‘How is China’s Economic Growth Affecting International Security in East Asia?’

Master’s Thesis- International Security

Joseph Boswell, Student Number s2317346

Supervisor: Professor Lobo-Guerrero

Telephone Number: 00447763473464

Address: 47 Moulsham Drive,
Chelmsford,
Essex
CM2 9PX
The United Kingdom
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Introduction

This essay will attempt to provide a greater understanding of how China’s economic growth is affecting international security in East Asia. Given the rapid pace of economic development exhibited by China it is reasonable to assume that its neighbours and others in the East Asia region will have been affected in at least some way by this. This essay therefore seeks to determine the relationship between China’s economic growth and its dealings in terms of security with other nations in East Asia as well as the extent to which Chinese economic growth is integral to its conception of security. The essay will utilize a theoretical basis built on complex interdependence and securitisation theory to accomplish this.

The main questions the essay attempts to answer are:

- Has Chinese economic growth increased tensions in the region and, if so, what is the evidence for this?
- Is there evidence that the United States and others see China as a threat?
- Does China show evidence of being a compliant state in terms of the international regime, or a revisionist one?
- Does economic interdependence prevail in East Asia?
- Is military conflict as a result of China’s economic growth a reasonable possibility?
0.1 Motivation

The motivation for this essay is clear; China’s economic growth has received massive coverage in the Western media, with many expecting it to surpass the United States in terms of economic, political and military power within the next couple of decades.\(^1\) Along with this, there are often predictions of China asserting itself aggressively given its new-found power and triggering conflict.\(^2\) This essay aims to discover the effect China’s growth has had on security, using an IR analytical framework.

0.2 Justification

East Asia has been chosen as the main focus point for the essay as it is the region in which China’s growth has been most felt. China has a number of unresolved issues in the region, particularly with regards to Taiwan and the territorial disputes it has had with neighbouring countries in the South and East China seas. China is also, as of now at least, still a regional power which does not have the same global reach as, for instance the United States.

When studying securitisation, a regional approach was taken as it was felt that analysing states separately would allow greater detail in each states’ individual disputes than if they were dealt with simultaneously. In terms of states’ studied, Japan is relevant due to its status as China’s main economic rival in the region. The countries also have a history of animosity which continues in some part to this day, evidenced by anti-Japanese

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demonstrations in China including vandalism of Japanese-owned businesses. The United States is relevant as, despite the fact that it is not an East Asian state, it has alliances with Japan and Taiwan and is thus concerned about security in the region. The United States also has ‘substantial’ economic interests in East Asia based around a large volume of imports and exports which increase its desire to maintain a strong presence in the region. The ASEAN nations were chosen as they give an example of a coalition in the region, as well as the fact that China has been involved in territorial disputes with many of the individual nations. Of course, other nations are important to understanding China’s impact on security as well, but in the interests of brevity these cannot be discussed and could be the subject for further research.

0.3 Understanding Chinese Economic Growth

Central to the question of the essay is the extent to which Chinese growth can be expected in the near future. As such, it is worth investigating whether repeated assertions of China’s imminent economic dominance are accurate. It will also deal with the definitions of economic growth, what factors affect this and whether China has the necessary basis to achieve dominance over other comparable economic states or blocs. The first problem with relations to the question is that of defining economic ‘growth’. Growth is a term frequently used in editorial pieces commenting on China’s economic process but growth itself is not a definition. It requires clarification as to what indicators are to be used to reach such conclusions about the state of China’s economy, as many signs exist and are utilized by analysts.

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The most commonly used statistic in regards to growth is Growth Domestic Product (GDP). GDP is defined by the World Bank as ‘the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products’, and is usually converted to US dollars using single year end official exchange rates.\(^5\) GDP is often used by journalistic publications because it is the most simple growth indicator available, but this is counterbalanced by the fact that it is sometimes regarded as overly clumsy and fails to take into account certain subtleties inherent to economic issues.\(^7\) As well as this, it is open to manipulation, often in order to further political ends. Indeed, in the case of China there has been speculation that GDP growth figures have been intentionally over-inflated, a theory which is given some credibility by China’s authoritarian political system.\(^8\) Relating to this, Li Keqiang, China’s current premier and an economist by trade, was exposed by wikileaks as commenting that China’s GDP growth figures are ‘man-made’ in a diplomatic cable to US ambassadors.\(^9\) In order to develop a more clear picture of the real nature of Chinese growth, he stated that other indicators are more useful for the analysis of China’s real growth level. These include rail cargo usage, electricity levels used and amount of loans disbursed.\(^10\) Between these indicators, a more accurate picture of Chinese growth can be established.\(^11\)


\(^7\) Richard Lambert, ‘There are Better Gauges of Economic Health than GDP’, *The Financial Times*, July 24\(^{th}\) 2013, retrieved from http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8de484e8-f456-11e2-a62e-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2cn63hM4a [20/08/2013]


\(^10\) Ibid.

Even with revised economic indicators, actual Chinese GDP growth ‘has been in the ballpark of what official data [has] reported.\textsuperscript{12} Of course, there is the possibility that these other forms of indicators are being manipulated also, though this would imply that any and all economic data emanating from China cannot be trusted. Nevertheless, stated figures are the best information available and thus there is no choice but to use them as analysis when commenting on Chinese growth.

In relation to China on the world stage, it is also necessary to evaluate Chinese defence expenditure. Defence expenditure, related as it is with notions of power projection and traditional ‘hard power’ is a useful tool to determine a state’s objectives on the world stage, as well as broadly its economic health as a whole. Rapid military build-up does not necessarily mean that a state will be acting more belligerent, but it does imply that a state is looking to keep its options open with regards to hard power. Choosing to expand the size of the military with the knowledge that this is likely to cause wariness on the part of a state’s neighbours also shows a certain willingness to intimidate. According to official figures, Chinese military expenditure has been subject to significant expansion in recent years.\textsuperscript{13}

That said, Defence expenditure has remained roughly consistent with stated GDP growth figures, though defence expansion rate stays ahead of GDP growth. Notably, the rate of defence expenditure growth fell off sharply between 2009 and 2010 from a 14.9% increase to a 7.5% increase and as of 2013 has not recovered to pre-2009 levels.\textsuperscript{14} As such, it is not necessarily true to say that China is embarking on an unprecedented programme of military expansion.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13}‘The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database: China’, \textit{Stockholm International Peace Research Institute}, retrieved from \url{http://milexdata.sipri.org/result.php4} [20/08/2013], and ‘15\textsuperscript{th} April 2013: World Military Spending Falls, but China’s, Russia’s Spending Rises, Says SIPRI’, \textit{Stockholm International Peace Research Institute}, April 2013, retrieved from \url{http://www.sipri.org/media/pressreleases/2013/milex_launch} [20/2013/2013]
\textsuperscript{14}Mandip Singh, ‘IDS Comment: China’s Defence Budget 2013-2014’ \textit{Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis}, March 2013, retrieved from \url{http://www.idsa.in/idsacommets/ChinasDefenceBudget2013-14_msingh_180313} [08/07/2013]
China’s defence expenditure, like its growth rate, is unable to be reported with complete accuracy, along with accusations of a lack of transparency in Chinese spending overall; official figures are said to not include military research and development and other defence industrial capabilities.\textsuperscript{15} Views on the legitimacy of Chinese defence expenditure claims are mixed, though the argument has been made that criticism of the transparency of Chinese defence expenditure is rooted in Western paranoia and from equating China with the Soviet Union in the Cold War, which did attempt to hide its real expenditure.\textsuperscript{16} Indeed, any major deviation from the stated expenditure would likely be noticed relatively quickly as new warships and equipment were noticed by Western intelligence services. The impact of China’s defence expenditure rises will be discussed further later, but for the intents of this paper official figures will be used for analysis.

