.116). The 1980s marked a switch to the "victim" narrative, dominated by the "rape of China narrative" (Gries, 2007, p.117), an emphasis on "foreign powers' brutality and Chinese misery" (Wang Z., 2008, p.792) and "vivid descriptions, concrete figures, gruesome pictures" of Japan's war crimes (He, 2007b, p.7). Such ghastly references are absent from contemporary media reports, but the theme of "national humiliation" continues to inform today's *People's Daily* interpretations of history in relation to Diaoyu/Senkaku incident by hinting at both "victim" and "victor" narratives.

Additionally, history does not serve only as a reminder of the past, but also as a persuasive element of China's present claims over the islands. Historical references are closely linked to the 46 references to international law and treaties, all used to strengthen China's claims over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands: "According to the international law as postulated after WWII in the Cairo and Potsdam Proclamation, the Diaoyu islands were returned to China" (People's Daily, 2012f). As Suizheng Zhao writes (2014, p.35) "the nationalistic discourse thus not only leads to a sense of 'victimization' but also 'involves a unique and strong sense of morality and righteousness in foreign affairs'". China seeks a clout of morality and righteousness for its domestic nationalism and for its actions towards Japan in international treaties.

The "history" theme alone builds a bi-dimensional layer to Chinese nationalism – while it serves as a brief reminder of China's "victimhood" past, it is a much stronger reinforcement of China's current position, that of "victor" and "lawful defender".

Mistrust

Mistrust between China and Japan has always run high, but in 2012 it was visible in the public domain. Mistrust has three sources. First, China was adamant in its view that Japan's purchase of the islands was illegal and this can be seen in the fact that it was the most common theme coded per article in 2012 (see Table 6.2). For China, the "nationalisation" of the islands justified as the only way to stop the right-wing nationalist Shintaro Ishihara's own

purchase "were outright lies". "Under the pretext of 'purchasing island, Japan's theft of Chinese territory actually exposed the sinister and insidious scheme of Japan" (Zhong, 2012b). Japan is also constantly being blamed for stirring this dispute and China often demands it to assume full responsibility for its actions (see Table 6.1, 6.2., 6.3). "Japan on one hand violated China's sovereignty, on the other hand brazenly announced 'would be sorry if Diaoyu Islands issues somehow impair the overall China-Japan relations', which were intended as double-dealer moves, but it would fool no one" (Zhong, 2012b). Second, mistrust was quickly linked with Japan's past "no matter how many years, due to treachery and get smart attitude, Japan would not be a normal country with dignity" (People's Daily, 2012g). This was a new turn, as previously in 2010 such remarks about Japan's "fascist" past were minimal; for instance, the word "fascism" does not appear in 2010, while in 2012 it can be retrieved in 11 sources. Third, China's mistrust towards Japan was enhanced with the publication of Japan's 2010 Defence Paper, China began being portrayed as a threat, largely due to its lack of transparency and decision making[70]; in addition, the paper called for a stronger partnership with the US and regional security alliances, including military modernisation and more responsive and mobile ground forces. In Japan's 2011 and 2012 Defence Paper China continued to be portrayed as a "concern" for the regional and international community. Initially, China tried to soothe relations before becoming highly critical of Japan's comments.[71] According to Zheng Yongnian (1999), the Western overuse of "the China threat" label has led to anti-Western nationalism in China. If this assessment is right, by association, Japan's threat perception of China also fuelled anti-Japanese nationalism through underlying mistrust (and most likely vice-versa).

Overall, the most common metaphors used to conceptualise nationalism were sovereignty and history, followed by mistrust. The often assumed link

[70] In 2004 Japan's Defence Planning Guidelines "first called out China in a public document, pointing to its ongoing military modernisation and its expanding maritime operations, noting that Japan would have to 'remain attentive to its future actions'" (Manning and Przystup, 2015).

[71] On June 4, 2011, on the side-lines of Shangri-La summit in Singapore, the Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie tried to appease Japan's concerns, stressing that China's development was an opportunity and not a threat; he was quoted saying: "China thinks highly of Japan's pursuit of peace and development after the World War II and takes Japan as a partner in cooperation" (Blanchard, 2011). After Japan's 2012 Defence Paper, the Chinese reply was highly critical. The Chinese Foreign Minister contended that Japan was finding pretexts for sustaining its arms expansion, fortifying military alliance and purposely misleading regional security concerns (Baruah, 2012).

between nationalism, sovereignty and history has been clearly identified in this section. With a historical memory marked by repeated surrenders of territorial sovereignty, anti-Japanese nationalism in China today is still reinforced by the same indivisible main features. The deep interconnectedness between history and sovereignty is of paramount importance for the anti-Japanese nationalism that the government wants to promulgate domestically. If the historical argument weakens, so does sovereignty and so does nationalism. As for the way in which mistrust in portrayed in state media, it is suggestive of China's reactiveness to Japan's actions of betraying history and Sino-Japanese agreements; what follows from here is that Chinese nationalism is reactive too which intertwines with the "victim" and "victor" narrative – China now has the ability to respond to perceived injustices.

In addition to these conceptual constructs of nationalism, two other discursive strategies were used to further clarify the contours of nationalism: polarised China-Japan images and galvanised inclusiveness.

6.1.2. Polarised China-Japan images

China's representation of itself and of Japan is also suggestive of the way in which anti-Japanese nationalism is constructed. Looking at "how agency and process are attributed" to China and Japan is "a useful tool to explore the ways in which language constructs reality in terms of how primary and dominant social agents, actors, or groups are categorized, characterized, represented and polarized in discourse" (Li C.a, 2010). China describes itself in opposition to Japan, relentlessly buttressing the "us/them" polarisation. This breeds nationalism for "us" and dissent for "them", the "opponent". As Connor notes, both ethnic and civic states find a "self" and "other" distinction useful for generating a political programme (1994, p.42)[72]. One such example is the division between the "good" and the "bad" as illustrated by a direct comparison: "Moreover, Japan who initiated the war and ended up a vanquished country also needs to realize that when conflicts arise between justice and evil, brightness and darkness, there is only one possible outcome" (Zhong, 2012a).

Throughout 2010 and 2012, the Chinese media constantly contrasted China with Japan, so whenever Japan was "absurd", "ridiculous", "naive", "single minded", "evil", and "reckless", China was characterised by a "rational", "legal", and "valid" spirit and action. In 2010, Japan "*illegally* detained (…) *severely*

[72] See Chapter 2 for more details.

invaded China's territory and the human rights of Chinese citizens (…) unsophisticated to believe that they could force China into submission by *fabricating* accomplished facts and seeking help from big country. It's way too *naïve*" (People's Daily, 2010c). In contrast, "China's position is *consistent and clear* (…) The Government's commitment to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity is *firm* and shows *unshakable will* and *determination*" (People's Daily, 2010g).

In 2012, "Japan is taking a chance to buy more time for its *evil* plan, and it is doomed to fail (…) Japan has been *refusing to admit its mistakes* on the Diaoyu Islands issue, it makes more mistakes instead, which makes the international society see its *wicked intention* of *deliberately making troubles*" (People's Daily, 2012i). In contrast, China's series of measures of suspending relations with Japan were seen as "*justified* and *restrained*, and it showed the *rationality* of China as a great nation, and the *unshaking* and *unstoppable resolve* on guarding the territory and sovereignty of China" (People's Daily, 2012a).

Staszack explains the "us" vs "them" opposition as "a criterion that allows humanity to be divided into two groups: one that embodies the norm and whose identity is valued and another that is defined by its faults, devalued and susceptible to discrimination (2008, p.43). This choice of language sets China and Japan as perpetual rivals where China has the upper hand; as Whiting writes (1995, p.295) China becomes "a positive referent with pride in attributes and achievements" while the other, in this case Japan, is depicted as the enemy who threatens China's vital interests. The "other" is a necessity which allows the "us" to create a negative ideological figure to "stitch up the inconsistency of our own ideological system" (Zizek cited in Wu G., 2014, p.265).

Additionally, China's self-portrayal is always reactive, blaming Japan and calling for it to assume responsibility for the Diaoyu/Senkaku incident. Almost all media articles from *People's Daily* mention "the illegal arrest" of the Chinese ship and fisherman in 2010 and the "illegal and invalid nationalisation" of the islands in 2012. For instance, in 2010 the newspaper decries "Japan's government [which] has violated the international law and international common sense" (2010f). In 2012, it points out that "the Japanese government in spite of strong opposition from China, brazenly declared the purchase of the Diaoyu South Island and North Island, the implementation of the so-called "nationalization", which is a serious violation of China's territorial sovereignty"

(2012j). Such polarised representations strengthen and "justify" anti-Japanese feelings. After examining Chinese discourses, Nick Knight (2007, p.54) reaches a similar conclusion: that by dichotomising its image from that of Japan, China "enhance[s] the perception of difference and opposition between the two countries" which ultimately "reinforce[s] the CCP's credentials as the defender of the Chinese nation" (2007, p.59). Polarised Sino-Japanese images fuel the imagination of the Chinese and continue to spur anti-Japanese nationalism.

Further to ascribing negative attributes to Japan and positive ones to China, the intensive use of personal and possessive pronouns, particularly "we" and "our", in *People's Daily* is a marker of persuasive tactics of clearly separating identities "us" from "them", as well as of bringing consensus and unity among "us", the people. A frequency word search in *People's Daily* (Chinese edition) shows the personal pronoun "we" is the 20th most frequent word with 100 references in 39 articles both 2010 and 2012, and "our" is the 33rd most frequent word with 74 references in 23 articles both in 2010 and 2012. Some examples of common usage of "we" and "our" in *People's Daily* are: "we will be taking strong measures", "we resolutely safeguard our sovereignty", "we should remember history", "we should be rational and obey the law", and "our sovereignty", "our power", "our government", "our country".

These personal pronouns in media reports are aimed at involving the audience (Karapetjana, 2011, p.43) and at creating a group with a clear distinct identity (Bramley, 2001, p.76). In the press, the ideology that "a society shares all its interests in common, without division or variation" is the source of the "we" pronoun usage and aims at constructing a unified audience (Fowler, 2013, p.16). On the one hand, the press tells "us" how "we" are supposed to behave collectively, and on the other strains divisive visions of "us" and "them". The common use of pronouns in *People's Daily,* hence, plays a dual function, not only of polarising China from Japan, but also of galvanising inclusiveness, as it will be further discussed in the next section.

6.1.3. Galvanised inclusiveness

While Japan epitomises China's reverse image, the support that the government claims to enjoy in its "defensive" stance of Diaoyu/Senkaku is stressed through a wide popular inclusiveness. This "People-government" unity is achieved through linguistic strategies such as the usage of "all" and "every". By way of illustration, Japan's actions "aroused the anger of *all* the Chinese

people abroad and at home" (People's Daily, 2010d; emphasis added), so "*all* Chinese people unite together" from "*all* political parties, organizations, ethnic groups" because "*all* walks of life have expressed strong indignation and severe condemnation" (People's Daily, 2012c; emphasis added). Occasionally, guidance was even provided on how patriotism should be manifested and by whom: "it's *necessary* that *all sons and daughters of the Chinese* feel irrepressible anger, protest and 'countermeasure'" (People's Daily, 2012c; emphasis added); likewise, "*every* Chinese who has a sense of justice would be filled with indignation, *every* Chinese who has a sense of uprightness would be filled with vehemence" (People's Daily, 2012a; emphasis added).

The *People's Daily* seeks to forge unity between the Chinese government and people, intimating that all citizens should unite in nationalism and oppose Japan:

> The 'purchasing island' farce by the Japanese government has stirred up the pain and anger hidden deep in the hearts of Chinese people, and *1.3 billion Chinese* blew their horn for unity and homeland guarding. Chinese government and people commemorated 'Sep. 18th' in a persistent, righteous, rational, civilized way to show the world the Chinese power of guarding sovereignty and territory (Zhan*,* 2012; emphasis added).

With the aim of achieving a unified nationalism, the sudden participation from various groups is reported. *People's Daily* reports how several Chinese associations and organisations, varying from "women's associations", "youth associations" and "writers' association" to "overseas Chinese organisation", threw their support behind the government in its dispute with Japan; unsurprisingly, news articles about these organisations appeared to be scripted around the template of the usual *People's Daily* articles. The expectation that "all citizens" regardless of their location, age or occupation should act when it comes to China's core interests, is indicative of the Party's expectation of Japan acting as a glue for Chinese people.

In summary, the government established the parameters of what nationalism means by tapping into collective memories and invoking history and sovereignty, by reinforcing the Sino-Japanese discrepancies and by calling to all citizens to join the old struggle against the foreign oppressor, Japan.

6.1.4. Official state actors, civilian and military views

If nationalism is constructed top-down then it is important to know what the Chinese officials, both civilian and military, think of the Diaoyu/Senkaku incident, how they frame it and how they construct the nationalism related to it. In addition to drawing on *People's Daily* which reports some of these actors' views, press-conferences and white papers have also been included in this analysis for a more detailed understanding of the issue. Various other media and academic sources have been consulted in order to get a grasp of their perspective. The first part of the section draws on civilian official statements; the second on the military officials. In each part the 2010 incident is discussed initially and is then followed by the 2012 incident.

The fact that this analysis includes civilian and military views does not necessarily suggest that there is a civilian and military split in China; one cannot identify a clear (causal) connection in the civilian-military relationship which remains vague in terms of decision making and directives. Nevertheless, given that the Chinese military is traditionally known for being "leftists" with "nationalist inclinations" (Harris, 2014, p.44) and for holding sway on issues concerning China's territory and Japan (Jakobson and Knox, 2010; Interview with Tan, 2014) it is worth considering extensively.

While in 2010 Chinese military (commentators) made hardly any public statements and not many officials stepped into the public eye, in 2012 the military (commentators) incited the public opinion through speculative and offensive statements towards Japan, and many Chinese officials expressed their views publically.

2010

In 2010 it was mainly Yang Jiechi, the Chinese Foreign Ministry, who publicly handled the Diaoyu/Senkaku incident. He repeatedly restated China's inherent sovereign rights over the islands[73] and cautioned Japan to "face up to the seriousness of the issue and release the crew and the boat immediately and unconditionally so as to avoid further deterioration and escalation" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010a). There was no mention of Japan's historical "fascist" past, which became a popular topic in 2012. There were no specific discussions about the protests either, except to caution that the protests should obey the law (Guo Q., 2010). This falls in line fully with the *People's Daily* account. On September 22, Premier Wen Jiabao also joined in with the

[73] The Foreign Ministry held three immediate conferences on September 9, 14, 16, 2010.

debacle and when visiting Chinese communities in the US he blamed Japan for its illegal actions surrounding the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands (Johnson, 2010). Later on October 4, 2010 China and Japan's PM, Wen and Kan met at the Asia-Europe meeting where Wen reiterated China's claim to Diaoyu/Senkaku islands "the 2 sides agreed that communication between people needs to be enhanced and a summit between the government leaders should be held at the right time" (People's Daily, 2010e).

In 2010, the PLA comments on the East China Sea incident were absent; this may be suggestive of the unified control or agreement over discourse that was exercised to maintain good Sino-Japanese relations, as explored in the previous chapters. When looking at *People's Daily*, *Global Times*, as well as other Chinese regional newspapers and Japanese newspapers, the usual military commentators kept a very low profile. Not only did they not make public appearances, but even on the "blog and webpages for Luo Yuan and Dai Xu [prominent PLA commentators], for example, no articles were authored or posted in September 2010" (Fravel, 2013, p.22).

This silence was striking because the military was active on other fronts, such as the Sino-American front. For instance, Senior Colonel Liu Mingfu, the director of the Institute of Military Development of the National Defense University (NDU), argued in his 2010 best seller *The China Dream* for the use of "military rise" (*junshi jueqi*) to secure a position which allows it to compete with the US. Not only did the Chinese authorities encourage this publication, but another prominent military figure, Lieutenant General Liu Yazhou, a confidant of Jiang Zemin, wrote the foreword for the book *(*Li C.a, 2010). If such anti-American statements are aimed at domestic audiences "hungry for a strong voice" (Li, 2010) why were there no anti-Japanese statements? It was clearly not because the PLA did not have views of its own, but because it is likely that it was held in rein by the government. The lack of PLA commentators hence fits well into the government's plan of playing down the incident, as shown in Chapter 5 when the 2010 event was brushed over in the media with the "hope".

2012

Compared to 2010, many more actors joined in the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku debate, both from civilian and military ranks. During the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku crisis, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the most outspoken department, providing constant updates to the press throughout the conflict. The Minister of Commerce also summoned Japan to take full responsibility for

the situation and for the deterioration of Sino-Japanese economic ties; while it voiced understanding for rational patriotic activities, it cautioned that the Ministry would firmly oppose any illegal behaviour involving smashing and looting during protests (Ministry of Commerce of the PRC, 2012).

The themes retrieved in their speeches reflect similar themes as those found in *People's Daily*. First, the theme of indisputable sovereignty has been upheld constantly from Hu Jintao to Ministers and below. Second, China felt betrayed by Japan at several levels and expressed its mistrust. MFA often complained that Japan refuses to recognise the shelving of the islands agreed 40 years before and that the 2012 nationalisation is a breach of this agreement.

> [T]he Japanese authorities deny the previous common understanding reached between the two countries (…) regardless of repeated strong representations of the Chinese side, the Japanese government announced on 10 September the 'islands purchase' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012a).