\subsection*{1.1 Theoretical Framework}

The essay will seek to employ a critical evaluation of China’s impact on East Asian security through the prism of analytical frameworks as outlined by views on economic interdependence in combination with the Copenhagen School’s view of security studies. More specifically, the idea of complex interdependence as outlined by Keohane \& Nye will be combined with securitization theory as put forward by Waever, Buzan and De Wilde. These theories should allow the issues raised by the essay question to be tackled through established security studies frameworks and allow clarity in terms of understanding the issues regarding to China’s ongoing economic growth. The essay will utilize academic discourse from a variety of scholars from differing persuasions, though the main basis of the essay will be based around the theories of complex interdependence and securitisation theory.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Xiao Tiefeng, ‘Misconceptions About China’s Growth in military Spending’, \textit{Carnegie Endowment for International Peace} \textsuperscript{\textcopyright} May 2013, retrieved from \url{http://carnegieendowment.org/2013/05/28/misconceptions-about-china-s-growth-in-military-spending/g76a} [08/07/2013]
\end{flushleft}
Complex interdependence has been chosen as it provides insight into the relationship between economic dealings between states and how these affect security studies overall, while securitization theory has been chosen as it allows certain aspects of security to be discussed separately from one another. Securitization theory also gives an insight as to how issues of military and economic importance may turn into security concerns, which is integral to the essay question. While both theories are undoubtedly relevant to the question at hand, there remain discrepancies between the theories as they are not a perfect fit. Complex Interdependence is after all a rationalist theory which is focused on empirical study, while securitisation is open to more reflective analysis. However, together they are able to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue than they otherwise would apart as combining them allows us to examine both the rhetoric of relevant actors as well as the mechanics of interdependence and International organisations. This section will first give an overview of the theories and their relevance before going on to outline the similarities and differences between the theories and how they may combine to provide a foundation with which to approach the question at large.

1.2 Complex Interdependence

In *Power and Interdependence*, first published in 1977, Keohane and Nye attempt to provide a comprehensive theory of the military and economic goals of states and how these combined to account for the inherent dynamics of the global international order. In their own words, they intended to create an analytical tool that would combine contemporary modernist and traditionalist positions in order to blend ‘the wisdom in both positions by developing a coherent analytical framework for the political analysis of
Their theory also intended to examine the ‘conditions under which each model will be able to produce accurate predictions and satisfactory explanations’, thereby going some way to producing a model which would be able to explain the behaviour of states and other important actors on the world stage. Their theory became an alternative to the realist discourse which dominated International Relations at the time of publication and as such informed one of the ‘great debates’ in the study of IR. This inter-paradigm debate saw neo-liberal theories set against rebooted realist theories and Marxist approaches to International Relations. Ranged against liberal authors such as Keohane and Nye in this debate were realist scholars such as Kenneth Waltz, whose structural realism theories aimed to update realism in response to emerging liberal discourse. Waltz’s most important contribution to this debate is often cited as his *Theory of International Politics* which applied classical realist thinking to emerging problems, and as such can be considered a counterpart to *Power and Interdependence*. Indeed, Keohane and Nye viewed realism as an ‘incomplete’ theory of International Relations and therefore looked to add value to existing theories by broadening the research agenda. As such, *Power and Interdependence* tends to dispute certain assumptions of realist theories and through this attempts to add new areas of analysis. *Power and Interdependence’s* view, along with other liberal or pluralist texts of the time is that realism's state-state level analysis is too simplistic for the true


18 Ibid.

19 Huseyin Isiksal, ‘To What Extent do Complex Interdependence Theorists Challenge the Structural Realist School of International Relations?’ *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, vol. 3, no. 2, Fall 2004, p. 130


21 Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 2nd ed. (Long Grove, Waveland Press Incorporated, 2010), and Smith, Booth, Zelewski, p. 49

The relationship between power and interdependence is first elaborated on by Keohane and Nye with power defined as ‘the ability of an actor to get others to do something they otherwise would not do’. Interdependence is described succinctly by the authors as referring to situations whereby ‘situations are characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or between actors in different countries’ and that, in short, interdependence means ‘mutual dependence’.

Previous to Keohane and Nye’s work, interdependence had been described as being based around two trading economies being mutually sensitive to ‘price and income developments’ in the two states. The level of trade is less important than the difference that economic developments and the like could make to the transactions between the countries. A growing level of interdependence between nations based around growing standards of transport and communications has led to the effects of sensitivity spreading globally. For instance, effects had been felt in labour markets, as the flow of foreign workers means that recession in one country may be felt as now-unemployed workers returned to their native countries to unemployment there.

Regarded as most important to interdependence was the growth during the 1960’s of large scale international investment by firms seeking to take advantage of new markets and certain tax breaks. This is described as having led to an increased linkage between world economies with the effect that financial global markets had become mutually more sensitive, with the

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24 Ibid. p. 7

25 Richard N. Cooper, ‘Economic Interdependence and Foreign Policy in the Seventies’ *World Politics*, vol. 24, no.2, Jan 1972, p. 160

26 Ibid. p. 162
effect that interdependence had risen. Keohane and Nye in *Power and Interdependence* expand on the theory of interdependence further. They agree with the concept of sensitivity, categorizing interdependence as when ‘costly effects’ are imposed by transactions between states; when no such costly effects are present, there is simply interconnectedness. Interdependence necessarily involves costs, as it tends to restrict a state’s autonomy to act in the way it wishes, though there is no way of deducing whether the benefits of such a relationship will outweigh the costs. Similarly, an interdependent relationship may not involve mutual benefit. *Power and Interdependence* expands on the theory of interdependence, however, adding that there are two types of interdependence which must be distinguished: sensitivity and vulnerability interdependence. Sensitivity interdependence is essentially the same concept as outlined above, namely that transactions between states can lead to reciprocal costly effects, but Keohane and Nye state that this only takes into account such costly effects within the realms of a given policy framework. Vulnerability interdependence, on the other hand, takes into account the capacity of states to react to such costly effects; two countries may be equally sensitive to outside costly effects in the short term, but one may be less vulnerable than the other in the long term as there are other viable alternatives available. Alternatively, sensitivity interdependence has been described as the costs inherent in being in an interdependent relationship with another state, while vulnerability interdependence refers to costs associated with leaving the relationship. Vulnerability interdependence is perhaps more useful in explaining the behaviour of states in terms of their projection of power strategically; a state which is less vulnerable than another can use its position to enforce its will on said state.

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27 Ibid.
28 Keohane, Nye, p. 8
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid. p. 10
31 Ibid. p. 11
33 Keohane, Nye, p. 14
Sensitivity interdependence is stated to still be of importance, especially in pluralistic systems in which the government is subject to accountability; sections of the population troubled by the costly effects of sensitivity may put pressure on the government to apply protectionist trade policies.\(^{34}\) As such, taking advantage of their interdependence allows states to exert power on one another through means other than military force, and as such can be considered an alternative to the military when projecting power by a state. Indeed, Keohane and Nye argue that while military force is the most dominant power resource available to a state, it also accrues the greatest potential costs, meaning that often economic means are more useful in exerting power.\(^{35}\) Ultimately, Keohane and Nye argue that in situations of complex interdependence, economic power resources are more useful than military ones, as the costs incurred by pursuing military action are usually too high for the potential benefits.

*Power and Interdependence* is intended as a response to the prevalent realist discourse of the time and Keohane and Nye go on to set their own theories against realism in order to test expected outcomes. Keohane and Nye state that realists have asserted a number of points which inform their model of how states interact with each other; realists have three basic assumptions. Firstly, that states are the dominant actors in world politics and are homogenous units working towards a shared goal, secondly that military force is an effective instrument of foreign policy (if not *the* effective policy) and thirdly that military matters are at the top of states’ agendas in terms of foreign policy matters.\(^{36}\) As an alternative to this, complex interdependence as outlined by Keohane and Nye states three main characteristics of their approach which set it against the prevailing realist explanations for the way in which states interact with each other.

Firstly, multiple channels connect societies apart from official ones; informal ties may exist between politicians in different states, as well as between non-governmental elites

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\(^{34}\) Ibid.
\(^{35}\) Ibid.
\(^{36}\) Keohane & Nye, p. 19
and transnational organisations.\textsuperscript{37} Secondly, interstate relations deal with a large number of different national issues that are not necessarily subject to a consistent hierarchy, meaning that military security does not always dominate the international agenda and that the line between domestic and foreign policy becomes ‘blurred’. Thirdly, military force is not regarded as a viable foreign policy tool within the region when complex interdependence prevails; within an alliance, military force is largely irrelevant, though it may still be a viable component in settling disputes against states in other power blocs. These characteristics were all denied by existing contemporary traditionalist theories, despite Keohane and Nye claiming that all can be easily observed; the authors provide evidence for each of these points in the text.\textsuperscript{38}

Also of large importance to understanding complex interdependence, Keohane and Nye express that the effects of interdependence are shaped by prevalent ‘rules, norms and procedures that regularize behaviour’, and refer to those that affect interdependence as ‘international regimes’.\textsuperscript{39} Keohane and Nye point out that while International organisations are often weak, regimes can have a lot of influence in specific areas, for instance in convincing countries to give aid to less developed states since World War II.\textsuperscript{40} International regimes are regarded as the intermediaries between the power systems of international politics and the economic and political ‘bargaining’ that goes with this. The way in which a given regime structures the system of norms and power resources available to states is able to have a noticeable impact on the way in which states interact with one another.\textsuperscript{41} Regimes, and the norms and procedures they bring with them, remain a common subject of analysis in the field of IR, as an explanation for a large number of behaviours in the international system. Elsewhere, regimes have been likened to traditional social institutions with easily identifiable roles which prescribe certain

\textsuperscript{37}Keohane, Nye, p. 20

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid. p. 21-24

\textsuperscript{39} Keohane, Nye, p. 16

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid. p. 17

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid. p. 18
behaviours; opting out of a defined role may bring prohibitive repercussions. Regimes are, however, subject to change which may lay the foundations for new sets of norms rules and procedures which may be vastly different to those which preceded them. Keohane and Nye state that regime change is caused by any one of four explanations, or some combination of them. Regimes are states to change either because of economic processes, overall prevailing power structures in the international order, power structures in individual areas, or because of the effects of international organisations.

In short, complex interdependence as outlined by Keohane and Nye refers to the way in which states' autonomy is constrained by the costly effects incurred by increasing international transactions. This restriction of autonomy is tolerated because the benefits of transactions with other states outweigh the disadvantages of infringement on a state's ability to act in its own interests. Along with this, interdependence allows states an alternative method to deploy power resources as opposed to military methods which, while the most dominant form of power, are often too costly to be worth pursuing. These factors conspire to lead Keohane and Nye to conclude that their theory of interdependence gives a more accurate picture of the way states interact with each other than the realist interpretations of its time. Finally, Keohane and Nye outline four explanations for global regime change which aim to explain why prevailing norms and procedures in the international system may be subject to change.

*Power and Interdependence* has of course been open to criticism from a number of sources. During the 1980’s, some argued that the increasing use of force by the United States and the USSR showed that interdependence did not preclude the use of force, and that *Power and Interdependence* was merely a product of the specific circumstances of its time. Keohane and Nye responded that none of the events of the 1980’s

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43 Keohane & Nye, Pp. 32-51
rendered their theory obsolete and all could be accommodated by the framework. Indeed, use of military force was predicted as long as it was used against militarily weak states, as had happened in the 1980’s. Realists have often stated that the value of interdependence in preventing conflict is overstated. In terms of evidence, proving whether interdependence increases or decreases conflict is inconclusive, with studies showing that interdependence actually increases international tension. However, it is also stated that where independence becomes more beneficial, conflict will decrease, indicating that there certainly is a relationship between conflict and Interdependence. Finally, though the theory is over thirty years old, it remains relevant to international politics today, and is still being discussed, including with regards to China’s rise.48

In relation to the essay question, Power and Interdependence, along with the key tenets of it as listed above, provide a useful basis for analysis in terms of establishing the effect Chinese economic growth will have on East Asian security in the future. Firstly, the theory of interdependence predicts that in cases of economic or other forms of interdependence, military means are not used. In relation to China this means that if a large degree of interdependence can be observed between China and its potential rivals, the likelihood of any sort of military action can be lessened to an extent. Secondly, the lack of practicality of military means, along with the nature of interdependence, means that economic methods of projecting power can and will be used by states. Efforts on the part of China and other key actors to accomplish this form of power projection can be analysed. Thirdly, explanations for regime change are partly centred around the power structure of the international system, often set by hegemonic powers. The United States’ relative decline in comparison to China can thus be expected to affect the international regime in a number of ways, which can be speculated on. Power and

Interdependence thus gives valuable analytical tools with which to tackle the overall question.

1.3 Securitisation Theory

The second major source which will inform the theory of the essay is Security: A New Framework for Analysis, by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap De Wilde. Although usually stated as a piece of IR literature from the Copenhagen School of International security, the book attempts to blend elements of existing International relations theory into a new theory; this is a similarity with Power and Interdependence. A New Framework for Analysis can be considered a text which intends to 'widen' the security debate as a counterpart to the traditionalist theories which preceded it without creating a theory that relied too much on abstract concepts at the detriment of more traditional analysis; the authors acknowledge the fears that such an approach may endanger 'the intellectual coherence of security'.\(^{49}\) Indeed, the three authors of the book come from differing IR backgrounds, further indicating that the text intends to add to the existing discourse on the subject and does not intend to entirely supersede previous Security analysis\(^{50}\). With that said, A New Framework for Analysis presented a view which is in many ways removed from, or perhaps is an evolution of, the neo-liberal perspective provided by Power and Interdependence. The texts are derived from approaches which tend to examine different things, particularly the constructivist element of A New Framework for Analysis, and linkage of the two primary theoretical texts in this paper will be examined further below.\(^{51}\) Essentially, A New Framework for Analysis marries social constructivist interpretations of security with the existing traditionalist theories of IR, in order to create new objects for analysis and thus shift the focus of security away

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50 Ibid.
51 Torbjorn L. Knutsen, A History of International Relations Theory, 2\(^{nd}\) ed. (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997) pp. 279-280
from established political entities. The ultimate argument of securitisation theory is that a ‘threat’ is not necessarily an objective security issue towards a referent object, but rather that threats or security issues are subjective and often a choice is made by relevant actors to securitise a certain issue. When this approach is taken, it allows insight into the securitisation process and why certain actors may choose to securitise a certain issue rather than merely taking at face value that something is a security threat.