MFA claimed that "the Japanese government has endorsed right-wing forces to clamour for the 'purchase' of the Diaoyu Island and some of its affiliated islands in an attempt to pave the way for a government 'purchase' of the islands" (2012c). Mistrust was intertwined with accusations of irresponsible behaviour on the Japanese side "it is therefore abundantly clear that the tensions surrounding Diaoyu Dao today are stirred up single-handedly by the Japanese side" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012a). Third, references to history started appearing, which were absent in 2010 – "What the Japanese government has done constitutes an outright challenge to the outcomes of the victorious World Anti-Fascist War and the post-war international order and encapsulates Japan's attempts in recent years to turn back the wheels of history" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012b). Fourth, references to the pervasiveness and unity of anti-Japanese feelings among the Chinese are explicit: as "long as we pull *together and act in unison*, nobody can ride roughshod over China and any external provocation is doomed to failure" (emphasis added) or "the decision of the Japanese government to 'purchase' Chinese islands, like an atomic bomb dropped on China, has aroused the anger of *all* Chinese and rallied the *1.3 billion people* of China closely together" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012b; emphasis added).

During the 2012 events a different trend can be identified among the military. A plethora of PLA officers and affiliated commentators participated in

public debates over foreign policy to such an extent that some noticed it as a new phenomenon within the Chinese context (Interview with Gui, 2015).[74] In August 2012, Major General Peng Guangqian (Retd.), considered an influential adviser on the China's Military Commission and Politburo Standing Committee (Erickson, 2010, p.328), proposed that Beijing should dispatch personnel to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands to conduct scientific and environmentally-related research: "If Japan dares to dispatch soldiers [to stop the Chinese], we'd retaliate with missiles" (Lam, 2012). In a similar vein, popular commentator Major General Luo Yuan warned that if Japan increased its military presence in the vicinity of the islands, they should become a "shooting range for the PLA Navy and Air Force" (cited in Lam, 2012). Col. Dai Xu, another well-known PLA ranking figure, from the National Defence University made even more inflammatory comments: "Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan who are the three running dogs of the US in Asia Pacific region. We only need to kill one and it will bring the others to heel" (cited in Lague, 2013). Not surprisingly, *Global Times* followed up the trend with an article entitled: "If war breaks out between China and Japan, it will be a war that washes away the humiliation that China has suffered the past century" (cited in Lam, 2012).

The trend continued throughout September and October 2012. On October 29, 2012, at an international senior military meeting in Melbourne, Lieutenant General Ren Haiquan, Vice President of the Academy of Military Science, who represented China, reminded the audience that "one should never forget history and [should] learn from history" hinting at the "flames of the war ignited by fascist countries [which] engulfed the whole region" (Lague, 2013). Similarly, Luo Yuan suggested that "China should dispatch hundreds of fishing boats to fight a maritime guerrilla war" (Liu Y. and Ren, 2013, pp.270-271). At another summit in Shenzhen, in January 2013, Colonel Liu, while comparing Japan to a wolf, told a journalist that "of all the animals, Chinese People hate the wolf the most" and he has gone as far as suggesting using nuclear weapons against Japan if Japan repeats its mistakes of invading another nation's territory (Liu Y. and Ren, 2013; pp.270-271). Perhaps the most surprising and authoritative comment came from the Defense Minister General Chang Wanquan who in 2014, in a meeting with US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel in Beijing used a similar assertive tone as his colleagues to stress that "the

[74] Shortly after the nationalisation of the islands, on September 12 the Defence Minister Spokesperson Geng Yansheng came out to express his indignation towards Japan's "island purchase" (Taipei Times, 2012). This is unlike the aftermath of the 2010 incident when the Minister of Foreign Affairs was the main actor who spoke out on Japan.

Chinese military can assemble as soon as summoned, fight any battle and win (…) [China would] make no compromise, no concession, no treaty [on the sovereignty of territories in East China Sea and South China Sea]" (Ratner et al., 2014). Having these military officials representing China at international events and making such inflammatory comments took the issue to a different level. In comparison to Dai Xu and Luo Yuan, Ren Haiquan and Chang Quangquan were higher up officials known for having some weight in policy circles.

These PLA officials and commentators together represent a strand of opinions that echoes some of the public views, some media publications such as *Global Times* and even some scholars[75]. This strand should not be discounted. The PLA officials and commentators' exposure in the media and social media attracts a large number of followers. For instance, Colonel Dai is an ever-present figure in both mediums. He has over 250,000 Weibo followers and was voted as one of the most popular online opinion-makers in 2010 according to over 300,000 users; his popularity was also endorsed by *Global Times* which ranked him as one of "China's 10 most Outspoken Virtuous Men" (Yu M., 2013). The role of those like Dai Xu or Luo Yuan is often compared to that of a commentator rather than a policy maker (Interview with Feng Wei, 2015; Interview with Gui, 2015); yet, they have "spurred belligerent commentary among media commentators and netizens" (Jakobson, 2013). As Li (2012, p.4) puts it, the increased PLA participation in public discourse "indicate that PLA strategists have succeeded in broadening their audiences, and may better reflect the nationalistic strain of Chinese public sentiment than those in the foreign-policy establishment". Their comments reflect and reinforce a segment of public thinking, they set the tone to strident anti-Japanese feelings and bring the nation together under the rule of the CCP, ready to confront Japan.

Moreover, even if hawkish PLA comments were aimed primarily at domestic audiences, external repercussions were inevitable. They made the international news and in photographs they often appeared in military uniforms, which provided them a degree of respectability in representing China. Wang Fei, an influential Chinese scholar from Fudan University, remarked that in 2012 after Japan unilaterally nationalised the islands, at the international level, China's image was that of a victim of Japan's attempt to change the

[75] Further opinions on the deep seated mistrust held towards Japan by academics were collected from primary and secondary actors in the next section of this Chapter.

status quo. However, due to the military commentators' irascible statements, Japan gained momentum and used those statements to fuel "China's threat perception" and accused it of assertiveness (Interview with Wang F., 2015).[76] Concerned, Wang Fei, submitted a report to the government, warning against the harm such comments can do to China; he claims that his advice has been taken on-board and voices such as those of Col. Dai Xu are now banned from appearing in the public domain.

Overall doubt remains on whether these commentators are representing the PLA views, but what is more certain is that due to their role of public opinion leaders and extreme commentaries, they exert influence over nationalist discourses and heighten the animosity against Japan. Their hard-line views were welcomed by part of the media, academics and public. A survey conducted straight after Japan's decision to nationalise the islands on 12–13 September 2012 in 597 Chinese cities found that

> 80% of respondents agreed with the PLA's Liberation Daily that 'Japan's purchase of the islands was the most serious challenge to China's sovereignty since World War II', while 61% felt that the Chinese government should take military action in response. (Reilly, 2014).

Therefore, Bush's (2010) concern is legitimate: "the PLA's preference for firmness and strong anti-Japanese attitudes could play together with popular nationalism, ending up with squeezing civilian leaders into a confrontation with Japan, even though the PLA's loyalty to the party-state is beyond doubt". A government who may think it can "squeeze" anti-Japanese nationalism for domestic legitimacy purposes or external territorial gains, may fall in its own trap when elites find themselves sharing the popular views.

6.2. Bottom-up perspectives on nationalism

The Chinese government may have promoted its own version of anti-Japanese nationalism in an attempt to unify the nation, but "How is anti-Japanese nationalism portrayed by non-state actors?". This section draws on

[76] Indeed, increased attention has been given to PLA which since 2012 appears in Japan's Defence Papers. This document presents the relation between CCP and PLA as increasingly complex: "the degree of military influence on foreign policy decisions has been changing", and the PLA more often expresses a position of its own (Ministry of Defense, 2012). Unfortunately, none of the papers provide evidence to sustain these claims.

41 interviews conducted with scholars, researchers, journalists, activists and protesters mainly while on fieldwork in 2014 and 2015; the interviews are complemented by views of Chinese scholars and researchers published in the press or academic books and journals. Scholars and researchers as discussed in the Methodology Chapter too are not purely a bottom-up category but an individual group trapped between the state and non-state actors' relationship. Those better known for their academic and publishing record, hence with the ability of influencing discourse, were taken into account here. Where possible, considering the semi-structured nature of the interviews, transcripts have been coded, grouped into themes and analysed. The conceptualisation of nationalism from the bottom-up perspective is achieved by comparing findings with the main themes from top-down discourses. A number of themes identified mirror the *People's Daily* perspective, but others present a wider spectrum of nationalism and anti-Japanese nationalism.

This section starts by looking at the concepts that overlap in bottom-up and top-down nationalist discourses, such as history and sovereignty, and Japan as a unifying symbol of Chinese nationalism. It then discusses other features of anti-Japanese nationalism such as the selective memory over domestic and international politics labelled as "chosen obliviousness"; Chinese exceptionalism; and dichotomous loyalties to the Chinese state and nation. The chapter concludes with a discussion over the role that Japan plays in unifying the Chinese nation.

6.2.1. Common themes: history, mistrust and reactiveness

History – a central theme

History ranked high among interviewers when discussing nationalism and mirrored the image of the state-led nationalist discourses. Sovereignty was not as common as in the media discourses, but its conceptual meaning re-emerged indirectly through unanimous accusations of Japan's assertiveness and references to China's history from the First Opium War (1839-1842) and the Shimonoseki Treaty (1895) onwards.

From the 16 academics and researchers interviewed, eight spoke directly and at length about the sour Sino-Japanese history, usually with an emphasis on the Opium War, Shimonoseky Treaty and/or WWII Treaties; anti-Japanese nationalism was tightly correlated with historical collective memory. The idea that the government constructs or leads an anti-Japanese nationalism campaign was offensive to the Chinese collective memory of those interviewed.

"The government did not create anti-Japan nationalist feelings, history did" (Interview with Xiao G., 2014) because "no one needs to teach people because they can see by themselves what Japan did; they have their real feelings and judgements" (Interview with Tang, 2014). Others explain that "history" may appear instrumentalised due to the vast censorship on themes considered to be sensitive by the government, but argue that this is not the same as saying that history was purposefully instrumentalised by the government. For example, those working in arts, media and research are not left with many options but to focus on Japan; driven by commercialism and profit, anti-Japanese materials flourished in what may wrongly be interpreted as an anti-Japanese government led campaign (Interview with Guo and Pan, 2015).

Four other interviewees did not delve into historical matters, but hinted towards history when describing strong anti-Japanese feelings at the society level (Interview with Pan, 2015; Su Hao, 2015; Gui, 2015; Lian Degui, 2014). Only three interviewees clearly labelled anti-Japanese nationalism as Chinese state propaganda, in the words of Ge Hongbing:

> We Chinese have a misunderstanding of Japan. Japan's propaganda has never mentioned that Japan apologised, that they offered free interest loans. After China's liberation, we tend to consider Japan our imaginary enemy, when an internal threat happens, we focus on the outside 'other' (Interview, 2014).

The Party "misappropriated China's history" in relation to Japan in order to boost its legitimacy (Interview with Ge, 2015) and "a 'staged play' in which "youngsters have to act as being patriots in order to gain certain benefits from the government (Interview with Ma, 2014). Nevertheless, the three interviewees did not deny the existence of anti-Japanese feelings at the roots, but allocated more importance to the government's machinations of history. For Ma Licheng, for instance, "popular nationalism is both natural and instrumental", that is a nationalism based on history and instigated by patriotic education (Interview, 2014). Lian Degui similarily explains that "history is both a reason and an excuse" for the problems between China and Japan (Interview, 2014).

Amidst the six activists interviewed from CFFDI and CFCCJ, history clearly trumped all other themes and was interlinked with the protection of China's core interests. Tong Zeng, a known activist fighting for WWII victims' compensation campaign, explains that he holds "great anger towards the

Japanese government because based on its national interest, it denies the truth [of history], escaping from true responsibilities (…) [by] still acting in the pre-war style, which is against the development of the history" (Interview, 2014). Protesters shared similar views on history. When asked to describe Japan in three words, out of 8 protesters only 1 did not use a word with a negative historical connotation. The words often associated with Japan were: map of China suggestive of Japan's territorial grabs from what was perceived to be Chinese soil; war related words such as sword, slaughter, Nanjing Massacre; and feelings of "self-pity" for China and anger towards Japan's "shameless" invasion. Admiration for Japan's orderly society and technological advancement were faded by historical views.

Mistrust breeds perceptions of threat and reactiveness

Chinese respondents interviewed, academics, researchers, activists and protesters, almost unanimously believe that the tense Sino-Japanese relations both in 2010 and 2012 were unilaterally triggered by Japan. From the beginning the activists and protesters' position was clear cut – the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are China's inherent territory and any action on Japan's side is encroaching on China's rights. Japan's actions are quickly related to history and re-militarisation - "It is our international duty to make Japan apologise; if they [Japan] don't truly reflect on history, in a way, we are 'covering' Japan's murders and perhaps another war will start" (Interview with Tong, 2014).

Academics and researchers held a similar view which found Japan alone responsible for the tensions following the islands' incident. 12 out of 16 academic interviewees expressed such views, and four did not directly tackle the point. By way of illustration, Chen Zhimin clearly accused Japan of starting the disputes in both instances:

> "Japan can't face up to a strong China if they don't change policies. So Abe tries to unite Japan by creating incidents such as those from 2010 and 2012. The Chinese president asked Japan not to nationalise the islands and Japan did exactly that the next day. Japan lost its credibility" (Interview, 2015).

The 2010 incident was perceived very differently by China and Japan, and the common view among Chinese interviewees is that Japan was in breach of the Sino-Japanese informal agreement. When the fishing trawler clashed with the Japanese Coast Guard, Japan's position was clearly expressed by Chief

Cabinet Secretary Yoshito Sengoku "there's no territorial problem concerning the Senkaku Islands. We'll handle this case strictly based on the nation's laws, while considering the degree of the violations" (Daily Yomiuri, 2010, JCG). Meanwhile, according to Feng Zhaokui from the Japan Research Institute at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China interpreted Japan's action of arresting the fishermen as breaking their informal bilateral agreement of not applying domestic laws to trespassing fisherman, hence the expectations that Japan would chase the boats out of the disputed area, as customary (McCurry and Branigan, 2010). This point was mentioned by all the interviewees who considered Japan solely responsible for the Diaoyu/Senkaku debacle that followed. When asked about the 2010 video, which captured what appears to be the Chinese fishing trawler ramming into Japanese Coast Guard, Jin Yongming insisted that:

> regardless of the video, the ruling party of Japan chose a different policy from the previous government and broke the 2008 agreement China and Japan had on maintaining consensus and peace in East China Sea (…) The Democratic Party chose to resort to an aggressive action and arrested the captain (Interview, 2014).

So far, whether it was Abe's manoeuvre of gaining domestic support prior to assuming office as PM in December 2012, or the Democratic Party of Japan changing the rules set by the Liberal Democratic Party, in China, Japan alone is held responsible for the East China Sea incidents.

Regarding the 2012 incident, academics, researchers and intellectuals alike almost unanimously describe Japan as the status quo challenger of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Their argument relies heavily on Japan's dismissive attitude towards China's repeated warnings about the nationalisation of the islands. Just the weekend before on September 11, 2012, on the side of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit held in Rusia, Hu Jintao warned Japanese PM Yoshihiko Noda against the "illegal" nationalisation of the islands (Perlez, 2012). Likewise, the Japanese ambassador to China called for a halt in the nationalisation; Uichiro Niwa warned that Tokyo's municipal government acquisition of the islands could be catastrophic for China and Japan, "but the government was reportedly furious with him for misrepresenting Tokyo's position on the islands", BBC reported while citing Yomiuri Shimbun (2012b). Officials from the Foreign Minister of Japan also cautioned Noda about the growth of anti-Japanese movements in China and urged caution and restraint

in the government's actions, suggesting that it may be even better to let Ishihara buy the islands rather than involving the central government in the purchase (Zakowski, 2015, p.89). In a 2013 interview, even the former US Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell said that the US had cautioned Japan at the time which regardless "decided to go in a different direction, and they thought they had gained the support of China, or some did, which we were certain that they had not" (Kyodo, 2013). Domestically, Asahi Shimbun (2012f), reports that the Japanese government tried to pre-asses China's reaction to the nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and drew several scenarios based on the 2010 event.[77]

Accusing Japan of the 2010 and 2012 incident is often framed in the wider picture of mistrust and threat perceptions. Feng Wei is critical towards Abe's policy:

> "Abe does not meet the public opinion, so he tries to create tensions to portray China as a threat in order to expand Japan's military power. Before he took power, Abe said he would not resort to war to regain the islands, but after he took office he changed his mind as he is using force now" (Interview, 2015).

The Japanese government also comes under criticism from Lian Degui for falling more and more under the influence of right wing factions (Interview, 2014). According to Guo, "Japan keeps reinforcing its mistakes" because "it is not the fisherman or the activists' fault, it's the Japanese coastguard intensifying its control over the waters. It is all about Japan's maritime policy and actions" (Interview, 2015). Su Hao notes that "recently Japan made the wrong choice and strategically decided to see China as a 'problem' (…) China is not happy about Japan and its military moves" (Interview, 2015). For others the threat is more tangible; Li Xiushi expressed concerns over Shanghai's geographical proximity to Japan and welcomed the establishment of the Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) as a defensive measure that China had to take (Interview, 2014). Others such as Wang Shaopu pointed at Japan's interference

[77] Japan's act of perceived assertiveness is constantly combined with further mistrust. For example, on September 19, 2012, Sankei Shimbun, a Japanese newspaper, leaked information according to which the Japanese Defence Ministry would have stated that the joint training of Japan Ground Self-Defence Force (JGSDF) and US Marine Corps is reclaiming the Diaoyu Islands if attacked by the Chinese army; the leak was published just days after the Minister has publicly denied concerns expressed by China and South Korea (Hayashi Y., 2012).

in China's re-unification with Taiwan as a threat to China as a nation-state (Interview, 2015). The US was also sometimes indirectly included in the debacle; Lian Degui observed that when Japan and the US are strengthening bilateral relations Japan is also strengthening its position on Diaoyu (Interview, 2014).