Before moving on to the text itself, it is worth establishing the relationship between Power and Interdependence and Security: A New Framework for Analysis. Ostensibly the two books differ in a number of ways. Firstly and perhaps most obviously, the books and theories were published twenty years apart and were written in response to different political realities, with the former text being written during the Cold War and thus part of a bi-polar international system, whereas A New Framework for Analysis addresses issues in which the international system is more diverse, if dominated to a certain extent by the United States. Secondly, Power and Interdependence as a traditionalist piece uses mainly the state as its focus of analysis, whereas A New framework for Analysis is open to new levels of analysis and does not devote its entire focus to the actions of states. Similarly, A New Framework for Analysis features elements of constructivist IR theory which adopts a less empirical view of security, rather that the nature of security is a social construct and differs from situation to situation.

In response to this, while it is clear that there certainly is some divergence on a number of issues, it is not true to say that the two theories are totally irreconcilable; far from it. Indeed, while A New Framework for Analysis does go some way to setting itself against traditionalist theories, as we shall see it wishes to build upon existing theories. The authors come from a variety of different IR backgrounds, with De Wilde having done work on Interdependence before, indicating that interdependence is an accepted part of

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52 Ibid. p.179
54 Ibid.
the narrative of *A New Framework for Analysis*.

While certainly widening the IR debate to an extent to new levels of analysis, *A New Framework for Analysis* still leaves plenty of room to deal with state-level interactions. As we shall see, one of the criticisms of the text is that it is an overly state-centric approach. Interdependence also finds convergence with the five sectors approach taken by *A New Framework for Analysis* in that it provides an explanation for the crossover of many security issues into different political sectors.

In terms of content, both books agree that economic matters are now inextricably linked with other elements of politics, with the latter text accepting that the liberal economic system necessarily limits states’ own autonomy. *Power and Interdependence*’s view of regime change also fits in well with analysis of international structures, which is a common theme in *Power and Interdependence*. In short, *A New Framework for Analysis* can be seen in many ways to be a development of many of the ideas elaborated on in *Power and Interdependence*. In terms of this essay, the two approaches, while connected, can be used to analyse different matters. Securitisation theory can assess how other nations are viewing China’s growth and whether there are efforts to securitise it, while the complex interdependence model can be used to analyse the alternative power resources available to important actors, given that military means are often impractical in projecting power.

*A New Framework for Analysis* is largely based around three main concepts, namely those of securitisation theory, sectoral analysis and decentralisation or regionalisation of security studies, thereby widening the debate while retaining elements of existing theories.

These core concepts are combined in chapters devoted to military, environmental, economic, social and political security. In terms of this paper, military and economic security are the most pertinent in relation to the question at hand, and so these will be discussed in the most detail, though, as the authors state, many security

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55 Jaap De Wilde, *A Short History of Global Interdependence*, (Groningen, University of Groningen, 1989)
57 Buzan, Waever, De Wilde, pp. 1-20
issues can cross over into a number of sectors. The concept of securitisation, first expounded by Ole Waever in 1995, does not make the assumption that security is an inherent feature of the international system, and rather posits that it is a social construct deployed by certain powerful political entities at various times. The method through which this is achieved is through a 'speech act', whereby a political entity may label something a threat to a particular referent object. Whoever employs the speech act will then argue that such an existential threat requires extraordinary measures in order to retain security, above and beyond ordinary politics. The use of a speech act is described as being key to states 'legitimising the use of force' and, as security is generally seen as a matter of grave importance, allows states to use 'whatever means are necessary to block a threatening development'. It must be noted that simply stating that something is a national security matter does not necessarily make the problem securitised; it is only with the use of extraordinary political means that this becomes the case. Once a form of existential threat has been established, the securitisation process is stated as having three main units of analysis which can be studied. Firstly, a referent object to which the threat is directed, secondly the securitising actors which seek to portray the threat and thirdly functional actors: actors which are not necessarily referent objects or that call for securitisation but have some impact on the securitisation process. The authors state that the first two of these are the most important and difficult distinctions to make. As an example of this dynamic, the most obvious referent object and one most commonly used in traditionalist IR theory is the survival of the state against an existential threat, while the most recognisable securitising actor can be considered a state’s government.

58 Buzan, Waever, De Wilde, p.8
60 Buzan, Waever, De Wilde pp. 21-29
61 Ibid. p. 21
62 Ibid. p. 23-24
63 Buzan, Waever, de Wilde, p. 36
Sectoral analysis is stated by the authors as being developed naturally during the Cold War simply due to the fact that more issues were being added to the security agenda. This idea was originally laid out by Buzan in 1991, where he first laid out the five security sectors of military, political, environmental and societal security.\(^{64}\) This original version of Sectoral Analysis is stated in A New Framework for Analysis to have been revised to not assume the state to be the only referent object; it has thus been synthesised with securitisation theory to allow a more flexible approach to analysis. Essentially, the different sectors of security are now distinguished by their different referent objects, though the securitising actors may stay the same between different sectors.\(^{65}\) As such, the relevant sectors and their referent objects and securitising and functional actors will be discussed in more detail below.

1.4 Securitisation in the Military and Economic Sectors

Given the nature of the question, the military and economic sectors of securitisation theory are the most relevant and as such deserve further investigation. The military sector is initially described as ‘the core subject of traditional security studies’ and as such is the one which can be most easily compared with traditionalist analysis of security studies.\(^{66}\) This is primarily because in this sector the state is still the most commonly used referent object, though scope for widening the debate is accounted for as the caveat that military security need not necessarily revolve around the survival of the state is referred to.\(^{67}\) As such, military security can revolve around both inward and outward security threats, as political and military threats can be interlinked; both political threats from inside the state and threats posed by other states from without may need to be

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66 Buzan, Waever, de Wilde, p. 49
67 Ibid.
met by military means.\textsuperscript{68} However, military security matters largely revolve around the need for the state to defend itself against existential threats. In a move to set itself against realist IR theory, A New Framework for Analysis asserts that in terms of external threats to the state, the simple presence of opposing military forces need not mean that relations between states necessarily be securitised. In support of this position, the point is made that while states may often be wary of each other's intentions, democratic states do not often fear each other's military capability, with a number of existing academic pieces being used to fortify this claim.\textsuperscript{69} The most important referent object in terms of military security is still the state, though alliances, organisations and principles of international society can also be referent objects in this sector.\textsuperscript{70} Securitising actors are most importantly representatives of state, though national actors and agents of international organisations can also play a role.\textsuperscript{71} Functional actors in the military sector are numerous, including arms companies, private military contractors and defence ministries.\textsuperscript{72}

Economic security is more problematic to define, with a major issue being that in a capitalist system economies are actually meant to feel insecure.\textsuperscript{73} The authors assert that liberal economic theories are now the dominant ones in the economic order, valuing free movement of goods, capital and labour across markets, though some economic nationalism remains.\textsuperscript{74} The texts outlines five elements of economic security in light of this reality. Firstly, that states wish to maintain their capability for military production. Secondly, that dependencies in certain natural resources will be exploited for political ends. Thirdly, that a globalized market will engender great inequalities in wealth. Fourthly, that global capitalism will spread the trade in drugs, weapons of mass

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., p.50  
\textsuperscript{69} For instance, Zeev Mao zand Bruce Russett, ‘Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace’, American Political Science Review, vol. 87, no. 3, 1993, pp. 624-638  
\textsuperscript{70} Buzan, Waever, De Wilde, p. 70  
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid p. 55  
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid, p. 56  
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, p. 95  
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid, p. 96
destruction and will be the cause for huge environmental damage. Finally, that an international economic crisis will come about through structural instability of the system. Of these, only the final point is considered purely an economic security issue. Under a liberal system, securitisation in the economic sector can be seen as efforts at protectionism or economic nationalism within the overarching capitalist framework. Overall, the authors concede that while there is little to definitively claim to be solely economic security, this sector has a large overspill into other areas, with the five economic security issues mentioned earlier being largely relevant to other security sectors.

These two sectors are perhaps the most relevant for analysing the question at hand, but of course there will be crossover into other sectors as well. Political security is important, for instance, as every threat is by nature defined politically. Military and economic security in combination are perhaps most relevant to the question at hand by virtue of the fact that military security is the main sector which will be studied in the question, and economic security can be linked with interdependence satisfactorily. The pursuit of economic security, for instance, is a justification for the loss of sovereignty inherent when interdependence is present.

1.5 Issues with the Theory

While a useful analytical tool for the study of security, like any theoretical framework securitisation theory should not be adhered to religiously when analysing an issue and like all theories there are criticisms levelled against it. An often-cited criticism of securitisation theory is that it is irresponsible through lacking insight on specific problems; if securitisation is simply a way of defining the process of realising violent

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75 Buzan, Waever, De Wilde, p. 98
76 Ibid, p. 115
77 Ibid, p. 116
78 Ibid, p. 142
political action, then anything can be labelled as securitisation and, as a result, the theory lacks clarity.\textsuperscript{79} Conversely, others have argued that securitisation theory is defined too narrowly in that it focuses too much on dominant political actors, and does not address specific contexts in which security is viewed.\textsuperscript{80} Also, securitisation theory has been described as being bound by the 'Westphalian Straitjacket' inherent to Europe-Centric security studies and is therefore unsuited to application away from Europe.\textsuperscript{81} The first two issues with the theory are somewhat contradictory and tend to cancel each other out, with the result that whichever viewpoint on this issue is chosen will be based around one's own opinion. The latter criticism, however, is relevant directly to the subject matter of the paper and thus deserves addressing. The Copenhagen School at large has been accused of being too Euro-centric at times and securitisation theory continues this trend. The criticism revolves around the fact that the authors come from backgrounds which rely on established International Relations theory which was originally developed to deal with previous European issues. Notably, securitisation was originally developed by Waever upon reflection of Cold-War lessons, while certain sectors of security were responses to specific European problems; societal security, for instance, was thought upon after integration issues became apparent in the early 1990s in Europe after the end of the Cold War.\textsuperscript{82} Despite these Euro-centric leanings, securitisation as a theory has become more widely used than this fact would imply. Its success has been explained by a number of factors, including that while it is too Western, it fares better and is more relevant than other existing theories which happen to suffer from the same cultural bias.\textsuperscript{83} As well as this, even if this criticism is held to be valid it assumes that other systems to be investigated will be incompatible with a


\textsuperscript{80} Matt McDonald, 'Securitisation and the Construction of Security', \textit{European Journal of International Relations} vol.14, no. 4, 2008 p. 1-2


\textsuperscript{83} Ibid. p. 403
European model. However, when investigating the increased place of China on the world stage, parallels with the European model can be made.

Interestingly, securitisation has also faced criticism on moral grounds, as some commentators argue that the theory may lead to greater securitisation in the future. While this issue is indeed an interesting one, it is likely not a discussion which the authors intended for their work and as such deals with issues which are not strictly relevant to analysis of security matters.

Securitisation theory will be used in this essay to examine other actors’ response to China, in order to establish whether prevailing trends are towards painting China as a threat. If this is the case, it can be argued that relations between China and other major players on the international scene will be characterised by low levels of trust and, potentially, diplomatic confrontation in the future. Moves away from the securitisation of China can be seen to show the reverse effect. As an example, a politician in a certain relevant nation, say Japan or the United States, may state publicly that Chinese actions are impacting them negatively in a given area. In this case, securitisation theory allows certain information to be gleaned from this. If a threat is implied to a certain referent object, it could be considered the start of a securitising move. If extraordinary measures are proposed to deal with the implied threat, securitisation of the given issue can be said to be occurring. The fact that securitisation is a choice is also relevant, as the motives for painting Chinese actions in this way can be commented upon. The sectoral nature of securitisation will also allow the type of securitisation to be established. For instance, a response to a territorial dispute between China and other nations could be described as

a military security matter, as the existential threat is considered to be territory, and as such the sovereignty of the state itself can be seen to be violated.

### 1.6 A Combined Framework

Why choose securitization and complex interdependence to address the question? In short, the two frameworks utilize different levels of analysis which in combination provide a more thorough understanding of the question than they would do separately. Interdependence, given its analysis of International organizations and the constraints that these relationships incur, allows us to assess a state’s freedom of action. Securitisation and the speech act, dealing as it does with rhetoric, allows us to deduce the intentions behind states’ policies. Alone, interdependence would be constrained by its positivist basis which prescribes that states will act in a certain way. Similarly, securitization would be an imperfect theory on its own as it does not take into account certain constraints inherent in enacting policy goals. Securitisation provides context to complex interdependence and interdependence allows us to make informed deductions as to the practicality of securitization attempts.

As an example, the essay will use securitization to study recent territorial disputes between Japan and China. From a securitization standpoint it seems clear that both sides are willing to act assertively over the issue which may increase fears about conflict. However, a knowledge of the interdependent relationship both states have with the international system may show that while both states are willing to speak aggressively, in reality real fears about conflict are low. This allows us to speculate as to other reasons for the securitization of this issue, for instance as a way to earn support from nationalistic elements of the population.
As such, this combination of theories allows us to assess the situation in East Asia in a way that would not be the case if the theories were applied on their own.

2. The Securitisation of China

China’s emerging pre-eminence on the world stage has not gone unnoticed by its neighbours and potential rivals. Indeed, many editorials from a variety of nations are predicting a return to something approaching the Cold War, along with all the features of that conflict. Some articles focus on arms races between China and the United States, others on potential proxy wars between the two states and still more predict military confrontation.\(^{86}\) This section, informed by securitization theory, will establish whether any securitizing moves have been made by China’s rivals or neighbours or those who are wary of its imminent economic pre-eminence. Specifically, the ‘speech act’ which is the first component of securitization, involves a certain political actor claiming that something is an existential threat. As such, this section will examine instances where something approaching a speech act has been observed in relation to China, or whether China has been referred to as an existential threat by various political actors in different states. This securitization will be looked at from the perspective of the states which have most to be wary of China about. The chapter will first evaluate securitisation from a Japanese perspective, before moving on to analysing U.S. responses to Chinese actions.