By briefly turning to secondary sources, broader perspective is provided on the mistrust and threat perceptions held in wider circles by the Chinese academics and intellectuals. Even Feng Zhaokui, an Honorary Academician at CASS and a main contributor to the "new thinking debate"[78], seen as a liberal alongside Ma Licheng and Shi Yinhong, writes that "Japan's propaganda on the islands falls into US strategies to create and take advantage of tension in East Asia. The Diaoyu Islands dispute was a disruptive mine planted by the United States into Sino-Japanese relations nearly four decades ago" (Zhang F., 2010b). Likewise, in the midst of the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku protests, Shi Yinhong, also professor of international relations at Beijing's Renmin University, explains China's point of view in relation to the islands: "the Chinese government views the US as encouraging illegal actions by Japan. The government is dissatisfied with this, and the Chinese population is even more dissatisfied" (cited in VOA News, 2012).

Liu Jiangyong, professor of International Relations at Tsinghua University and former research fellow in the influential Central Office of Foreign Affairs People's Republic of China, plainly states that with Japan's nationalisation of the islands, "We have entered a new stage. In the past, the Chinese government advocated setting aside the (island) dispute and developing bilateral relations (…) that period of history is over" (cited in Buckley, 2012). Liu is clearly pessimistic about Sino-Japanese relations: "Relations are worse than they have ever been in 40 years (…) I don't see much chance of a war; but I think Japan is preparing for one, and we should, too" (cited in Ford, 2012). While calls for war are rare, except among the military commentators discussed in the previous section, perceptions of mistrust and threat are deep-seated. Whether it is Japan or the US or the two together, scholars and officials share the China's obsessive threat perception

[78] Ma Licheng published in 2012 an article in *Strategy and Management* in which he criticised illiberal nationalistic trends in the Chinese society and advocated for the improvement of Sino-Japanese relations which could be achieved by yielding history to the past. Feng Zhaokui and Si Yinhong subsequently published a number of articles in the same magazine, supporting Ma's "new thought".

as discussed in Chapter 4. These academic voices are strikingly similar with the *People's Daily* narrative[79]:

> maintaining the hard-earned stable and harmonious condition of China so that we can seize our development opportunities, get more development opportunities and construct China into a much better country. This is the real patriotism and also what *hostile overseas forces of various kinds who want to destroy and stir up trouble in China fear most* (Guo, 2010; emphasis added).

This section has shown that most academics interviewed share the public and government's threat perception towards Japan; China was seen domestically as reactive to Japan's "aggressive" and "mistrustful" behaviour. The 2010 and 2012 incidents in the East China Sea only aggravated China's stewing feelings of mistrust and threat already stewing in China as discussed in Chapter 4. The next section focuses on activists to show that anti-Japanese feelings can play a unifying role.

6.2.2. Japan - a unifying symbol

The "unifying" function that Japan plays in Chinese nationalism can be seen by looking at the wider category of actors who participate or support anti-Japanese protests. Human right activists, lawyers and journalists who often find themselves fighting the state in courts or challenging it in public, stand on the same side of the barricade on the 'Japanese question'. The following examples are just a sample of a much wider segment of activists and anti-Japanese supporters.

Guo Quan is one example of a political activist who calls for democratic elections, but has also initiated the Defend Diaoyu/Senkaku islands boycott against Japanese goods (Human rights in China, 2011). Likewise, Yeung Hung is a political Chinese activist who moved to Hong Kong after he was detained by the police for taking part in the 1989 Tiananmen activities; in 2012 he skippered one of the boats that carried Chinese activists to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands (Radio Free Asia, 2014). Feng (Interview, 2013) is another activist

[79] See Chapter 5 for more details on the messages that the media and state officials conveyed in relation to Japan.

closely involved with CFFDI, yet he also represents farmers whose lands have illegally been expropriated by local government.

Li Chengpeng, a popular investigative journalist, has a different story; he was once a fervent anti-Japanese protester, but the focus of his criticism has moved from Japan's government to his own. He writes:

> I was a typical patriot before 2008. I believed that 'hostile foreign forces' were responsible for most of my peoples' misfortunes. As a soccer commentator covering games between Japan and China, I wrote lines like, 'Cut off the Japanese devils' heads'. I saw Japanese soccer players as the descendants of the Japanese soldiers who brutally killed Chinese civilians in the 1937 massacre of Nanjing. I used to curse CNN for its anti-China commentaries. I was one of the protesters who stood in front of the US consulate in Chengdu and raised my fist after the US bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in 1999 (Li C.b, 2012a).

Things changed for Li when the Sichuan earthquake struck:

> [M]y patriotism began to come into question as I stood in front of the ruins of Beichuan High School. It became clear that the 'imperialists' did not steal the reinforced-steel bars from the concrete used to make our schools. Our school children were not killed by foreign devils. Instead, they were killed by the filthy hands of my own people (Li C.b, 2012a).

Li has been a staunch critic of the government ever since and in 2010 he even ran for political office as an independent candidate. It is cases like Li's that the government fears the most, but for now he remains a minority.[80]

Returning to the Diaoyu/Senkaku situation, despite being harassed by authorities frequently when staging anti-Japanese actions, CFDDI activists do not lose sight of their prime objective and believe that they share the same national interests with the government– that of protecting China's territorial

[80] For others, such as the CFDDI activists, the Sichuan earthquake meant something different. They contributed to the alleviation of post-Sichuan earthquake situation, but have found themselves looked at with suspicion and not welcomed by the government. Nevertheless, their views on the government and on Japan did not alter. If anything, the Sichuan event has increased their determination to persevere in what they call a "process of learning" on the part of the government who yet has to learn the benefits of cooperating with NGOs; they can complement the government's functions rather than challenge it, one activists explains (Interview with Li, 2014).

integrity. The CFDDI members express trust in government and make a plea of unity:

> [I]n our heart we are in favour of peace and stability and we trust the government - they are standing with us, for example they [the government] claimed Diaoyu islands. government and civilian have to trust each other and will do so, they want to defend people, borders and the government should not treat us as enemies[81] (Interview with Li, 2014).

For these interviewees, stability and national interests prevail over concerns of freedom of expression or other democratic principles. For now, anti-Japanese nationalism acts as a reinforcement of the Party rule. As Odgaard (2012, p.147) remarks, "by upholding political and territorial sovereignty the Chinese regime makes a clear stance on the priority and superiority of the rights of the states over the rights of individuals" and for the time being the activists appear to share the same prime concern for China's core interests rather than individual rights. Suisheng Zhao also aptly observes that the government always speaks in the nation's name not only "to create a sense of nationhood" but also to demand "citizens [to] subordinate their interests to those of the state" (2000, p.20). Therefore, even if these CFDDI activists also aspire to increasing individual rights and freedoms, they place them secondary to the nation's sovereignty, and rally behind the same government that otherwise harassed them and their families on numerous occasions.

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[81] Li Nan and Tong Zeng, activists known for their Japan related activities, are both optimistic about the future of civil society in China. They justify their optimism through the very existence of their organisations "Strictly speaking the Patriots Alliance is illegal, but the government still allows us to get volunteers which is a sign of an accommodating policy" (Interview with Tong, 2014). When faced with the sombre prospect of civil society, NGOs and citizens' freedoms in China as described in Document 9, a leaked "Communiqué on the current state of the ideological sphere", which clearly speaks against liberalising the Chinese society and vehemently warns against the negative influences of the West, activists showed little curiosity towards it and quickly dismissed it. They classed it as an intentionally faked and leaked document by organisations aimed at getting international attention. Li Nan, on a hopeful tone, asserted: "I doubt it [Document 9] is true. Despite going through many troubles, I have faith in democracy and democracy in China is improving". Questions over the high number of jailed journalists, lawyers and activists under Xi's regime were met with the same denial (Interviews with Tong and Meng, 2014). They were countered with surprise and disbelief despite being otherwise critical towards certain aspects of the government, particularly censorship and control and lack of freedoms. From their perspective, Hu-Wen administration has met public nationalist sentiment more than Jiang Zemin's regime did before them (Tong cited in Lam, 2006, p.175), and under Xi Jinping things got even better (Interview with Tong, 2015).

The Diaoyu/Senkaku problem combines sensitive issue of territorial sovereignty with a history of animosity towards Japan; this suffices as a theme which brings together different parts of the society, pro and against government activists, and upon which a persuasive unified nationalist discourse can be built.

6.2.3. Chosen obliviousness over domestic policy

Another prominent feature of nationalism, closely linked to sovereignty and history, is the "chosen obliviousness" over domestic affairs. For the Chinese, based on interviewees and media articles, Japan's "refusal" to face and teach the "real" WWII history fuels anger and mistrust, but the willingness on China's behalf of to look within China's own yard is limited. Significant parts of Chinese history remain untaught in schools and are taboo subjects in society.

Pitting China's domestic and foreign policy against Japan's own policy is peculiarly dismissed as inappropriate or is simply not talked about. When asked whether China does not cover up the same history that Japan is accused of, Mr. Tong from CFDDI says: "There's no resemblance. Japan invaded another country and it wants to cover the truth. The Chinese government also covers something, but most if this issues are domestic affairs" (Interview, 2015); Tibet and Xinjiang probably fall within this domestic affair, as Li Nan, another activist from CFDDI, explains that China has never invaded a country, unlike Japan (Interview, 2014). As for the silence of the other interviewees, one explanation may be best embodied in the powerful words of Vaclav Havel: "All of us have become accustomed to the totalitarian system, accepted it as an unalterable fact and therefore kept it running...None of us is merely a victim of it, because all of us helped to create it together" (cited in Schwarz, 1994, p.85). This choice to ignore the domestic realm led to suggestions that Chinese nationalism lacks empathy, it is "unable to understand the interests of other nations and ignorant of tolerance and compromise" (Cong, 2009, p.842). For instance, in 2010 when the Chinese fishermen were released there was tremendous debate within Japan's political groups on whether this was bowing down to Chinese pressure. As a result, Noda came under much criticism for releasing the fishermen. *Daily Yomiuri*, a Japanese newspaper, reported: "the Cabinet's disapproval rating was 55 percent, up from the previous 37 percent and surpassing the approval rating (…) major factors for the drop in popularity include the administration's handling of an incident in which a Chinese fishing boat collided with Japan Coast Guard patrol vessels off the Senkaku Islands" (2012). However, *People's Daily*

does not mention any of this.[82] Academics and researchers interviewed rarely make references or show understanding to Japan's domestic situation.[83] China remains self-centred, and shows little understanding towards their Japanese counterparts. In a way, this is not surprising given the earlier discussion on "mistrust breeds threat perceptions and reactiveness", where China claims that Japan alone should be bearing the brunt of the 2010 and 2012 conflict.

China's obliviousness over the reasons behind Japan's decision to arrest the fishermen in 2010 and to nationalise the islands in 2012, stems from China's inability to compare Japan's actions with its own because of the selective reading or acceptance of its own history of abuse of power and political misjudgement. For instance, Wu rightly critiques Wang Xiaodong and others alike for their conviction that "ethnic borders are still the firmest" when they "have never addressed the internal ethnic conflict within China" (Wu G., 2014, p.235). As long as China's own history will continue to be taboo domestically, then Japan's actions will continue to stand out as the "enemy". [84]

Moreover, it is not China's own past that the government has to come clean about, but also China's relations with other countries. More recently, just by following the period of 2010 and 2012 surrounding the Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents, similar events have been recorded in relation to Russia, but to which the Chinese government has turned a blind eye. One such event took place on July 16, 2012 when 36 crew members of a Chinese fishing vessel that entered Russian waters were illegally arrested. In what seemed a more serious incident than the 2010 Diaoyu/Senkaku case, "when Russian personnel prepared to board the boat, they encountered resistance and the Russians were forced to open fire" (Henochowicz, 2012f). This incident should surely be making news,

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[82] In contrast, The Asahi Shimbun (2012g), for example, appears more conciliatory in tone and notes in an editorial: "one major factor behind the rapid and severe deterioration of bilateral ties is both countries' lack of accurate and adequate knowledge and understanding about the other side's political system and culture (…) China, which believes the central government has control over local governments, didn't really understand the aim of the Noda administration's move".

[83] Gui (Interview, 2015) is one of the few who suggests that Japan's decision to nationalise the islands was potentially an internal misunderstanding "at that time Japanese domestic politics was a real mess and perhaps they did not understand the full picture and consequences of their acts. Or perhaps they pretended to do so". The latter option certainly gained more in popularity as Japanese domestic issues did not appease the mistrust of many Chinese counterparts.

[84] Many still learn that China was the main force that brought WWII to an end; the millions who perished during the Great Leap Forward are forgotten; the Korean War, Tibet and Taiwan's history are presented only from the Party's perspective with large omissions of inconvenient facts (French, 2004). Even today, only 15 out of 100 Chinese students trained at Beijing University, one of the best in China, know much about 1989 Tiananmen massacre (Lim, 2014).

but it was nowhere to be found in the Chinese media. As one interviewee further confirmed, even academics had little access to this information, which was quickly removed (Pan, 2015). China not only depoliticised the incident but it blacked it out altogether as it did not want to antagonise Russia, its ally on numerous international issues, including in its altercations with Japan. After the 2010 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident, on September 29 China and Russia signed a joint agreement perceived as a strategic move in which both countries reinforced their territorial claims over Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and Kuril Islands (disputed between Russia and Japan), while at the same time "emphasize their cooperation based on a shared view of history regarding the victory over Japan" (Oki and Yamaguchi, 2010). Such selective news on the part of the Chinese government raises questions about the choice to completely block potential anti-Russian unrest, but to allow anti-Japanese manifestations. By "othering" Japan, China will always have a "victim consciousness", but it will never be a "a perpetrator" (Interview with Fulda, 2013).

Overall, China's choice of not disclosing the past and not having domestic and international points of reference when analysing Japan's actions only reinforces the same perceptions of threat and mistrust.

6.2.4. Chinese exceptionalism

In addition to the features of nationalism exposed so far, a layer of primordialism described along "blood" lineage, appeared in several interviews. In the Chinese context this theme goes back at least to the beginning of the 20th century and Sun Yat-sen's enunciation of nationalism as one of the three principles of nationhood and defined it as the "greatest force [of it] is common blood The Chinese belong to the yellow race because they come from the blood stock of the yellow race. The blood of ancestors is transmitted by heredity down through the race, making blood kinship a powerful force" (Dikotter, 1994, p.406). This racial discourse resonated throughout the century. Wang Xiaodong, an influential scholar of Chinese nationalism in the 1990s, argues that nationalism is ethnic and racial, and has biological foundations (Wu, 2014, p.264). Su Xiaokang, an advocate of China's modernisation and Westernisation, and a well-known activist acclaimed for paving the way to the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989, also explains that "one will always be 'Chinese' by virtue of one's blood" (Dikotter, 1994, p.408).

When linked with history, this type of primordialism also denotes a degree of exceptionalism. A researcher at the Foreign Ministry-affiliated China

Institute of International Studies in Beijing explains that only those who "have Chinese blood" can understand the complexities of Chinese history: "the feelings between China and Japan are very unique and cannot be understood by any others with the exception of Korea" (Interview with Tang, 2014). Others did not necessarily link anti-Japanese nationalism with blood, but expressed the "uniqueness" of the Sino-Japanese relations and described anti-Japanese feelings along the same lines of "complex" and "unique" feelings (Interview with Wu C., 2015). Another researcher affiliated this time with the Shanghai Institute for International Studies also remarked that "the West doesn't know the real facts about China (..) some historical issues that Western researchers don't know and can't understand" (Interview with Li Xiushi, 2014). These views often imply that people are born with an identity which often translates into "hatred against Japan [which] is rooted in every Chinese" (Interview with Meng, 2014). The nation "has much more power [than the state]" which stems from the fact that "it has no border, as long as we all have the same blood" (Interview with Li, 2014). Activist Li Nan was critical of the Chinese government's decision to passively witness the maltreatment of ethnic Chinese of Indonesian citizenship in 1998: "They share the same forbearer, the same traditions with us; in essence, they are our compatriots" (Interview, 2014).

If at the turn of the 19th century race was replacing cultural identity as a marker of national cohesion in China (Dikotter, 1994), a century later, in the absence of an ideology, race still finds space in nationalist discourses. This type of "blood primordialism" is not recurrent in top-down perspectives; its closest equivalent perspective is the call to unity to "all" Chinese, home and abroad, to stop Japan. The Party-state strives to unite all people of China under its leadership, but it does not want to see divisions among blood or ethnic lineages and it certainly does not want a nation that can trump the state.

6.2.5. Dichotomous loyalties: the nation and the party-state

The dichotomy of loyalty to nation and to state is better highlighted when moving away from the anti-Japanese theme. The distinction between patriotism, i.e. loyalty to the party and its political belief, and nationalism, i.e. loyalty to the nation, was made clear unanimously by all activists and protesters.[85] From a bottom-up perspective loyalty was clearly shown to the

[85] There are two main different interpretations in the literature on China over the distinction between nationalism and patriotism. One is exposed in the thesis and focuses on the nation vs Party-state distinction. Suisheng Zhao uses the concept of "statism" to express the nationalism promoted by the state which endeavours to identify the nation with the communist state (2000b,

nation, to the land, to the Chinese people and not necessarily to the Party, which was not seen as indispensable. Emphasising the importance of the nation can turn into criticism of the Party-state and can be destabilising for the government. Li further explains that it is for this reason that "Communist Party's policies and political views cannot represent China" and hence loyalty to the nation trumps the loyalty to the state. The strength of popular nationalism should not be underestimated. Ethnosymbolists tried to raise its value by stating that "Patriotism cannot muster the level of emotional commitment that nationalism can" (Connor, 1998, p.55). Michael Lind (1994) similarly explained that "the state to which one owes allegiance may alter its borders, change its constitution, change its name, [and] even cease to exist through conquest or merger", whereas a nation cannot, and hence loyalty to a nation is continuously nurtured. Among the researchers and academics interviewed[86], Lian Degui captures this well:

> [N]ationalism is related to the process of how the nations form, to the external invasion of China. Today, China is not invaded but patriotism still exists. To many, Chinese patriotism and nationalism are the same - they both strive protecting the country`s sovereignty. Officially, patriotism is the same as nationalism; for ordinary people, it is common sense that nationalism is not the same as patriotism (Interview, 2015).

More incisively, Ge Hongbing adds:

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p.20). This message is best epitomised by Jiang Zemin in 1997: "The patriotism of the Chinese Communist Party is the highest example of the Chinese nation and Chinese patriotism" (cited in Seckington, 2005, p.26). More recently, in 2014, a point was clearly made in *Global Times* on the importance of overlapping the state with the nation. On Sept. 3 the newspaper editorial read: "while love of country and love of party are not the same, they are 'certainly not contradictory either'" and "Trying to separate patriotism from the love of party is a 'poisonous arrow' used by people with 'ulterior motives' to undermine China's unity". But this was not "patriotic enough" because the next day's editorial criticised those "brainwashed public intellectuals in China" who teach people to believe that "loving the country doesn't equal to loving the government and the party" (Lu, 2014). The second interpretation over the distinction between nationalism and patriotism attributes them positive and negative connotations. While nationalism reflects a feelings of superiority that one holds about another country, patriotism is seen as a more dignifying sentiment which conveys pride in Chinese civilisation and attainments (Yan, 2002, p.152). For results based on empirical research see Woods and Dickson (2012) and Gries et al. (2011). This thesis recognises the differences in terminology, but for simplification purposes chooses to operate with the word "nationalism" throughout the thesis, unless otherwise stated as in this current subsection.

[86]Only a few commented on the division between loyalty to the state and nation. This is perhaps because as Lian Degui mentioned, the dichotomy is "common sense" or as Ge Hongbing observed "nationalism is a red line" and stressing the dichotomy between patriotism and nationalism could be misinterpreted as speaking against the government.

> [I]n China, dealing with nationalism is a red line, nationalism has to equal patriotism (…) Chinese patriotism [defined as support for the party] needs the support of nationalism [support for the country]. Nationalism should be a common sense and feeling, but the government promotes ideological and political nationalism (Interview, 2015).

As one protester also metaphorically commented: "Loving the country is loving the territory and the land. If the present landowner (CCP) is leading us to good development, we should love him and support him. If not, it is like in democratic countries, the ruling party could be changed" (Interview with Protester H, 2014). Another one concurred: "These two terms nationalism and patriotism are unrelated. Loving a country is a sense of belonging. If the CCP is the leader of the family, but it leads us the wrong way, we won`t listen" (Interview with Protester G, 2014). All protesters and activists interviewed expressed a preference for the loyalty for the nation, and clearly differentiated it from from the loyalty for the party. But for now, as long as the party is perceived to be defending China's interests, it is endorsed by these supporters. The view that the Party can be changed anytime if it fails its people were expressed by protesters with a striking nonchalance in a country where the same Party imposed its rule for over 60 years facing little social resistance.

In brief, in contrast to top-down perspectives of nationalism, bottom-up respondents often refer to the primordial "power of the nation", independent from that of the government. The loyalty to the nation and the Party-state coincides when Japan is taken into account and perceived as a "threat". When Japan is absent from the Chinese context, loyalty switches from the government or Party-state back to the nation. Nationalism hence serves as an adhesive social force that bolsters the government's legitimacy.

6.3. Conclusion

The question posed in this chapter "How was anti-Japanese Chinese nationalism discussed in relation to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in 2010 and 2012?" required an analysis of both top-down and bottom-up perspectives on nationalism. The top-down perspective focused primarily on *People's Daily* and secondary officials' speeches, while the bottom-up perspective relied on interviews with a variety of participant actors in the formation of nationalism. The theme of history was mirrored in both these perspectives, followed by

territorial sovereignty and interrelated themes of mistrust and reactiveness.

By constantly attacking and criticising Japan, and due to the lack of China's disclosed history, Chinese people are removed from their own domestic realm and are more likely to throw their support behind the Party's crusade in the name of a "lawful defence of territorial sovereignty". It was noted that even across a wide spectrum of academics, from so called liberals to conservatives, mistrust towards Japan and threat perceptions to its sovereignty brought them all together. Even activists from various backgrounds who sometimes clash with the government on human rights issues, for instance, hold the same judgements about Japan and rally behind the government in the defence of the nation-state's core interests. Anti-Japanese nationalism appears strong and unified across a wide spectrum of actors in society - from activists to intellectuals.

However, the government benefits from the support of almost all interviewees only in the presence of an external aggressor like Japan. In Japan's absence, discourses of nationalism change from support for the government or Party-state to support for the nation. For boosting its legitimacy China needs Japan, probably as much as Japan needs China. For protesters, the Party-state appeared as a disposable item when it will no longer serve the nation's interests, while others limited themselves to acknowledging the clear dichotomy between loyalty to the nation and state. For now, Japan, is likely to continue to retain a central place in the government's management of Chinese nationalism since it proves successful in gathering public support.

Given the strong anti-Japanese tone among both bottom-up and top-down perspectives, the questions that remain are over its significance both at the domestic and foreign policy level, which are approached in the final empirical chapter.

Chapter 7.

The effect of nationalism on areas of Chinese foreign and domestic policy

"Having mounted the tiger, it is difficult to dismount" (qí hǔ nán xià)
(Chinese saying)

The effect of nationalism constitutes the last step of the analytical framework proposed at the beginning of this thesis. It follows on from three empirical chapters: the historical perspective and triggers of nationalism; manifestations of bottom-up nationalism and state responses to it, and discussions of contemporary anti-Japanese nationalism in China. This chapter closes this analytical chain of anti-Japanese nationalism with the aim of examining the effect of nationalism on specific areas of foreign and domestic policy. The events presented to substantiate the arguments of this thesis include a wide range of issues in Sino-Japanese relations and are not restricted solely to Diaoyu/Senkaku islands.

The chapter is divided into two main sections, dealing first with aspects of foreign policy, then moving to domestic policy. Analysing the effects of nationalism on foreign policy is a challenging area of research, partly due to the difficulty of designing an effective analytical framework. A particular difficulty in the Chinese case arises due to the restricted access of researchers to political actors. The actors who contribute to China's foreign policy making, and the circumstances under which they do so, remain largely unknown; this often leaves scholars in the Chinese field only with the ability to make informed guesses at best. Some even maintain that foreign policy making is still in the hands of the few whose names are not even "desirable to be known" (Interview with Chen Z., 2015). Therefore, identifying a direct or indirect link between nationalism and China's foreign policy is a Sisyphean task.

Instead of trying to quantify the effect of nationalism on foreign policy, this section assesses how various actors perceive the link between nationalism and foreign policy. Based on interviews with activists, six successfully championed causes are presented and evaluated in context. The link between nationalism and foreign policy is further complemented by data that comes partly from interviews with researchers and academics' conducted in 2014 and

2015, and partly from relevant secondary sources. Activists, researchers and academics alike mostly convey that the pressure coming from the nationalistic public exercised some degree of influence over policy. Before delving into the empirical analysis, the theoretical question that is worth raising is 'Why is it that only elites are generally assumed to be able to tap into the public's memories and sentiments to pursue their agendas?' Could activists and protesters not tap into the elite's memories and sentiments, and influence their decisions? After all, both state and non-state actors share, to an extent, similar memories and operate within the same cultural context. At times, from the perspective of the activists interviewed, tapping into the elites' anti-Japanese feelings sometimes changed or suspended the government's policy towards Japan.

The second section of the chapter discusses the effects of nationalism on areas of domestic policy. The focus is on the freedom of speech, which appears to be restrained under the threat of denouncing those who digressed from the "unified nationalism" discourse as "traitors". The discussion is split among three categories of actors - intellectuals, political elites and the public - all of whom fell at some point under the harsh criticism of the nationalists. Nobody is shielded from this public pressure, a self-censorship imposed not necessarily by the Party as seen the previous Chapters 4 and 5, but by the masses themselves. Within this "limited culture of expression", the marginalisation of moderate voices is a concern. At the domestic level, anti-Japanese nationalism in China is an expression of nationalism that closes down the legitimate spaces of discussion. It is no longer the political elites alone who exercise this function; on the contrary, as it will be discussed in this chapter, there were instances in which the elites' own space of discussion and action was restricted by the public.

7.1. International level: Perceptions of the effect of nationalism on foreign policy

This opening section construes the potential effect of nationalism on foreign policy first from the perspective of activists, and then from that of researchers and academics.

7.1.1. Activists' perspectives

Activists[87] claim that they have had an influence on China's foreign policy towards Japan over the last decade, but less so during 2010 and 2012 events when they were closely monitored by authorities. Six such instances that the activists take pride in are explained next. Given the authorities' stricter approach towards the activists from 2010 onwards, the six instances are collected from the activities of three related organisations: CFDDI, CFCCJ and Patriot's Alliance over a decade[88]. These examples are not solely drawn from activities involving Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, but also from their other anti-Japanese projects.[89]

First, in 2003 a Japanese company placed a bid for the construction of a high speed train in China between Shanghai and Beijing; it was supported by a number of Chinese officials, including Hu Jintao who suggested to the Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi that the rail project would be a good opportunity to put Sino-Japanese relations back on track (Przystup, n.d). However, the Patriots Alliance activists rebuffed what they perceived to be an infringement of "economic sovereignty"; they wanted Chinese technology to be used instead and sought to build up opposition to Japan's bid by collecting signatures for an online petition. Other websites soon disseminated the petition, which was also picked up by newspapers and magazines (Reilly, 2008). Since

[87] Most of the activists interviewed were involved in the The China Federation for Defending Diaoyu Islands and The China Federation of Civil Claims against Japan organisation, but their actions often went beyond the suggestive names of their organisations, as shown in this section.

[88] These three organisations were selected because they are at the fore of anti-Japanese activities and are closely interlinked through the core members that support them and the common activities that they organise. Patriots' Alliance and CFDDI are the most similar and are sometimes referred to as the Bao Diao network; Li Nan, director for both organisations, explains the difference: "the Patriot Alliance doesn't only focus on defending Diaoyudao, but does also charity work and carries out other educational issues. Initially, Defending Diaoyudao focused on the islands only, but has gradually been paying more attention to other activities beneficial to national interests" (Interview, 2014). The two organisations garnered a high profile particularly during the 2005 events when they collected large number of signatures for petitioning against Japan's attempt to win a permanent seat at the UN Security Council. CFCCJ's aim is slightly different as it focuses mainly on the WWII reparations for Chinese victims. Led by Tong Zeng, the organisation works towards bringing lawsuits against the Japanese government and private companies such as Mitsubishi involved in the activities of the Imperial Japanese Army during their occupation of China. Nevertheless, they maintain an interest in the Diaoyudao/Senkaku Islands and financially supported some of the Bao Diao activits' voyages to the islands.

[89] Chapter 5 has also touched on the activists' (limited) actions during the 2010 and 2012 protests and other means through which they manifested their nationalism in order to make their views known; these examples stressed the idea of a bottom-up anti-Japanese nationalism manifested through behavioural elements and the government responses to it. In contrast, the focus in this chapter is solely on the activists' perception of their role in influencing China's foreign policy.

the Patriots Alliance were the initiators of this process, an official from the Chinese Railway Ministry requested the activists to stop their "protest" out of concern for national security. When they refused, their website was shut down (Interview with Li Nan, 2014). Despite this, in the activists' eyes the campaign they initiated was fruitful: "the Minister started to think more on national security and the safety of technology and in the end our plea was successful" (Interview with Li Nan, 2014). Indeed, Japan's bid was replaced with Chinese, French and German technology. Driven by their patriotic duty to the nation, the activists created corridors of communication with the political elites, and managed to achieve a favourable result.

Second, Japan's bid for a seat in the UN Security Council in 2005 is another event commonly cited by activists as a successful campaign. Patriots Alliance ran a petition against Japan's bid and collected a staggering 22 million online signatures. Activists claim that through this petition they influenced officials' decisions in rejecting Japan's bid because the government would not have risked opposing such a clear statement of millions of Chinese citizens. Weiss argues that the protests and the signature campaign were a diplomatic asset for China given that it did not really want to publicly oppose Japan, so "having opened the floodgates of public opinion, the Chinese government then found itself pressed to oppose Japan's candidacy more openly" (2014, p.138). There is little doubt over the Party's "controlocracy" in what Ringen (2016) calls a "perfect dictatorship", hence the capacity of the government to nip the petition into bud. Yet, it is not only about the capacity to do so, but about the reactions it may trigger and the consequences that it may face. During the same period of 2005 Sino-Japanese relations were marked by intense debates over history textbooks and large anti-Japanese protests, the government had to be careful in its calculations, antagonising an already effervescent public carried risks of criticism turning against the government.

Third, another successful instance cited by the activists dates from the aftermath of the powerful May 12, 2008 Sichuan earthquake. Hu Jintao was the first Chinese President to appeal to Japan for aid relief. Japan responded immediately and within a couple of days dispatched a number of professional rescue teams. However, two weeks later, when Japan proposed to send Self-Defense Force (SDF) planes, instead of civilian planes, to deliver blankets and tents, the Chinese government rejected the offer. Patriots Alliance claim that the government's decision of turning down Japan was the result of another of their successful campaigns. They submitted several reports and petitions to the relevant authorities and arguably persuaded the government to reject

humanitarian aid sent in Japanese military aircrafts (Interview with Li, 2014). Japan's offer was seen as an unpleasant reminiscence of WWII and yet another infringement of China's sovereignty (Interview with Li, 2014).

Indeed, initially, Hu Jintao asked for Japan's help. Then the spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry welcomed help from "any country and its military to provide logistical supplies"; although, he was reticent in stating whether this would include Japan in case of potential complaints from Chinese citizens, choosing to leave it to Defence Ministers to negotiate matters further (Lo, 2014, p.53). The activists must have tapped into this reticence because when Chinese authorities decided to turn down Japan's SDF offer of help, as a diplomatic columnist put it, they did so "without any expression of reasons" (Qiu, 2011). Hardly anything surfaced in the Chinese media[90] about the official governmental standpoint on the SDF. Most of the news expressed China's deep appreciation for the assistance and donations received from Japan. Chinese Ambassador to Japan, Cui Tiakai was even quoted as saying: "the outstanding performance of the Japanese relief team in its rescue operations in the quake-stricken areas has earned vast applause among the Chinese people" (Xinhua cited in China Daily, 2008a). The government must have acknowledged the risk of how the news about the SDF deployment could blow out of proportion domestically, hence the decision to censor it and focus instead on the positive side of this unexpected Sino-Japanese cooperation. Despite press restrictions, the word spread among netizens. *Yomiuri Shimbun* also wrote at the time that "Chinese Net forums [were] swamped by anti-SDF posts" (Sugiyama, 2008). One of the few public remarks on the topic in the aftermath of the earthquake was made by a Chinese official during the Shangri-La Dialogue held in Singapore in May-June 2008. PLA's Deputy Chief of Staff, Ma Xiaotian, stated that "personally" he could not welcome the SDF because "the appearance of Japanese aircraft over China 'would have a certain degree of impact on the psychology of the Chinese public'" (Przystup, 2008, p.8). In contrast, American military aircrafts delivered aid in the affected area without any difficulties. What was surprising is that even in the critical moment of facing enormous post-

[90] Searches using key words such as "Sichuan earthquake", "Japan Self-Defense Forces", "SDF", "Japan military" were conducted on LexisNexis on Chinese sources in English, including newspapers, magazines, reports and online websites, between 11.05.2008 and 1.07.2008, but they all returned 0 findings. The same search was conducted on *China Daily,* which also includes articles from *Xinhua* news agency*,* returned 1 finding only connected to SDF deployment which is actually a quote of the Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura: "According to my understanding, China wants Japan to send its Self-Defense Forces planes to transport relief materials including tents and blankets" (China Daily, 2008b).

earthquake problems, attention was paid so closely to the domestic reaction towards Japan. The fact the Chinese government had a change of heart from welcoming to rejecting Japan's aid sent in military aircrafts can be seen as the success of the activists' campaign of influencing policy.