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The reason for the inclusion of these particular states has been discussed, but suffice to say they have important strategic, geographical or historical links with China itself. Finally, acts of securitisation on the part of China itself will be analysed in order to ascertain whether China is showing a pattern or increased securitisation and thus increased opposition to other states. Military security will be the main sector to be focused on here, though crossover with other sectors of security, particularly political and economic is of course likely. The main analysis will revolve around the ‘speech act’ which forms the basis of a securitisation movement and could potentially lead to the adoption of extraordinary measures which would complete the securitisation of an issue. In terms of Japan and the ASEAN nations, recent territorial disputes based around disputed islands in the East China Sea will be analysed from a securitisation standpoint, an issue which has the potential to involve the United States also. On the part of the United States, a variety of issues will be mentioned, including the aforementioned territorial disputes along with the status of Taiwan which has historically been a point of contention between the two countries. As well as this, the emerging ‘cyber conflict’ which has been observed between the two countries will also be discussed, along with more general comments on the relationship between the two powers and what can be inferred from this politically.

Ultimately, information can be gleaned from the way in which important actors can be seen to securitise certain issues, and analysis can be made as to whether China’s rising economic strength can be considered a salient factor in this dynamic.

### 2.1 Securitisation: Japan

China-Japan relations have been largely fraught since the conclusion of World War II. Japan’s invasion of China, with its harsh treatment of Chinese Civilians during its time,
has engendered a great deal of bitterness towards the Japanese on the part of the Chinese. Indeed, the first visit to China by a Japanese warship only occurred in 2008, though implying attempts at improving relations between the two nations, is nevertheless indicative of the long-term distrust towards Japan and especially its military forces which is felt by China.87 This fractured state of diplomatic relations, combined with the economic power of both states and their geographic proximity means that Japan must be considered one of China’s main strategic rivals in the future.88 From the Japanese perspective, China has been described as being considered the state which ‘poses the greatest challenge for Japanese security over the longer-term’.89 That said, there has been evidence of the two states’ long-standing rivalry beginning to erode somewhat to be replaced by more cordial, if not friendly, relations recently. During the Cold War, Japan became one of the first major nations to offer development assistance to China in light of its openness reforms, in order to stimulate market growth.90 As well as this, efforts had been made by Japanese Prime Ministers to apologise for past actions of the Japanese government and military, in an effort to allow the countries to move on from past hostility.91 There were hopes that the two countries may cooperate to create a ‘new regional order’, based around their shared major-power status.92 That said, tensions between China and Japan remain high, with the two nations often stated to be unable to get over the ‘history issue’ between them, a problem exacerbated by nationalism prevalent in both countries.93

88 Ibid.
89 Christopher Hughes, ‘Japan’s Military Modernisation: A Quiet Japan- China Arms Race and Global Power Projection’ Asia-Pacific Review vol. 16, no 1, p. 87
91 Ibid, p. 8
92 Ibid, p. 3
Recently, the two countries’ fraught relationship manifested itself in a series of territorial disputes over the sovereignty of an island chain in the East China Sea known as the Senkaku Islands (Japanese name), which have led to vessels from both sides being dispatched to the area. The dispute over the islands has been ongoing ever since the United States reverted control of the islands back to the Japanese in 1971; Japan had claimed the islands in 1895 despite Chinese protestations. The issue remained relatively low-key until the refocusing of U.S. interests to the Pacific region, which saw China adopt a more assertive stance in its territorial claims as a response to this. Recently, the issue was inflamed further with the purchase by Japan of the islands in 2012, as until this point the islands were privately owned, igniting nationalistic anti-Japanese sentiment in China. In terms of response on the part of Japanese politicians to this dispute, there have been statements made warning China against any belligerent action. For instance, in April 2013, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared that any attempt at a landing by Chinese forces would be ‘[dealt] with strongly’. This can be regarded as, if not an outright securitizing move, then certainly the beginning of a speech act that seeks to portray China as a threat to the sovereignty of Japanese interests. The fact that the Chinese ships involved in this dispute were ‘government ships’ rather than PLN ones, means that there was at least a chance for the Japanese government to desecuritize the issue, perhaps by stating that it was simply a misunderstanding. The fact that a move towards securitization was made implies that the Japanese government is willing to show China as a threat to international observers,


97 Ibid., p. 10

as has been the case with previous disputes. The dispute also was alluded to in the Japanese defence white paper of 2013, which states that China ‘intruded into Japanese territorial waters’. The white paper also states that the ‘lack of transparency in its military and security affairs’ from China means that Japan ‘must pay utmost attention to China’s movements’. The painting of China in securitising terms shows that Japan is monitoring the Chinese military expansion with trepidation, and is not ruling out the use of extraordinary means to meet this perceived threat.

Japan, in common with the United States and other nations in the region, holds a strong line over the status of Taiwan and the Chinese government’s intentions regarding it. United States and Japanese policy on Taiwan are interlinked, based around alliances and the fact that Japan is still a major base for United States operations in the region. Indeed, during the Taiwan strait crisis of the mid-1990s the US carrier battlegroup dispatched to the region was based in Japan. Japanese policy towards Taiwan is in keeping with the United States due to their strategic partnership, though it is not merely a case of Japan passively supporting the U.S. in this goal, as the Japanese leadership has remained strongly supportive of the U.S. military, especially in the period after 9/11. As far as Japanese politicians’ comments on the Taiwan issue, there have been instances of both attempting to paint the issue in security terms in order to show resolve, as well as to state that the issue can be resolved peacefully. The recent Japanese defence white paper points out that China refuses to ‘renounce the use of force’ in regards to the islands, if provoked by a foreign state’s actions in the region. This shows that the potential for Chinese action regarding Taiwan is seen as a major threat for a potential conflict in the


103 Japanese Ministry of Defence, p. 56
future. From official channels, Prime Minister Abe went on record saying that ‘it would be wrong’ for Japan and the United States to ‘tolerate’ China’s invasion of Taiwan. This statement was made before his current premiership, but presumably his views on the matter remain the same, and show that Japan is willing to securitise the Chinese threat to Taiwan.

What can be gleaned from this is that Japan seems to be becoming increasingly wary of China and is looking to assert itself, with its representatives using more belligerent rhetoric in the process. The trend towards increased positive relations between Japan and China between the end of the Cold War into the 2000s, now shows some signs of slowing down. Moves towards securitisation as in the case of the Senkaku islands dispute imply that friendly relations between the two countries are decreasing again. Indeed, from the Chinese perspective both the Senkaku Islands dispute and the issue of Taiwan have motivated strong criticisms of the Japanese stance. Upon the succession of new Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2006, the Chinese government was swift to make their position clear stating that they ‘firmly oppose including ... China's Taiwan in the scope of a U.S.-Japan security arrangement’.