Fourth, in 2014 China introduced two new national days, widely described as "anti-Japanese", something that the activists have also been campaigning for over two decades. The two days are September 3 which celebrates China's victory over Japan and December 13 which commemorates the Nanjing Massacre. While activists do not claim the success of introducing these national days for themselves alone, they have been petitioning the government since the 1990s to take this much welcomed step (Interview with Tong, 2015; Interview with Activist O., 2015). Their petition initially proposed September 18, a commemorative date of the 1931 Mukden Incident, as a national holiday. On that date, the Kwangtung Imperial Japanese Army secretly blew up a section of the railway track near Mukden city, blamed it on the Chinese nationalists, and used the accident as a pretext for advancing their occupation of Manchuria. Every year, on this day outbursts of national feelings are powerful. In some places, sirens wale and students gather in schoolyards across the country to collectively remember Japan's advancement into China, while in other places anti-Japanese protests are organised. The atmosphere is so tense that police forces are mobilised and manifestations are closely monitored. For instance, the CFDDI website is often shut down by the authorities, as are other websites which are likely to see an upsurge in online comments (Interview with Li, 2014); as mentioned in Chapter 5 numerous activists are also warned by police not to take part in any activities on September 18. This type of commemorative events brings back to life collective memories of Japanese aggression and potential domestic turmoil that authorities prefer to avoid. However, due to the sensitivity of this day, the activists' request of setting up September 18 as a national day was not met. Instead, September 3 was chosen to celebrate the Victory Day of China's War of Resistance against Japan and December 13 to commemorate Nanjing. It is to be noted the choice of the "victor" narrative and that of "victim" reflect the language that the state press used in relation to Japan (see Chapter 6). At the first Nanjing Massacre Memorial Day in 2014, Xi Jinping mirrored a phrase often found in *People's Daily* "the humiliating past of the Chinese race being slaughtered and bullied is long gone" and "anyone who tries to deny the massacre will not be allowed by history" (China Daily, 2014). Activists take pride in the fact that they shouldered for years this effort of pushing for a

national day of remembrance, even if it did not come into being on the date they had proposed.

Fifth, activists also claim to be slowly gaining ground in judicial courts against Japan. The China Federation of Civil Claims against Japan (CFCCJ) organisation, appealed on behalf of WWII victims for war reparations, both against the Japanese government and Japanese private companies, among which Mitsubishi is the most prominent. The NGO started its activity at the beginning of the 1990s and initially focused on suing the Japanese government, but was turned down on numerous occasions by Japanese and Chinese courts alike. The case against the Japanese government is very problematic largely because the Chinese government gave up any right to compensation in 1972: "for the friendship of China and Japan, the People's Republic of China abandons its right to claim war indemnities" (Tanaka, 1991, cited in Kim, 2015, p.217). The activists maintain that the Chinese government relinquished the right to ask the Japanese government for "governmental" compensation, but not from "civil compensation" (Interview with Meng, 2014). This emboldens them to continue to fight on behalf of Chinese WWII victims. The fact that after the 1978 Treaty of Peace and Friendship, Japan started providing substantial yen loan packages to China is an insignificant gesture in the eyes of the activists. For them the "sorrow" and "damage" that Japan inflicted to China has no comparable reference and "a little right [yen loans] cannot undermine the past" (Interview with Meng, 2015).

After decades of lobbying and trying to sue the Japanese government, more recently the NGO claims to have made some progress in their lobbying and lawsuit efforts, particularly due to the recent introduction of new Chinese laws.[91] Lawsuits against private Japanese companies have been launched for the first time in what seems to indicate a new turn of events. For instance, in February 2014, a court in Beijing accepted a lawsuit against two Japanese companies brought by 40 Chinese people, supported by CFCCJ, who were forced into labour during the war (Wee and Hui, 2014). In April 2014, a Shanghai court ordered Mitsui, a Japanese shipping company to pay about three billion yen (HK$227 million) for the release of its ship over a wartime commercial dispute (Ng, 2014). In July 2015, after years of being pressured, Mitsubishi also admitted that "the human rights of Chinese forced labours were

[91] One of the new laws, enforced since May 1, 2015, stipulates that Chinese courts have to attend to any appeal. Another new law, related to appeals for public interest, stipulates that China can now sue Japan in the collective name, not only on an individual basis (Interview with Tong, 2015).

infringed upon", apologised and agreed to compensate the victims (Xinhua, 2015). Lin Xiaoguang, an international relations expert at the Central Party School, observed that "the courts are more willing to accept these [civil] cases (…) they [courts] usually did not when bilateral ties were good" (Ng, 2014). These changes in the government's attitude and law gives hope to activists that their work is not in vain and motivates them to continue representing Chinese victims in court appearances against Japan. Wan explains what triggered the change at the government level:

> The Chinese government has found it difficult to control the grassroots redress movement which also involves Japanese lawyers and supporters. The government has become resigned to the issue while still not pressuring the Japanese government to resolve the suits on behalf of Chinese plaintiffs (…) the Chinese government now tries to balance between domestic pressure and its desire for a strong relationship with Japan (2006, p.322).

Wan's view is shared by activists: "The process [of compensation claims] may not be smooth, meaning that people's nationalism may become strong enough to influence the diplomacy of the government and lead to social instability" (Interview with Tong, 2014). After approximately 20 years of campaigning, activists believe that the Chinese government has slightly relented to domestic pressure. In their pursuit of "historical justice", activists claim to have influence aspects of Sino-Japanese relations.[92]

Sixth, for almost two decades, in addition to petitioning the government and organising protests, activists embarked on several trips to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Through such actions, the activists claim that they carried out their duties of protecting China's national interests - they maintained the islands in the public eye and changed the status of the islands to that of a disputed territory as China is now patrolling the surrounding waters. From 1996 to 2012, at least five incidents were instigated by PRC activists,

[92] The CFCCJ further continues other Japan related projects. For instance, a project which started in the 1990s as a collection of interviews and letters from WWII victims of Japan's military were translated in English and made available online in summer 2015. Concerned about the government's supervision and potential interference, the NGO cooperated with a US-based activist who posted the documents on a secure American-based website (Interview with Tong, 2015). Anti-Japanese feelings live through these thousands of documents collected over the years and the activists took upon themselves the "responsibility" of "teaching the world the truth about history" (Interview with Tong, 2016).

usually in cooperation with Hong Kongese and Taiwanese activists, with one successful landing on the island in 2004 (Tatsumi, 2013, p.110) and a more recent one in August 2012.

Until 2003, most activists who landed on the islands or navigated in the waters around them were from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Japan's Coast Guard 2014 Report records the surprise of spotting PRC activists for the first time:

> On June 23, 2003, boats carrying activists from mainland China entered into Japanese territorial waters around the islands for the first time, claiming Chinese ownership over the Senkaku Islands. This illegal entry into Japanese waters was followed by similar incidents on October 9, 2003 and January 15, 2004. The incident of March 24, 2004, in which seven Chinese activists landed illegally on Uotsuri Island, leading to a major reaction in Japan and other countries, remains fresh in memory (Hirose, 2013).

The two landings in 2004 and 2012 brought about the most significant consequences among all voyages. On March 24, 2004 the Chinese activists left Zhejiang Province on a trawler and landed on the disputed islands. They were immediately arrested by the Japanese authorities. Okinawa prefecture accused the activists of violating immigration laws and trespassing Japan's territory. Koizumi, at that time Japan's Prime Minister, called for calm in Sino-Japanese relations in the management of this incident, but the Japanese media called for a stronger approach "against the Chinese security threat" and for protecting Japan's sovereignty. Additionally, given that only one Japanese article reported the deportation of the activists, despite otherwise a significant coverage of the landing events, suggests that the Japanese state restricted the media coverage in order to downplay domestic controversy (Kim, 2015, p.51). On March 30, 2014, a resolution concerning the protection of Japanese territory, requesting the Japanese government to strengthen its security around the Diaoyu islands was endorsed in the House of Representatives for the first time (Drifte, 2014). Moreover, Edano Yukio, chief of the Constitution Research Committee of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), then in opposition, proposed that Self-Defense Forces (SDF) troops should be stationed on the disputed Senkaku Islands to prevent incursions by other countries. This echoed Abe's request from September 2012 of deploying civil servants on the islands, without clarifying whether he meant SDF military personnel or not (Drifte, 2014). The Chinese activists' incursions triggered a series of effects on Japan's domestic

politics, some of which translated into policies and often forced China to respond.[93]

On August 15, 2012, a day symbolising the surrender of Japan in 1945, a crew of 14 activists from PRC, Macao and Hong Kong sailed towards the disputed islands[94]. Despite repeated collisions with the JCG, six activists, including one Chinese, landed on the islands and planted the Chinese flag. They were then swiftly arrested by Japanese authorities and released two days later. As presented in Chapter 5 the landing on the islands triggered protests across the country, including Shenzhen, Hangzhou and Hong Kong, occasionally accompanied by violence, and calls for boycotting of Japanese products (Jingjing, 2012). The incident dragged into the dispute the Chinese Foreign Minister who had to appeal to Japan on the activists' behalf and to urge their release. Meanwhile, the Japanese government summoned the Chinese Ambassador to Japan to the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo to lodge a protest (Liu and Liang, 2012). Only days later, on August 19, 150 Japanese activists on 21 ships, led by eight parliamentarians from the LDP and DPJ went to the islands to commemorate those who died there during WWII; despite not having permission from the local authorities to land on the islands, 10 activists did (BBC, 2012a). One of the parliamentarians aboard one of the boats explained: "Four days ago there was an illegal landing of Chinese people on the island as such we need to solidly reaffirm our own territory" (AP, 2012). In a similar manner to 2004, the activists once again managed to get a reaction from Japan.

During the same period with these landings took place, Noda was in discussions with Ishihara over the nationalisation of the islands, whom he met on the same date of August 19 (Nihon Keizai Shimbun cited in Horiuchi, 2014,

[93] The activists even triggered a response from the US, as Japan's ally. The day after the Chinese activists' successful landing on the islands in March 2004, Washington reiterated its security commitment to Japan (Fravel, 2010, p.156).

[94] The message of the Chinese activists for Japan was the same as always - they demanded China's sovereignty over the islands to be acknowledged, as well as Japan's crimes during WWII. When a small group of CFDDI gathered in front of the Japanese embassy in Beijing, they presented a letter for Noda that "included a knife to humiliate him for denying history" (Liu and Liang, 2012). By claiming the sovereignty of the islands activists say that they only do their duty as citizens of a country they love (Interviews, 2014, 2015). In the words of another activist "it is a matter of national esteem and pride" (Jingjing, 2012). Through their actions Diaoyu activists stated in 2014 that their aim of making the islands a disputed territory has been achieved, reason for which their activities around the islands will cease (Interview with Tong, 2014; Interview with Li Nan, 2014). However, the loosely structured organisation still has a number of members who will continue to attempt to land on the island by water or air. Not all members are satisfied with the current status of "disputed" island, status which is still not recognised by Japan, and they want to further press on the issue until China will gain full sovereignty over this territory (Interview with Tong, 2014).

p.38). Noda feared if he decided to postpone the nationalisation of the islands he would have faced domestic criticism for bending to foreign pressure and its inability to protect the country's territorial sovereignty (Zakowski, 2015, p.88).[95] The PM was concerned that Ishihara's purchase would only make his government look even weaker and at the same time Ishihara's control over the island may lead to future tensions with China (Horiuchi, 2014, p.23). It could be further argued that the August events and the domestic criticism received strengthened Noda's conviction of the need to assert sovereignty over the islands through the process of nationalisation.

In summary, while activists' actions do not directly influence foreign policy, they can create tensions at both the domestic and international level for both China and Japan. Activists can prompt instant reactions from their counterparts' activists, drag governments into disputes and lead to actions which are more likely to escalate bilateral tensions. The activists' role on Sino-Japanese relations was also acknowledged by a number of sources. For instance, Qu Xing, Director of the China Institute of International Studies while claiming China's sovereign rights over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, warned that "the detention of the Chinese activists has serious implications. The Japanese government should release them unconditionally, or there's a risk the tension between the sides will escalate" (CNTV, 2012). After the landing of the Japanese activists, Xinhua also warned that such "landing, along with a barrage of other provocations, has poisoned the atmosphere of the Sino-Japanese relations and constituted another setback for both countries' efforts to further their political and economic ties" (Branigan, 2012b).

Table 7.1: PRC activists' voyages to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands

Date	Details
6/2003	CFDDI activists sailed in the Diaoyu/Senkaku waters for the first time, but were blocked from landing by the Japanese patrol vessel

[95] Noda's task became increasingly difficult in August because it was not only China, but also South Korea who entered in a territorial altercation with Japan. South Korea's president visited Tokdo islands, a disputed territory between South Korea and Japan, and also called for the Japanese emperor to apologies for Korean's treatment during WWII (Zakowski, 2015, p.88).

10/2003	CFDDI activists sailed in the Diaoyu/Senkaku waters for the second time
1/2004	CFDDI activists sailed in the waters around the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, but were fired with water cannons by the Japanese Coast Guards
3/2004	7 PRC activists landed on the islands for the first time; they were the first Chinese nationals to be arrested and deported by Japanese authorities for landing on the island.
10/2006	Activists mainly from Hong Kong and one from China sailed to the islands and waved the Chinese flag
10/2007	4 members of the CFDDI entered the territorial waters around the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands
8/2012	6 Hong Kong activists and one PRC activist landed on the islands for the second time.

As discussed in the six instances above, over the years, activists have pressurised the government to take a tougher stance on Japan by holding protests, collecting signatures, petitioning Chinese institutions and by creating incidents such as directly sailing towards and landing on the islands. In most of these instances, activists often claim to have been successful in influencing the government's stance towards Japan. While activists are just one among many other factors trying to influence foreign policy, they have played a role in at least triggering a response from Japan which in return engaged the Chinese government more than it would have done otherwise. Despite sometimes clashing with the government, the activists do not see themselves as constraining the government's actions, but rather as complementing its activities and reminding it of China's interests. They describe themselves as bound by loyalty to their nation, by the desire to safeguard national interests and to bring Japan to justice on behalf of the Chinese government and people.

7.1.2. Researchers and academics' perspectives

Unlike the optimistic image painted by activists, who describe the government in recent years as more willing to listen to the public and to liberalise the society (Interview with Li, Tong, Meng, 2014), researchers and

academics remain divided over the relationship between the public nationalism and foreign policy. While most recognise the pressure that the public exercises on China's foreign policy towards Japan, for some this link is direct and strong, for others it is indirect and less visible.

Those who uphold that a nationalistic public influences China's policy towards Japan tend to subscribe to the following rationale: "If China wouldn't have changed its policy [offering a tough response to Japan's antagonising policies], Chinese people would have reacted very angrily, especially given that Sino-Japanese relations are sensitive due to historical reasons" (Interview with Wang F., 2015). Scholars such as Professor Feng Wei (Interview, 2015) from Fudan University are convinced that "nationalism clearly influences foreign policy" because "the government needs to meet public expectations to unite the country"; in his view, China's tougher stance towards Japan in 2010 and 2012 is largely explained within these parameters. Others stress that nationalism adds a layer of "thrust" to China's foreign policy, but it does not go beyond the government's control. Lian Degui from the Shanghai Institute for International Studies argues that nationalist boycotts, online comments and protests made China's policy towards Japan fiercer, but this is not to say that the government cannot control these activities or that they are excessively influenced by them. Wu Chingqin, Pan Zhongqi and Guo Dingping agree that bottom-up nationalism can contribute to foreign policy to an extent as everyone feels the public pressure (Interviews, 2015).

The pressure of nationalism took its toll on Chinese officials as well. In policy circles, a tendency to avoid engaging with the Japanese issue was noticed by Yu Tiejun, International Studies Professor at Peking University:

> passing the buck from one department to another, from one person to another (…) because nobody wants to take on this hot potato because it [dealing with Sino-Japanese relations] is a huge responsibility (…) The responsibility often implied putting one's political career on the line because of the historical sensitiveness of the issue and the backlash of nationalism that one can face from the officials and the wider public (Interview, 2014).

Yu also remarks that "China's increasing nationalism has fostered a politics of caution and further encouraged a passive diplomacy towards Japan" (Interview, 2014).

One other potential effect of nationalism can be seen in China's decision to establish the Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea in November 2013. ADIZ was introduced a year after the 2012 protests, but in a period which was marked by the continuous deployment of military ships, maritime surveillance ships and fishery patrols boats in the Diaoyu/Senkaku area. In the words of Chen Zhimin: "ADIZ is a consequence of nationalism, was triggered by nationalism, but should have been done a long time ago" (Interview, 2015). On a similar note, Prof. Wu Chongqin claims that "ADIZ-was a reaction to Diaoyu nationalisation, it's fair to reply to Japan's unfair ADIZ, when China has the capability, it tries to make it even. Nationalism in China is reactive". Allegedly, ADIZ in East China Sea had been discussed in Chinese political and academic circles for many years (Interview with Yu, 2014) and some sources citing confidential documents even claim that the Chinese informed their Japanese counterparts in 2010 of their plans of setting up an ADIZ in East China Sea (Hofilena, 2014). The nationalisation of the islands by Japan in 2012, followed by wide spread criticism and protests in China, created the opportune moment for China to draw its ADIZ.

In another instance, Liang Guanglie, the Chinese Defence Minister, expressed concern about domestic opinion to his Japanese counterpart on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plus 8 that took place in Hanoi on October 13, 2010. "The Chinese side showed reluctance about promoting bilateral military exchanges, asking [Japan] to postpone a scheduled port call at Qingdao, China, by a fleet of Maritime Self-Defense Force training ships" (Shima, 2010). China further rejected the idea of the Japanese Defence Minister, Kitazawa, to visit China on the basis that the "Chinese people's current sentiment toward Japan should be taken into consideration"; Liang stated that such an arrangement would be welcome at an opportune time after the bilateral relationship recovers fully (The Japan Times, 2010). To Japan's surprise, in the aftermath of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, China preferred to uphold the hard-line tone towards Japan imposed by the public in the midst of anti-Japanese protests.

Additionally, during the same ministerial meeting in 2010, the Chinese Defence Minister mentioned restarting the "Maritime Contact Mechanism" (MCM). After a brief meeting of only 20 minutes, the Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa and his Chinese counterpart Liang Guanglie agreed to restart the MCM in the East China Sea, which had been put on and off numerous times since 2007. After two more years of stagnation, post-2012 nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, the MCM restarted yet again. It was a curious decision

because none of China's previous conditions set in 2013 were met: 1) Japan had to acknowledge the contested nature of the debate over the islands, and 2) Japanese officials had to refrain from paying visits to the Yasukuni Shrine (SIPRI, n.d.). Mathieu Duchâtel, director at SIPRI Beijing, believes that China forwent its two conditions out of fear of a potential vessel or jet scramble in the East China Sea: "Can you imagine the consequences at popular level if such an incident should happen? Nationalism would explode" (Interview with Duchâtel, 2015). In an environment in which China and Japan reached the highest number of jet scrambles since the Cold War in the East China Sea (AFP, 2015), such crash incidents are not simply remote possibilities. Similar concerns were aired in China. Zhu Chenghu, a major general and professor at the National Defense University, Beijing, stated at the 10th Tokyo-Beijing Forum: "Any accidental incident might trigger nationalistic outcries (on both sides), leading to full-scale military conflict" (The Genron NPO, 2014b). In this context, Yu Tiejun was correct to note that "if we can't change the minds of people, then let's talk about crisis management of maritime security and management" (Interview, 2014). In other words, the concern over domestic nationalistic outbursts in the eventuality of an accident in East China Sea between Chinese and Japanese air force, navy or even activists, contributed towards the push for restarting the MCM. Preventing Sino-Japanese accidents means, among others, preventing nationalistic outbursts.

A common thread among the interviews with academics and researchers is the belief that the government acknowledges the public pressure of nationalism. This does not always mean that it caves into it, nor that it internalises it as a future norm. Nevertheless, the Chinese government appears to give particular consideration to anti-Japanese feelings and to public pressure emerging from it.

7.2. Domestic level: Public pressure and Self-censorship

The unified anti-Japanese nationalism, including the reinforcement of anti-Japanese feelings as discussed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6, led to a "limited culture of expression". Those daring to diverge from the "usual" path of the discourse of nationalism can easily bring upon themselves the "traitor" label.

As Gustafsson (2014, p.4) also observes, patriotism within the Chinese culture dictates the norm of patriotic behaviour while it hastily brands those who do not adhere to these norms as traitors. The argument put forward in this section is that a revived Chinese nationalism, especially in moments of crisis such as those of 2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku islands incidents, reinforces a form of self-censorship now stemming not from the government, but from the masses for the masses. To quote Heath Chamberlain "societies can be as tyrannical as states" (cited in Brook and Frolic, 2015, p.10), hence the Chinese government could even loosen its grip on nationalism because the masses now carry on this task by themselves.

The process of "traitor" labelling is complex and can be traced back to the traditional culture of breaking the oath of loyalty to the "emperor", but it also bears the weight of a more modern contemporary Chinese history. In Mandarin, *hanjian* is often used to depict traitors. Originally, *hanjian* meant "traitor of the Han race". References to "traitors" can also be found during the Opium War when those individuals collaborating with the British for financial gains were labelled as traitors by the Chinese; the Manchu officials who abandoned their Chinese cities and people in front of the British invasion were called "traitors" too (Lovell, 2011, pp.90-91). Later in 1919, after the Versailles treaty, "Externally, struggle for national sovereignty; internally punish national traitors" was a very popular slogan; the concept of sovereignty and traitors never seem to have left China (Xu, 2001, p.116). Later, betrayals became common within the KMT factions, between the KMT and the CCP, and generally between state and society (Xia, 2010, p.3). Most commonly the term was associated with Chinese collaborators who worked with the Japanese military during the War of Resistance and WWII. According to a historical account, in 1936 the KMT imprisoned seven members of a patriotic organisation who criticised the government for not facing Japan, but soon a movement to liberate them was organised and carried the slogan "one is innocent if one is patriotic". In order to obtain their release, the movement argued that if the seven were to be imprisoned then patriots all over the country should also be imprisoned (Gustafsson, 2014, p.6). The government had to give in to the nationalists' requests. Subsequently the term of *hanjian* was applied to the victims of the Cultural Revolution. In 1967, the CCP published a circular of the Central Committee on the question of "ferreting out traitors" with unbridled mass denunciations, often unjustified (Jian et al., 2015, p.66). This became the beacon of the purges during the Cultural Revolution. In 1968, Mao himself denounced Liu Shaoqi, one of his closest and most powerful political allies in

China during the 1950s and 1960s, as China's foremost "capitalist roader", a high level betrayal. Today *hanjian* is widely used to describe any Chinese who betrays the nation and serves foreign interests.

In the 1970s and 1980s, on account of the government's "imposed" promotion of Sino-Japanese relations (see Chapter 4), speaking freely in public about the discontent towards Japan entailed risks that not many wanted to take. "Though never openly declared as a strategy, the Chinese government preferred to use diplomatic channels to voice its disagreement and save public announcements for pushing to improve Sino-Japanese ties" (Fogel, 2000, p.29). In the decades that followed however, people were permitted and even encouraged to debate these previously considered "taboo topics". As people became freer, they also became critical in their political assessments and the government became more constrained by popular pressure (Interview with Yu, 2014). This pressure is felt on three levels, which are discussed next: intellectuals, political elites and members of the public.

7.2.1. Intellectuals

Chinese intellectuals claim that there is an increased freedom of speech in China, but it must be with "Chinese characteristics" because even if "different opinion exists, they can only be shared in inner circles" (Interview with Wang S., 2015). This is not only because of governmental censorship, but because of a public backlash engaged in a "hound for traitors".

In 2011, when a powerful earthquake struck Japan, *Global Times* emailed a petition to a number of Chinese scholars, asking for their signature in a symbolic gesture of support for the Japanese victims of the earthquake. The *Global Times'* initiative was unexpected given that the newspaper is known for its nationalist views, often going the extra mile compared to other media outlets. One Chinese academic described his involvement in this campaign, in which along with over 100 Chinese scholars, he showed his solidarity for Japan's tragedy; however, once the petition went public signatories faced public condemnation of betrayal of the Chinese nation (Interview with Yu, 2014). The interviewee further affirmed that at least six other scholars that he knew faced the same online abuse and accusations of betraying the nation; among only a few compassionate responses, most "wished" the signatories to "go to earthquake" themselves, in other words to go to hell. In the same vein, the Chinese government had to tread carefully when it announced its aid package for Japan. The Chinese government felt the need to explain to its people that

"its actions were those of a 'responsible power', and should therefore be understood in the context of China's increasing efforts to contribute to international post-disaster operations since 2003" (Hirono, 2011). Even in instances of natural disasters and humanitarian intervention, when connected to Japan, intellectuals and officials alike can be confronted by the abusive public criticism.

In another instance, during the 2012 frenzy over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, Cui Weiping, a known academic and leading human rights activist started a petition [96] calling for China-Japanese reconciliation. Briefly, the petition called for the need of having an updated image of Japan, which reflects the present and not only the past: "We have seen many Japanese make efforts in apologizing for the war and rebuilding peace. Japan also supported China's development. Looking straight at history, we need to have a new awareness of Japan and make fresh judgments about it" (Cui, 2013). She explained the eruption of the 2012 anti-Japanese nationalism in China "due to hostilities within the nation [Chinese civil war] (...) the opportunity to alleviate the public's memories of the war and their sufferings was lost and people were forced to lock away those feelings". Cui's bottom-up acknowledgement of nationalism was also accompanied by a subtle criticism of the Chinese government for misinforming and manipulating its citizens towards Japan. Nevertheless, the petition clearly stated that Japan's claim over the sovereignty of the Diaoyu islands "lacks persuasiveness" and mentioned the problematic existence of Japanese right wing militaristic views. Over a hundred scholars, journalists and human rights activists signed Cui's petition, but others called her initiative "treasonous" (Hayashi N., 2012). What must have not been to the liking of the critics is that it expressed concern over the risks of purposefully inflating nationalism and it recommended shelving the island dispute and the restoration of Sino-Japanese relations. Foreseeing the accusations to come, Cui said: "In fact, I am not afraid to be a scolded as a traitor, because I was the descendant of the New Fourth Army"[97] (Meng Q. and Nojima, 2013). However, Cui is trapped between two polarised views: "some liberal-minded friends think she [Cui] is very pro-government (..) But a large number of netizens and social critics think that she is taking a very soft stance toward Japan and she sounds

[96] The petition can be found at http://www.gopetition.com/petitions.

[97] The New Fourth Army was under the control of the Communist Party and active south of the Yangtze River from 1937 to 1947. In 1941 it was defeated by the Nationalists troops which marked the official end of the United Front.

like a traitor (hanjian)" (Ding, 2013). Even those defending China's national interests expect to be branded as "traitors" because for some, Japan's past still appears as an insurmountable obstacle in the improvement of Sino-Japanese relations.

Dai Qing, a former journalist and renowned environmental activists, plans a more unusual project for which she too expects to be criticised and labelled as a "traitor". She wants the bones of the Japanese soldiers who have fallen at Baoshan, Yunnan, to be returned to Japan. Dai Qing has no high hopes of receiving much support for her project. Instead, she expects many more to criticise her for "national betrayal", even if as the daughter of Ye Jianying, once a high up CCP official and marshal in the PLA, she could reap many benefits from the government (Interview, 2016).

Another public figure, Li Chengpeng, known more recently for his work as an investigative journalist and author, learnt what it means to be accused of being a "traitor" in a harsher way. Over the years, Li changed his views - from being a severe critic of Japan he became a severe critic of the Chinese government. And so in the midst of the 2012 anti-Japanese protests he wrote online his own "Confession of a Traitor" (一个卖国贼的自) (Li C.b, 2012b). With a following of 6,6 million Weibo fans, the blog went viral on Sina Weibo, registering over 200,000 views and 19,000 comments in just under two days (China file, 2012). Li decried the boycott of Japanese goods and the violent demonstrations and anti-Japanese feelings over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Poignantly he wrote: "In this country that specializes in producing patriots, the biggest difficulty of a writer is not how to make one's work better or to discover novel things in life, but foremost how not to seem like a traitor" (2012). These lines were too offensive for some nationalists who considered he deserved a lessons; two men who identified themselves as Maoists attacked him with a knife at the launch of his latest book, a collection of political essays, in Beijing. At another book launch that followed in Shenzhen, while some fans praised his work, others shouted "Down with traitor Li Chengpeng" (Beech, 2013).[98] The pressure and threats that came from these extreme nationalists put scholars *en garde* and while it may stimulate some to push further the boundaries of

[98] In June 2014, Li's Sina blog and Weibo account got closed down. It has been suspected that it was not incidental that immediately after, the *Global Times* published a suggestive editorial captioned "Radical Liberals Must Have a Sober Awareness of Boundaries" (激进自由派须有清醒的底线意识): "if a few radical liberals want to continue bumping against the line and being antagonistic, then that is their political and personal choice. They must bear the consequences of doing so, and it's not something worth grousing about" (China Digital Times, 2014).

acceptability, it would not be surprising if many more will be deterred from such future outspoken acts.

The above examples are not a new trend, but rather a continuing one. Other intellectuals such as Ma Licheng, a writer and long-time editorialist for *People's Daily* and Ge Hongbing, a professor at Shanghai University, were singled out and also branded as "traitors". They were at the forefront of public anger in 2002 and 2007 after they each published articles calling for the need to overcome historical differences between China and Japan in order to improve bilateral relations. They were immediately threatened by nationalists, criticised by some colleagues and even risked losing their jobs. Ma Licheng is a popular figure in Chinese politics and literary circles, considered to be in the top 50 most influential people in China by the *Asia Week* magazine in 2002. That year he published an article on "New thinking in relation to Japan" in which he advocated the burial of the historical hatred between China and Japan, arguing that Japan has apologised on numerous occasions to China and had paid for its past actions. As a consequence, he came under severe attack for breaking the "unified" nationalism and deviating from the usual norm of sowing anti-Japanese hatred. Ma's "new thought" became an emblem of "traitors" online and also one of the most searched phrases in 2003 (Wu X., 2007, p.67). In the aftermath of the event, many speculated that he departed for Hong Kong to take shelter from the outpouring accusation of betrayal brought upon him, as one activist put it, by his "typical 'traitor' attitude" (Interview with Activist O., 2015). However, Ma Licheng denied such suppositions and continued his work (Interview, 2014). He notes that "[contemporary] nationalism is turning in a strange direction as the economy develops. The first thing China needs to do is tone down the nationalism" (The Asahi Shimbun, 2014). But not many are as outspoken as Ma Licheng. He recounts the eve of the 70th WWII anniversary, in 2015 when Abe expressed "profound grief" over Japan's actions during the war:

> One Chinese academic appeared on television on the evening of August 14, after the statement [Abe's statement] was made, and noted its positive role. The following day, however, he thoroughly denounced it. It makes one speculate that he became frightened when he saw how other people were hurling abuse at Abe's words and quickly reversed his earlier position (Ma, 2015).

In 2007 the literary critic Ge Hongbing went through a similar experience

of "hanjian" abuse. He wrote a blog post entitled "China: How Should World War II Be Commemorated". His main argument was that the Japanese themselves were victims of the war and condemned China's anti-Japan propaganda manifested through constant references to WWII. The immediate response came online in over seven hundred messages cursing the author and labelling him as a *hanjian*. Ge Hongbing (Interview, 2015) recounts how each department of Shanghai University where he holds a Professorship post, received between 30-50 daily phone calls of complaints and threats, for a 3-month period. His address and phone number were made public and the situation escalated to the point that he had to interrupt his work and move out of his home. Protesters held demonstrations at the university and they even filed a complaint at a court in Shanghai. Some of the most concerning threats were issued by the extremist nationalist organisations such as "Iron Blood" (*Tiexue*) and "North East Anti-Japanese League". Threats did not stop until the government interfered by removing personal information and blocking his name from appearing in engine searches; for instance, Baidu, the Chinese engine search version of Google, no longer linked "traitor" or "Sino-Japanese relations" to his name. Only this, eventually, brought the incident to an end. This narrative is minute, but it supports Stockmann's finding that it is largely the absence of state restraints that leads to highly negative news reports, rather than the active promotion of propaganda (2013). The moral of this story is best written in the words of Yu Jie (2008), a CCP critic and current dissident:

> Under enormous pressure from the 'will of the netizens' (*wangluo minyi*), Ge Hongbing was forced to withdraw his article and apologize for it. Thus, the so-called 'will of the netizens' mercilessly deprived such a scholar of his freedom of speech in the belief that they thereby 'kept the country's dignity intact'.

As the examples above illustrate, "traitors" who "disrespect" China are cornered and often silenced. "It has become riskier for intellectuals and researchers to comment on sensitive issues because rational nationalism has been squeezed" (Interview with Yu, 2014). It has been "squeezed", to use Yu's term, under the burden of history and collective memory, whipped up by politicians from time to time, and pushed to the extreme by loud anti-Japanese nationalists.

7.2.2. Political elites

The "traitor" formula works at numerous levels. Representatives of political elites are not shielded from the blustering public anti-Japanese views. In the past, attributing positive adjectives to Japan was not a crime and politicians were freer to speak about Japan than they are today (Interview with Yu, 2014; Interview with Gui, 2015). However, in contemporary China, political elites are not spared from accusations of "betrayal" either.

The public pressure of upholding strong nationalistic principles, which often are against Japan, is exercised on various political actors, up to the highest level. A relevant illustration of this is the event from 2005, when Wu Yi, Chinese vice-premier during Hu's presidency, was commissioned to improve Sino-Japanese relations and to persuade the Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi to abandon his plan of visiting Yasukuni Shrine. However, Koizumi refused to provide any assurances over Yasukuni and as a consequence, in an unexpected and undiplomatic manner, Wu Yi cancelled the meeting and returned to China. The former US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Susan Shirk describes this incident as a rare political disobedience as Wu Yi would not have had the government's endorsement to cut short her visit. Shirk further claims that Wu Yi was not punished because it would have been political suicide for Hu, who would have come under intense nationalistic scrutiny (2007, p.175). Hu had to appear firm against Japan, rather than against Wu Yi, whose action was classed by many as a patriotic act. In the words of Christopher Hughes, "the Hu–Wen leadership did their best to foster their reputations as protectors of national pride and domestic stability, [and to] avoid criticism along nationalist lines" (2014, p.37).