The rhetoric over the Senkaku islands is even more assertive and makes it clear in no uncertain terms that China is displeased with Japanese ownership of the islands. China has labelled the Diaoyu Islands (the Chinese term for the Senkakus) as a ‘core interest’, in the same vein as Taiwan and Tibet. China has also accused Japan of stubbornness over the issue, and stating that their refusal for dialogue over the islands could lead to a breakdown of the bilateral relationship. The robust response to the Japanese purchase of the islands can be

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104 Wenrang Jiang, ‘Japan Dips its Toe in the Taiwan Strait’, *Yale Global* retrieved from [http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/japan-dips-its-toe-taiwan-strait](http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/japan-dips-its-toe-taiwan-strait) [07/07/2013]


attributed to a desire by China to assert itself more proactively given increased U.S. focus of the region, and to play up to nationalistic sentiment in China. The securitisation of the dispute from a Chinese perspective is evidenced by firmer political and military action in the region, for instance by deploying fighter jets and sea vessels in response to Japanese actions. The securitising rhetoric of the Chinese has thus been backed up with a certain military response, indicating that territorial disputes between China and other Asian countries are increasing tension in the region and are likely to continue into the future.

In terms of extraordinary measures, one clear indication that the securitisation of China has taken hold in Japan is the fact that the Japanese defence budget has been raised for the first time in eleven years. The defence white paper which heralded this development has been described as more nationalistic in tone to previous defence white papers. Indeed, the paper goes into detail about new policies of ‘effective deterrence’ by the Japanese Self Defence Forces, in a slightly belligerent manner which is at odds with Japan’s strictly defensive posture post World War Two. The white paper also pushes for the introduction of new amphibious rapid-response troops and states that pre-emptive action is justified in certain situations. These new measures can be regarded as a direct response to territorial island disputes with China, given that they appear in the section dealing with defending offshore Japanese islands. This can certainly be regarded as a securitisation being used to justify extraordinary measures, as due to Japan’s belligerent history as well as its protection by the United States, its defence budget has remained very low, around the 1% mark. The Japanese defence forces, for similar reasons, have always been sworn to defensive-only actions. The new justification

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108 Chew, p. 10
111 Ibid.
112 Japanese Ministry of Defence, p. 213
113 Ibid.
for pre-emptive strikes marks a shift in this policy and, while Japan’s defence budget remains under the informal cap of 1%, the increase in defence budget implies that Japan may be willing to break this in the future.\textsuperscript{114} China’s economic growth, along with its simultaneous military growth, can be considered the main factor in this change and implies certain tension between the two countries into the future.

2.2 Securitisation: The United States

In terms of international responses to China’s increasing global position, no individual state’s response is more important than that of the United States. As the sole superpower and global hegemon, the United States’ government is clearly interested in looking for ways to continue their dominance of the global order. China’s increasing economic might is often posed as a threat to this, and it is a matter of interest to all international observers to see how the two countries will approach the issue in the future.\textsuperscript{115} So far, there is evidence that the United States is wary of the threat China poses to its dominance, which is reflected in a large number of commentary pieces asserting that the two states are undoubtedly heading for confrontation in the future, coming both from mainstream and more academic sources.\textsuperscript{116} When assessing the level of securitisation of China by political elements of the United States, there are mixed messages. On the one hand, the United States has shown willingness to co-operate with the Chinese leadership and make statements to the effect that the United States does not see China as a major threat for the future. Examples of this include President Obama

\textsuperscript{114} Kirk Spitzer, ‘Japan Boosts Defence Spending, More or Less’, \textit{Time}, January 2013, retrieved from \url{http://nation.time.com/2013/01/31/japan-boosts-defense-spending-more-or-less/} [07/07/2013]


openly calling for cooperation between the two states, offering emotive phrases such as that the two states will 'shape the 21st century'. This increased cooperation manifested itself in certain ventures based around such issues as limiting climate change, indicating that something approaching a bilateral cooperative relationship is possible.

On the other hand, opposed to this ostensibly cordial diplomatic relationship is the fact that there is wariness of China across American society. This is often based around the perceived incompatibility of values between the two nations related to opposing political systems and vastly different national histories. The United States frequently calls on China to address its censorship of the press, for instance. From the Chinese part, its membership of international institutions is tempered by a belief that these work in America’s favour and that the international regime as a whole is biased towards the United States. There is therefore a mutual wariness between the two nations. From the American side, this has manifested itself in a number of ways. Most notably, two issues are key: the military ‘pivot towards Asia’ and the securitisation of Chinese cyber espionage committed upon the United States. This essay will argue that these issues are interlinked; the painting of China as a legitimate threat comes alongside the wish for Washington to impose indirect pressure on China through its military deployments.

Cyber-warfare is an increasingly covered topic in global politics, with many even viewing it as a new style of warfare that is likely to see increasing use into the future. Allowing covert means to spy on one’s enemies while remaining undetected, it also in extreme cases can and has been used to affect actual military objectives on the ground. Israel, aided by the United States, notably employed the Stuxnet virus in 2010 to infect Iranian


computers used on their nuclear programme, managing to destroy equipment at their Natanz nuclear facility and thus set back the Iranian nuclear programme for ‘at least two years’. This attack provoked great interest around the world as perhaps heralding a new dawn in cyber-warfare. Given the ubiquitous nature of computers around the world, their interconnectedness through the internet and their often uniform operating systems, it is clear that many states will be vulnerable to this kind of attack in the future if precautions are not made. Indeed, Lena Hansen of the Copenhagen School has proposed that cyber war deserves its own securitisation category into the future.

With cyber war now on the radar and seen as a legitimate security threat, The United States has increasingly been the victim of Chinese hacking attempts, based around espionage, theft of intellectual property and even interference with military equipment. United States’ response to this has been a mixture of worries about the susceptibility of their systems to external hacking attempts and the need to face this new threat. Commentators even refer to the hacking attempts by China and American in terms analogous to the military threats of the Cold War, stating that ‘the cyber war mirrors the nuclear challenge’ and that responses should be based around ‘deterrence’ and ‘preemption’. As such, Chinese hacking can be regarded as being viewed as an existential threat to the United States, in a number of sectors, as the hacking has focused on the United States armed forces as well as economic institutions. In terms of securitisation of the issue from relevant actors, there is a range of instances of this being

the case. Recently, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey even went as far as stating that responses to Chinese hacking ‘could actually be in one of the other traditional domains’ alluding to a potential military response.\textsuperscript{126} President Obama has also warned the Chinese leadership about this matter in a ‘blunt’ manner, and recent talks between the two countries have reportedly been held in an atmosphere of increased tension partly as a result of the issue.\textsuperscript{127} When allied with the fact that President Obama has gone on record as stating that the cyber threat is ‘one of the most serious’ dangers posed to the United States in terms of national and economic security, it becomes clear that the issue of cyber war with the Chinese has been securitised, and is now painted as a form of existential threat to the United States.\textsuperscript{128}