Not only does the Chinese government take into account public opinion, but even caves in to it due to concerns of nationalist outbursts and accusations of "betraying" nationalist interest. This is supported by means of two illustrations relating to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and joint exploration of East China Sea resources. In the case of the former, in October 2010 rumours emerged about a secret agreement on the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands that China and Japan had struck in 2006, according to which "[Japan agreed] not to detain Chinese citizens setting foot on the Islands while China promised to restrain Chinese vessels who voluntarily defend the Diaoyu from approaching the isles" (Xinhua, 2010a). At that time, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson rushed to discredit what he classed to be "sheer slander out of malicious intention, which not only misleads the public opinion but also further damages China-Japan political mutual trust" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010b). However, unlike the official version, in a leaked document from the Chinese

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Xue Jian, Japan Division Deputy Director, acknowledged the pressure the government faces from public opinion. He is reported to have made the following comments:

> Complaining about media reports on the lack of progress and about strongly negative public statements by senior officials from both sides, Xue said the progress was real and China wants the dispute to be resolved quickly. According to Xue, both sides agreed at the end of the talks that it would be beneficial if information on the Chinese proposal stayed out of the press. Blaming the Japanese side for leaks and pointing out that China had kept the details of the previously proposed Japanese plan out of the press, Xue said the media reports left both sides little choice but to take strong public stances and reject the other's proposal, thus making it appear that the talks had failed (Wikileaks, 2006).

This declaration in itself underscores the fact that the public pressure, generally characterised by strong nationalist feelings, is being considered by policy-makers; it may not always influence foreign policy outcomes, but it has an input into foreign policy debates, in the way policy is phrased and delivered.

In a separate instance, on October 31, 2010 during the East Asia Summit in Hanoi, a much awaited meeting between Japan's and China's PM, Kan and Wen was scheduled. To everyone's surprise the meeting was called off by China in the last minute. The Chinese complained about false information being disseminated by Maehara, Japan's Foreign Ministry, concerning the resumption of the East China Sea joint project: "Hu Zhengyue, an assistant Chinese foreign minister, accused Japan of 'ruining the atmosphere' for the planned Wen-Kan summit by making 'false statements' about the foreign ministers' discussions" (Anderlini, Bland and Nakamoto, 2010). Maehara denied having mentioned the East China Sea project and claimed he was misquoted; ultimately, the Wen-Kan meeting went ahead after a short over-night postponement. The Chinese government initial reaction of postponing the meeting and of accusing Japan, has been attributed to the potential public pressure that may have followed over the news about the East China Sea Joint Development.[99] A recent public survey indicates that among the 10 policy proposals, shelving the disputes and pursuing joint development was one of

[99] See the activists' petition on East China Sea from Chapter 5.

the least popular options (Chubb, 2014). Both Japan's Foreign Ministry Maehara and Japan's deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuyama said the report over East China Sea development had angered China: "It appears the administration of President Hu Jintao was concerned that anti-Japan rallies in inland regions had not stopped and Beijing fears the demonstrators might turn their criticism against the government" (cited in Miyai and Mukai, 2010). Unsurprisingly, these statements made the news in Japan, but not in China.[100] This then suggests that Wen, as in the past[101], was worried about both conservatives within the government back home and the public protests against the government itself for "selling off" the country to Japan. Jointly exploring resources with Japan, resources that nationalists perceive anyway to belong to China (see Chapter 5), amidst protests over the ownership of Diaoyu/Senkaku islands would have been seen as high treason on the government's behalf. Hu-Wen administration knew that they had to keep a close eye on the domestic audience. Ma Licheng's admonishment came true once and may become true again: "the risk of using nationalism is that if one day when China will want to make peace with the West these patriots will call the government a traitor" (Interview, 2014).[102]

Based on the government's reaction to the above examples, as other scholars have also noticed in different circumstances, "in the presence of strongly unfavourable public opinion the Chinese government tends to remain low-key in pursuing controversial foreign policy, or even opts for a hardline

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[100] The Japanese media reported little on the meeting claiming that except their reaffirmed commitment to end the political standoff, "discussion itself was rather superficial" (Oki, 2010). *People's Daily* and *China Daily* did not report anything on the meeting. *Global Times* did not provide any explanation on this issue either, instead it chose to bash Maehara for having done "nothing to repair the ties, but add fire to the renewed sovereignty dispute, bringing Sino-Japanese relations to its coldest point since when former prime minister Junichiro Koizumi was in power" (2010d).

[101] The domestic public and political pressure that Wen faced in the past when it came to the joint exploration of East China Sea resources has previously driven heated debates. For instance, in 2008 when China and Japan signed joint resource development in East China Sea "the agreement was sharply criticized by Chinese Internet users and the Hong Kong media immediately after its announcement—they criticized the Chinese communist authorities for betraying the national interests, humiliating the nation and forfeiting its sovereignty" (Shan, 2008). The Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Dawei spent the following days reassuring the Chinese public that China has not given up to its claim of sovereignty and continued to manage the public (McCarthy, 2012, p.76).

[102] As briefly mentioned in Chapter 5, segments of the public criticise the Government for restricting their ability to express nationalism, online or through print media. Similarly, Zhang Likun, one of the CFDDI activists, complains about the authorities' clampdown on the Mukden Incident commemoration, a year after the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku protests: "They have forgotten it [the Mukden Incident] even faster than the Japanese did. It's ridiculous (…) They suppress anyone who is patriotic or anti-Japan, or who calls for realism about the war of resistance against Japan" (RFA, 2013).

stance in line with public opinion" (Lai, 2010, p.38-39).

7.2.3. Members of the public

The social pressure of being a "good nationalist" is not felt only by the academics and politicians who advise moving away from an emotional nationalism to a more rational approach to nationalism. Members of the public come under the same pressure. Intimidation and raising self-doubt about one's "Chineseness" and "nationalism" are common ways of marginalising moderate voices.

Overseas Chinese students are often accused and labelled as "traitors" for being "less Chinese" simply because they study abroad. "It is a horrible feeling, I feel excluded" and "at the height of the Sino-Japanese conflict, things got worse" says one of the overseas students (Interview with Student A, 2014). On *Weibo* and *RenRen*, popular social networks in China, people circulated anti-Japanese posts and asked others to share them "'If you are Chinese you must read this and must share it' [referring to anti-Japanese texts]". Those who did not share the posts were seen as abandoning or offending their Chinese identity, because "the sense of belonging is rooted in the Chinese nation", the same student recounts. Another student explains that she too, along with other friends who study abroad, are often demeaned online by their friends and acquaintances, to the point that they may eventually take a pro-active stance just so that they stop the "shaming" (Interview with Student B, 2014). Others, studying at Western university campuses in China such as University of Nottingham in Ningbo, during the tumultuous days of the Diaoyu/Senkaku protests, were counselled by their parents to clearly display signs of "Chinese" appearance so that they avoid being targeted by extreme protesters who may rashly identify them as "traitors" serving "foreign interests" (Interview with Student B, 2014).

Similar pressures of displaying Chinese patriotism by showing anti-Japanese feelings became the norm at the peak of 2010 and 2012 protests. Chinese citizens who consumed or used Japanese products also came under attack. Owners of Japanese branded cars were targeted by mobs; some covered their car's badge and others stuck stickers on their cars with messages such: "I bought the car first, before Japan got bitchy. From now on, boycott Japanese goods" (Moore M., 2012). Restaurants and shops selling Japanese goods displayed patriotic messages in their windows and hung Chinese flags in a show of support in an effort to avoid coming under attack (Hongo, 2012).

The pinnacle of the protests and hunt for "traitors" was the Xi'an incident in which a Chinese Toyota driver was fatally wounded by a protester simply for owning a Japanese car(Westlake, 2012).

In the Chinese media, "national betrayal" gained a lot of popularity during the 2012 protests through the incident caused by Han Deqiang, professor and founder of Utopia, a Maoist organisation, who publicly slapped an elderly man who sullied Mao Zedong. During the protests, Han ran into two supporters displaying the slogan "Chairman Mao, we miss you!". They were walking towards the Japanese Embassy where they planned to stage a protest over the nationalisation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. An elderly man interfered and told the youths that "placing hopes for the protection of the dignity of the nation and the righteousness of the people in the hands of Mao Zedong is a mistake and totally impractical" (将这种维护国家尊严和民族大义的愿望集寄托在毛泽东身上是错误的，也是不可能实现的). Han claimed that the man disrespectfully bellowed him "You think like an ass", and tarnished Mao's image, which prompted the slap and the *hanjian* slur (Snyder, 2012). The incident was disseminated both online and on CCTV, attracting thousands of comments and heated public debates. In one day, one post describing the incident on Sina Weibo attracted 49,000 forwards and more than 23,000 comments (Tao, 2012). While some were critical of Han's gesture, others ironically remarked that "the elderly gentleman was a supporter of Wang Jingwei, leader of the puppet regime founded by Japan in China during the Second World War" and applauded Han's gesture (Shanghaiist, 2012). More importantly, the incident brought to attention problems surrounding the significance of the language employed when discussing nationalism and Japan. The *People's Daily* reaction is noteworthy; on its official Weibo account it stated: "This kind of 'with us or against us' philosophy can tear apart our society and runs counter to prevailing trends. This word 'hanjian' should be abolished, [let's] turn instead towards the imperative reforms of justice and fairness" (Wade, 2012). An op-ed from *China Youth Daily* (cited in Blatt, 2012) also read:

> 'Patriotism' isn't a word or concept that anyone can use to monopolize and dominate. People who don't take part in the protests can still be patriots; those who help support the countrymen, even if they don't support the actions of the anti-Japan movement, can still be patriots; even those who do not sacrifice anything, but who work hard and pay their taxes, they too can be patriots.

The online sphere is known for providing a medium of expression for nationalists, sometimes criticising academics, intellectuals and the government as discussed above, but often turning against each other. Take for instance, the online responses to the 2011 Japanese earthquake briefly mentioned in the first part of this section. Even in the face of a natural calamity, the responses were mixed. The majority, indeed, commended Japan and its people for the stoicism and resilience shown in time of crisis; while wishing the best to the disaster victims, they even "hope[d] no inharmonious, extreme, nationalistic voices will appear in this post" and poked fun at "[t]he fenqing[103] [who] will tell you that no matter how civilized they appear on the outside, it cannot conceal the uncivilized nature of when they invaded China in the past" (China Smack, 2011). Indeed, nationalists' comments appeared quickly and attacked those who showed sympathy towards Japan: "I suspect you are the descendant of a little Japanese who was left behind! Why don't you go and take a DNA test and make sure you are Chinese before you come and talk to me, because right now you are not qualified" (China Smack, 2011).

Overall, a pluralised spectrum of voices can be seen in China, but the question that remains is whether hawkish voices are marginalising dovish voices in public discourses. The risk of losing their jobs and attracting attacks on themselves and their family is a high price to pay for those who diverge from the "patriotic" line. Political elites also often have to face public criticism when dealing with Japan; when in disagreement with the public they choose to play their cards behind the scenes as in the case of Diaoyu/Senkaku "no arrests" deal and East China Sea Joint Development. Diverse opinions towards Japan within the public exist and are positive signs for the long term development of Sino-Japanese relations. Nonetheless, the voices of extreme nationalists are intimidating, sometimes they turn violent and in the eventuality of a Sino-Japanese incident could be silencing a more moderate majority.

7.3. Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the perceived effects of nationalism at the foreign level on one hand, and the effects of nationalism at the domestic level on the other. The nationalism-foreign policy link was analysed through the lenses of a number of actors varying from activists to intellectuals and elites. Activists are confident that by doing their duties of "defending the nation's

[103] Literally translated as "angry youth" but commonly used to describe nationalists.

interests" they have exercised influence over China's policy in a number of cases: the petition against Japan's high-speed train and UN bid; the deployment of aid to Sichuan earthquake affected area in non-SDF helicopters; the campaign for national holidays to remember the Japanese invasion; the legal advice provided to WWII Japanese victims; and the organisation of public anti-Japanese protests, boycotts of Japanese products and voyages to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. It is the activists' view that a good patriot should celebrate and remember history and should prod the Chinese government to toughen up against Japan when it forgets its "national interests". As for researchers and academics, most recognise the influence of public pressure on policy to some extent, but this varies across examples.

At the domestic level, a case was built for the influence that nationalism exercises on the freedom of expression. Nationalistic voices are strident and are often complemented by menacing accusations of national "treachery" directed towards intellectuals, political elites and the wider public alike. Promoting the national interest is a task that has been taken over by nationalists who seem keen to put pressure on anybody who does not conform to the definition of a "good nationalist". Ma Lichenga and Ge Hongbing are just some of those who faced an uncomfortable public pressure, while Hu-Wen tried to avoid it. Having the tone of "anti-Japanese nationalism" set by the masses can pose problems for some political elites as seen in the case of Diaoyu/Senkaku and East China Sea Joint Development project leak. Simultaneously, it can satisfy conservative elements within the political system who want to see a tougher stance taken against Japan in protecting China's interests. These public self-censorships are reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution when rational thinking was restrained and put under self-criticism if considered to be deviating from the Party line; in those days anybody could easily be attributed different statuses from a proud "red" (communist revolutionary) to a condemned "black" (counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie) or "grey" (pending status). Today, not even the "grey" status seems permissible for not holding anti-Japanese feelings.

As for the future, anti-Japanese nationalism remains a topic to be considered when designing policies both at the international and domestic level. Domestically, the government will try to maintain a delicate balance so that it avoids being branded for selling out the country while it will continue to collect the benefits of nationalistic anti-Japanese sentiments. Nevertheless, it provides opportunities for activists and the general public to persuasively lobby and criticise the government.

Chapter 8.

Conclusion

This thesis has endeavoured to assess the role that Japan played in the formation of Chinese nationalism. It argued in favour of a comprehensive understanding of Chinese nationalism, defined as a bidirectional process where the top-down and bottom-up components are engaged in an interactive dialectical relationship. Anti-Japanese nationalism in China was investigated by focusing predominantly on the 2010 and 2012 Sino-Japanese tensions over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. To facilitate the assessment of this phenomenon an analytical framework was proposed which followed five sequences from the "life of anti-Japanese nationalism in China", ranging from history, contemporary triggers, and behavioural manifestations of nationalism to contemporary discussions of nationalism and its lingering effects in the Chinese society and bilateral relations.

This chapter first surmises and reflects on the most important findings of this thesis and the contributions it makes at the empirical, theoretical and policy level. This is then followed by directions for future research, research shortcomings, and study implications and recommendations.

8.1. What was learnt: research questions, findings and contributions

The primary research question this thesis proposed was: What is the nature of Chinese nationalism and how was it formed and constructed? This was then divided into multiple sub-questions: 1) Under what domestic and structural condition was nationalism fostered in 2010 and 2012? 2) How was nationalism expressed and manifested at the non-state level? 3) What were the state responses to these non-state expressions and manifestations of nationalism? and 4) What are the perceived effects of anti-Japanese nationalism over aspects of China's domestic and foreign policy?

The findings reached in this thesis resulted mainly from the Diaoyu/Senkaku 2010 and 2012 case study and from discourse analysis applied on articles from *People's Daily*. Interviews with academics, researchers, journalists and protesters were an invaluable primary source of information. A significant number of other secondary sources, specifically newswires and newspapers, complemented the sources aforementioned. The main findings of

each chapter, including brief discussions of "so what" and "now what", are discussed next.

Chapter 4 set the historical backdrop against which anti-Japanese nationalism developed in China and the triggers that activated this "dormant" nationalism pre-2010 and 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku incident. A closer examination of history showed that the anti-Japanese theme pre-dates the CCP legacy and should not be dismissed simply as a CCP creation. Anti-Japanese nationalism is traced from the Shimonoseki Treaty to the KMT, before being discussed in relation to the CCP. Therefore, when scrutinising anti-Japanese nationalism in China the temptation of reducing it to instrumentalism on the grounds of the non-democratic ruling Party-state should be more carefully considered; the weight of history left its imprint on people's identities and still shapes what it means to be Chinese today.

When looking at the triggers for the 2010 and 2012 waves of anti-Japanese feelings in China it has been highlighted that the stronger underlining triggers of nationalism were threat perceptions and an increase in China's economic power, both at the public and official levels. In order to improve inter-state relations and understanding, China's own perceptions of threat should be given more attention, rather than focusing solely on the "China's threat" theory extremely popular in the Western literature. This is not to claim that China's "threatening" actions should be left unscrutinised, but to underline that China and the "others" images of each other are extremely similar and a one sided-analysis will only impoverish our understanding.

In Chapter 5, by following the unravelled manifestations of nationalism, in the form of protests, boycotts, actions of public activism and informal channels, a sense of the significance and extent of anti-Japanese feelings was provided. When looking into the state response to these manifestations, two findings surfaced. One finding is that the state ran a coordinated media campaign. The media hardly covered the protests, boycotts and activists. Online, a similar trend was observed where posts deemed risky for attracting large gatherings were quickly removed and key words banned. Similarly, non-state organisations and activists were closely monitored. All these responses clearly exposed an acutely concerned government over social stability. Contrary to prevailing wisdom, the Chinese government has often minimised the expressions of nationalism and the dissemination of news related to it, particularly in 2010; more lenience towards bottom-up manifestations of protests was indeed seen in 2012, yet there was no evidence found that it encouraged these protests. The difference between encouraging, tolerating and

curtailing anti-Japanese manifestations is relevant because it indicates the degree to which anti-Japanese nationalism needs to be "constructed" by the Chinese government and the degree to which nationalism is already formed and led by non-state actors. Both 2010 and 2012 manifestations appeared largely bottom-up driven. In this sense, Stockmann (2013) may be right in arguing that it is the restraint that the government exercises in media that tames popular nationalism, suggesting that a more tolerant and liberal government would see a more nationalistic public. This raises a shadow of doubt over the type of power China would become if it were to democratise.

The second finding was the lack of a coordinated state response to how and when nationalistic compulsions should be alleviated, tolerated or exacerbated. In contrast to expectations of a unified "authoritarian" state response, several variations were registered across provinces in China regarding educational and police measures and responses. It has been speculated that divisions at the top over how to handle the anti-Japanese manifestations may be the explanation for the differing approaches over dealing with the boycott campaign and the impact of the crisis on China's economy. This complex point is only presented in this research as an informed assumption, but it would benefit from further scholarly attention

Chapter 6 re-created portrayals of anti-Japanese feelings in China sketching the main features of this strand of nationalism. Discourse analysis on state media first established the main strategies employed by the state media when dealing with anti-Japanese nationalism. The themes correlated most with nationalism were *territorial sovereignty, history* and *mistrust*. Other noticeable strategies implied polarising Japan and China's images in black and white colours, and galvanising inclusiveness by implying that any good patriot should throw his/her support behind the government against Japan's "usurpations". Altogether, a partial shift from China's narrative of victimisation and humiliation, is a prevalent assumption that features in the literature, to a victor narrative dominated by confidence.

Anti-Japanese feelings did not run high among the masses alone, a number of military voices, with a high number of followers and receiving wide media coverage, made powerful accusatory remarks towards Japan, publicly and brazenly. Some officials and scholars joined in this trend, which suggests that there is a heightened anti-Japanese nationalism looming large among various strata of society. Additionally, the fact that in 2010 military voices were restrained from commenting on the Diaoyu/Senkaku incident falls in line with the media campaign from 2010 which was also much more restrictive than in

2012. While this appears to support Fravel's (2013) views that the PLA toed the Party line, the comments were so incisive that one can only wonder if it was due to differences in political views among elites, a difference which was more clearly noticed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce. Nationalism can always be used by a variety of actors to accomplish their own goals, but in the process it shapes domestic discourses and inflates the "threat perception" of Chinese nationalism.

As for the bottom-up portrayals of nationalism, the theme of history, threat perception to state-survival and China's reactivity in response to Japan's actions mostly matched the findings from media analysis. Both the public and the elites share the same view of Japan. This suggests that Japan can indeed play the role of unifying the country together and of gathering support for the government. This is a thought-provoking finding given that some bottom-up actors otherwise harshly criticise the government's rule, including the breach of their own human rights, and define nationalism as loyalty to the nation and not the state. Last, it was further argued that if the Chinese government disclosed its own history and uncensored news related to other countries, such as its allies, a point of comparison would be provided for Japan's actions; therefore, it is likely that anti-Japanese feelings would be less hyperbolised and empathy could play a role in the Sino-Japanese reconciliation.

In the last empirical Chapter, number 7, the focus was on the relationship between nationalism and foreign and domestic policy. At the international level, the link between nationalism and foreign policy was presented from the activists' perspective. Activists believe it is their duty as patriots to remind the government of China's core interests and to try to influence China's policy towards Japan; they have claimed numerous successes in affecting policy through petitioning and lobbying the government and by simply sailing to the islands. Academics were sceptical to give credit to activists, but most accepted that public pressure is influential in shaping Sino-Japanese relations.

At the domestic level, nationalism was reflected in the attempts of vocal, and often extreme, nationalist elements of the masses who set the parameters of a "good nationalist". A pervasive strand of this extreme nationalism puts pressure on the government, academics, researchers, intellectuals and the masses alike, spreading a "culture of silence" that nobody dares to challenge. Two examples over the Joint Development in East China Sea and Maritime Mechanisms of Communications, indicated the attention given by the Chinese government to public opinion and the concern of not being

in their good graces of "nationalism". While intellectuals continue to be often targeted for betraying the nation when they propose a new approach to Sino-Japanese relations, 'normal' citizens have to expose "Chineseness" in order to avoid such pressures from their peers. This "silencing culture" is not the healthy nationalism that China claims to want for harmonising and stabilising the society.

The above findings, enumerated chapter by chapter, answered in detail to the research question presented in the beginning of the thesis on the kind of anti-Japanese nationalism developed in China. A short answer to this question is that anti-Japanese nationalism is indeed a continuing historical and unifying theme for a nation, which would otherwise not necessarily choose to rally behind the Party-state rule. It is a theme dominated by concerns of sovereignty and deep-seated mistrust among the elites and public alike. The bottom-up forces proved to harbour strong anti-Japanese feelings with little need to be encouraged by the government to manifest them, more so presenting challenges for how to down-play them. Overall, while the bottom-up and top-down forces have a degree of shared understanding of Japan, through their actions, manifestations and participation to discourses, in extreme or neutral forms, the meaning of anti-Japanese nationalism is constantly negotiated.

In addition to the main research question, this thesis has also tackled partially the "complementary" question raised in the introduction on why was China prepared to make such a fuss and risk its economic development and international image for the sake of these small islands? The answer is threefold. First, nationalism sprung from the masses with an intensity that was not safe for the government to contain. China's priority has always been to maintain domestic stability and it keeps a lid on collective mobilisation, but it had to distance itself from the potential label of "traitor to the nation". Domestic stability in the case of Sino-Japanese disputes can be achieved by feeding the nationalists what they wanted, that is allowing their voices to be heard and showing understanding for their cause. Second, in 2012 it became more notable that China was confident in its economy and that Japan will suffer more from deteriorated bilateral economic relations. Third, China clearly tried to keep its image clean abroad; articles in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* appeared informing the readers that the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are Chinese territory (Saba, 2012), ambassadors were tasked abroad to uphold the same defensive stance through statements published online and attendances on TV

shows.[104] A campaign of highlighting Japan's actions of "aggression" and China's reactiveness was clearly underway. To sum up, containing the protests would have only harmed China's domestic legitimacy; China did not think that the risk to trade would damage its economy; and it worked hard to persuade the world about its sovereign rights over the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands.

Overall, based on the above findings, several contributions to the literature have been made. Anti-Japanese nationalism in China has been conceptualised as a constant interaction between bottom-up and top-down forces with the help of theories of nationalism such as primordialism, ethnosymbolism, and instrumentalism. The "ism" theoretical lenses mentioned above were used throughout all the phases of nationalism proposed from history and triggers of nationalism, manifestations of bottom-up manifestations and state responses to it, contemporary understandings of nationalism in China and the effects of nationalism on China's domestic and foreign policy; these phases and lenses constitute a "segment" of nationalism which could be applied to other studies. These theories gained more value within Wendt's constructivist frame and more specifically Gidden's structuration theory. Chinese state and non-state actors, driven by various factors and acting within specific contexts as discussed in the above theories of nationalism, are prominent to the understanding of contemporary Chinese nationalism towards Japan. They have been active participants in the creation of structure which in turn feeds into the possibilities of the expression of agency, including the content of nationalism towards Japan and the social behaviour attached to it. Chinese nationalism towards Japan is the collective product of the interaction of these agents which recursively transforms the structure.

At the empirical level, this study stressed the importance of analysing bottom-up nationalism when discussing the question of nationalism in Sino-Japanese relations in relation to Diaoyu/Senkaku islands; extensive details were provided about how the Chinese state media and other non-state actors perceived Japan and China's stance in the Diaoyu/Senkak dispute.

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[104] For example, the Chinese ambassador to the UK, Liu Xiaoming, on Oct. 3, 2012 authored an article in *The Telegraph* suggestively entitled "Diaoyu Dao history shall not be revered". In the same year, the Chinese Embassy to the US started a page on the "Diaoyu dao of China" which was regularly updated between 2012 and 20132012. The web page can be accessed at: http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/DiaoyuDaoofChina/default.html.

Understanding anti-Japanese nationalism as a permanent interaction between various actors was aided by detailed experiences and accounts of activists and researchers; this comprehensive image of anti-Japanese nationalism in China challenges the general assumption of a top-down dictated nationalism.

At policy level, a more globally integrated China than two decades ago means that whatever happens in China will have a significant external impact on the world, hence concerns about anti-Japanese nationalism in China are justified. It is in the last section of this chapter that policy recommendations are discussed in detail.

8.2. Directions for future research

This research has opened up many research paths in need of further investigation. The thesis was particularly preoccupied with anti-Japanese nationalism within China's borders, discounting due to constraints of time, an increasingly significant segment of the Chinese population, the Chinese diaspora. In 2010 and particularly 2012, Chinese communities around the world have been exceedingly active in taking the same strong stance against Japan as activists and protesters within China. Varying from fairly small diasporas, such as those in Romania and Norway, to large diasporas in the US and Canada, protests were staged against Japan's move over Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Do all Chinese, regardless of their residency, have then the same understanding of nationalism towards Japan? Or were these manifestations encouraged and even coerced by Chinese institutions abroad? After all, the Chinese ambassadors themselves in the US, UK, India, Australia, just to name a few, were engaged in 2012 in the promotion of China's ownership claims over Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. The influence of the state on the construction of nationalism abroad would bear a whole different set of implications.

Another continuation of this project would be to look at Taiwan and Hong Kong's take on the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands and their nationalism in relation to Japan through the prism of these territorial disputes. Both countries have a history of Japanese occupation, similar to China, and they have also been keen observers and active players in the developments in the East China Sea dispute, actually for longer than the mainland Chinese have. Taiwanese and Hong Kongese activists have enjoyed more freedom of action and clear support from some of their local politicians who even sponsored their voyages to the islands (Moy and Wong, 2012). These common elements could set the base for an

intriguing and complex comparative analysis of anti-Japanese nationalism in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

The road map of nationalism laid out in this thesis also allows for further regional investigations on nationalism and disputed territories. The most evident next project would be applying this framework to Japan. Recent publications have shed more light into Japan's nationalism[105], but would still benefit from empirically rich analysis of nationalism and identity politics. Moreover, comparable case studies with the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are the Takeshima/Dokdo islands, disputed between Japan and South Korea, and the Kurile/Sakhalin islands, disputed between Japan and Russia. These bilateral relations share a similar historical and cultural background with China and Japan, while the present continues to be stained by incidents and the pursuit of elites' agendas. Such comparative case studies would contribute with a wealth of details to the literature of nationalism in East Asia and to the growing literature on islands in the social sciences.

Besides the East China territorial disputes aforementioned, the South China Sea has attracted extensive worldwide attention. Vietnam and Philippines, backed by the US, are the disputants to the islands and China's fiercer critics. Domestically, both countries have witnessed anti-Chinese protests and criticism has intensified also from China's side. A particular curious point is that public support for the government's actions in East China Sea appear to be almost as strong as those in the South China Sea (Chubb, 2014). While one would expect sentiments, at least at the popular level, over the East China Sea dispute to be fuelled by the long shared history between China and Japan, the same does not equally apply to the South China Sea. This finding is intriguing for the future that "territorial" nationalism and "anti-foreign" nationalism hold in China.

The continuing development and unfolding of events constantly open up new avenues of research, which can be built upon this thesis' analytical framework and data to be used in comparative research.

8.3. Study implications and recommendations

[105] See Ekman and Pajon (2015), Wilson (2002), Iida (2002).

Territorial disputes in the East China Sea set the stage for all the unresolved problems and emotions that blemish Sino-Japanese relations. The Chinese government cannot afford to treat lightly anti-Japanese nationalism.

First, domestically, both China and Japan should exercise further caution in using nationalism for political purposes. From this perspective, the stakes are high for both Chinese and Japanese governments and the more nationalism is instrumentalised in a negative manner, the more unlikely it is for any of the two governments to back down and hence their declining ability to control expressions of nationalism. China and Japan's management of the "other-nationalism" are often a reflection of the mirror which means that reaching a common ground is likely to become increasingly difficult. The lack of mutual understanding more often than assumed is an incorrect misreading of the "other". Therefore, the future of "nationalism" and of Sino-Japanese relations still largely depends on how state officials manage and guide nationalism in their home countries. A starting point would be to "unlearn" the enemy mentality, seen in this thesis through the constant presence of threat perceptions. Misperceptions and unwillingness to engage with each other have created a vicious circle of action-reaction, which are exacerbated by new suspicions of threat. Issues lingering from the past have to be solved bilaterally; alternatively, nourishing a pan-Asian identity might narrow the now seemingly incommensurable gap that divides China and Japan.

Second, nationalism speaks with many voices that balance against one another. However, when China's perceived core interests are at stake and threatened by Japan, and other international actors, these otherwise different voices are more likely to unite. It is then that the power of nationalism tends to be strong. Nevertheless, the "anti-Japan thought" may be a useful resource not just for the government, but also for the activists in their attempt to give rise to civil society and even a more democratic China.

Third, anti-Japanese Chinese nationalism springs from the masses and the government, and there should be a close monitoring of the type of society that develops in China, as suggested through the proposed concept of "culture of silence". Extreme voices that manage to hijack the discourse of nationalism towards Japan, ranging from activists and netizens to commercial publications such as *Global Times*, limit "softer views" towards Japan and at the same time set high expectations about what the government is supposed to do to defend "national" interests. Therefore, there should be a liberalisation of public speech and an inclusive attitude towards the contributions that non-state actors can make. Such bilateral communication based proposals inevitably connect back

to China's backyard problems. Releasing the grip on freedom of speech and research in Chinese academia would allow more open debates about what it means to be Chinese and the role that Japan plays in relation to it. Several academics have pointed out in interviews that research on Japan and nationalism related topics have been forbidden by the government, yet policy would benefit enormously from large data produced through empirical research. Another issue that academics who were commissioned work by the government pointed out is that they are often left with the impression that the reports produced are "empty talk" as they rarely enter a conversation with the government over the report produced. The government has to learn the benefits of a genuine cooperation between practitioners and researchers. On the whole, the Chinese government should consider how to best use the capital of nationalism accumulated without the need of an external referent. Nationalism should be used to push for reform, and to open up a mechanism of communication and cooperation between various actors in the society.

Fourth, and last, more time and resources should be devoted to the study of domestic and foreign policy in relation to nationalism in order to accurately evaluate the constraints and negotiation processes that China has to go through. China's external behaviour should not be simply reduced and understood as China's aggressive expansion, as power for the sake of power. Nationalism in China resembles discussions over security dilemmas through concepts of threats to one's country, economic power and territoriality that they both share, but it should not fail to consider issues of history and perception.

Nationalism in China, nor in many other countries, will not go away despite globalization. Nationalism will continue to be negotiated, marked by compromises and conflicts, internally and externally.

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Chen Zhimin, Chair and Professor of International Politics and Public Affairs, Fudan University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Chong Flora, Executive Director at Association for Learning and Preserving the History of WWII in Asia (ALPHA). London, April 2015.

Dai Qing, Journalist and activist. Beijing, June 2016.

Duchâtel Mathieu, Senior researcher and Head China representative, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Beijing, May 2015.

Feng Wei, Professor of History, Fudan University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Fulda Andreas, Assistant Professor of Chinese studies, University of Nottingham. Nottingham, March 2014.

Ge Hongbing, literary critic and Professor, Shanghai University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Gui Yongtao, Professor of International Studies, Peking University. Beijing, May 2015.

Guo Dingping, Professor of International Relations, visiting University of Nottingham. Nottingham, March 2014.

Guo Dinping, Professor of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Jin Yongming, Professor of Law and Maritime Specialist, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. Shanghai, July 2014.

Li Nan, activist, Defending Diaoyu islands Movement. Beijing, July 2014.

Li Xiushi, researcher in Japanese studies at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies. Shanghai, June 2014.

Lian Degui, deputy director of the Japanese Studies Center at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies. Shanghai, June 2014.

Ma Licheng, Writer and former editor for People's Daily. Beijing, July 2014.

Mang, activist and secretary of the Chinese Association for Claiming Compensation from Japan. Beijing, July 2014

Manicom James, CIGI Research Fellow, Global Security & Politics. Beijing, July 2014

McEwen Andy, Journalist, Global Times. Beijing, May 2014.

Naday Kath, Journalist, Global Times. Beijing, June 2014.

Pan Zhongqi, Professor of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Su Hao, Professor of Diplomacy, China Foreign Affairs University. Beijing, June 2015.

Tang Qifang, Southeast Asia specialist at the foreign ministry-affiliated China Institute of International Studies. Beijing, June 2014.

Tong Zeng, activist and founder of the Chinese Association for Claiming Compensation from Japan. Beijing, May 2014.

Tong Zeng, activist and founder of the Chinese Association for Claiming Compensation from Japan. Beijing, July 2015.

Wang Shaopu, Director of Centre for Japan Studies at the School of International and Public Affairs at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Wu Chengqiu, Associate Professor of International Politics and Public Affairs, Fudan University. Shanghai, May 2014.

Xiao Gongqin, Professor of History, Shanghai Normal University. Shanghai, May 2015.

Yu Tiejun, Professor of International Relations at Peking University. Beijing, May 2014.

Zhang Shixin Ivy, Journalist and Lecturer of Media and Communication, University of Nottingham, Ningbo Campus. Beijing, February 2014.

Anonymous interviews

Anonymous interview A, Chinese student abroad. Nottingham, 2014.

Anonymous interview B, Chinese student abroad. Nottingham, 2014.

Anonymous interview C, Protester. Online interview, December 2013.

Anonymous interview D, Protester. Online interview, December 2013.

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Anonymous interview K, Chinese student. Henan province, 2014.

Anonymous interview L, Professor of Journalism. Beijing, June 2015.

Anonymous interview M, Chinese journalist. Nottingham, March 2013.

Anonymous interview N, Activist. Online interview, November-December 2014.

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