Also of in terms of security interests between China and the United States are responses to a perceived growing Chinese military build up, it is clear that China’s growing economic might has been viewed with some trepidation in Washington. This increased interest in security matters in the Far East has culminated in the Asian ‘pivot’ which the United States military under Barack Obama has undertaken in recent years. Essentially, it refers to the refocusing of American forces, particularly naval units, to the Asia-Pacific region and away from the Gulf, with as many as 60% of United States naval forces being redeployed to the region.\textsuperscript{129}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[128] Barack Obama, ‘Securing Our Nation’s Cyber Infrastructure’, (White House Speech, Washington DC, May 29\textsuperscript{th} 2009), transcript retrieved from \url{http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-Securing-Our-Nations-Cyber-Infrastructure} \[07/07/2013\]
\end{footnotes}
During China’s economic surge in the 2000s, Chinese defence expenditure grew steadily, and is projected to be around $113 billion for 2013, now second in real terms globally behind the United States.\textsuperscript{130} This increased defence expenditure manifested itself in improving the capabilities and equipment of China’s air, sea and land forces to more modern specifications, particularly in the medium of area-denial capabilities.\textsuperscript{131} This is critical for an understanding of U.S. interests in the region, as China now outspends other nations in the region significantly, and its expanding capabilities even threaten American bases and naval forces.\textsuperscript{132} American interests in the region are many and various, and are based around important alliances with Japan and South Korea.\textsuperscript{133}

Among reasons for the military pivot given by the United States, a number of issues have been raised in support of the initiative. Security commentators of a realist persuasion took it as signs of predicted U.S. balancing in the region based around preventing China from achieving regional hegemony, a focus of their foreign policy for many years.\textsuperscript{134} Officially, the moves have been stated as being undertaken to give the United States broader distribution of forces, greater flexibility and improvement in its coordination with allies’ capabilities.\textsuperscript{135} The potential threat posed by North Korea has also been forwarded as justification for the move, given the state’s somewhat belligerent behaviour recently regarding South Korea.\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{130} ‘China’s Defence Spending: New Questions’, \textit{International Institute for Strategic Studies}, vol. 19, comment 22, August 2013, retrieved from 

\textsuperscript{131} ‘The Dragon’s New Teeth’, \textit{The Economist}, April 2012, retrieved from 
http://www.economist.com/node/21552193 [07/07/2013]

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{133} Charles Glaser, ‘Will China’s Rise Lead to War?’, \textit{Foreign Affairs}, March 2011, p. 3 retrieved from 
http://www.stjoe.k12.in.us/ourpages/auto/2012/11/12/53952540/11-0304%20Will%20China%20s%20Rise%20Lead%20to%20War_.pdf [07/07/2013]


\textsuperscript{135} Mark E. Manyin et. al. ‘Pivot to the Pacific? The Obama Administration’s “Rebalancing Towards Asia”, \textit{Congressional Research Service}, March 2012, p. 11, retrieved from 
http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42448.pdf [07/07/2013]

\textsuperscript{136} Murray Hunter, ‘“North Korea, Obama and his Asian Pivot”, \textit{The Nordic Page}, June 2013, retrieved from 
However, most commentators agree that the main focus of the pivot is to check potential Chinese actions in the region in the face of ‘frequently assertive behaviour’ by China.\(^\text{137}\) Indeed, recent strategic directives from the President have focused on operating in ‘anti-access environments’, mentioning China as one of the motivators for this.\(^\text{138}\) Despite this, the Obama administration has made efforts to distance itself from claims that the pivot is entirely concerned with increased Chinese military build up.\(^\text{139}\) Official sources omit to mention the pivot as a rebalancing effort aimed at the Chinese and instead prefer to talk in more abstract jargon, without specifically naming China as the object of the move, though there are certain reservations as to the quality of Chinese equipment, including their nuclear missiles.\(^\text{140}\) However, there is far less talk of the direct Chinese military threat than the one posed by Chinese hacking attempts, with army generals making efforts to show that China is not a direct threat militarily and focusing on Sino-American partnerships in areas such as disaster management and engineering projects.\(^\text{141}\) What this points to is that while the Asian Pivot is almost certainly a response to increased Chinese military capacity and indicates that the United States is indeed securitising China’s growth, the relevant actors are generally unwilling to admit to this and are thus keen to ensure military security competition between the United States and China is minimised.

From the Chinese perspective, they are clearly under the impression that the Asian Pivot is aimed directly at themselves, despite American claims to the contrary. A recent defence white paper by China made veiled criticisms of the U.S. pivot, stating that ‘some countries are...expanding their military presence in the region’ and that this ‘makes the

\(^{137}\) Manyin et. al, p. 15  
situation there tenser’, a clear allusion to the pivot. There have even been reports of a ‘counter-pivot’, whereby China has begun stepping up relations with Western-hemisphere nations and even arming them, alongside sailing its warships in American waters. While the Chinese defence paper could be considered the beginning of a securitising move aimed at taking action against the United States’ presence in the Pacific region, on balance China too has refrained from unequivocally stating that the United States’ pivot is aimed solely at China.

Similarly to Japan, the United States has taken a firm line against China with regards to the sovereignty of Taiwan, and has consistently guaranteed Taiwanese sovereignty in the face of overt Chinese designs on the region. The two nations notably had a major crisis in the mid-90s which saw an American aircraft carrier battlegroup deployed to the area, signalling a high-water mark in tensions over the issue. Since then, while both the United States and China have retained their positions on Taiwan, the issue has receded in importance in terms of dialogue between the two countries. Indeed, it has even been speculated that the United States must increase its engagement with the Taiwan issue or face losing it to China. The lack of securitising rhetoric can be blamed on China’s increased pre-eminence in the region, which has led the United States to refocus its concern on other issues to some extent. Also, China’s relations with Taiwan have improved in the face of increased integration with the common market; bilateral trade between the two countries is soaring and diplomats between the two countries regularly meet.

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144 Harry Kazianis, ‘Has the United States “Lost” Taiwan?’, *The Diplomat*, June 2013, retrieved from [http://thediplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2013/06/22/has-the-united-states-lost-taiwan/](http://thediplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2013/06/22/has-the-united-states-lost-taiwan/) [15/07/2013]

145 Ibid.
Clearly, the Taiwan issue is still a major issue between the United States and China and is regarded as a potential area of tension between the two nations.\textsuperscript{146} There have indeed been some low-key attempts to securitise the issue of defending Taiwan from the United States, in the face of American long-standing ‘strategic ambiguity’ over the issue.\textsuperscript{147} However, these have been becoming less and less frequent during China’s increasing pre-eminence in the region and suggest growing American focus towards tackling China regionally as opposed to merely over the issue of Taiwan, as Chinese capabilities increase.

Ultimately, there is evidence that Chinese military expansion has been securitised to an extent by the United States. Though official government sources are careful not to explicitly state that China is seen as a clear threat to United States’ interests in the Asia-Pacific region for fear of increasing tensions, new defence department guidelines and wariness for new Chinese capabilities imply that matching up US military means with China is a factor in United States security issues. This attitude has manifested itself in the ‘Asian Pivot’ of the United States towards the Asia-Pacific region which could be considered somewhat of an extraordinary measure which is the benchmark for assessing successful securitisation. These actions have incurred a counter-response from China, who now seeks closer ties with Western hemisphere nations in what can be described as a tit for tat exchange. The issue of cyber security has also been securitised, with Americans now pushing for more measures aimed at preventing Chinese hacking of American internet interests. This has also incurred a response from the Chinese, who accuse the United States of engaging in hacking attacks on them as well. These can both be tied in to Chinese economic growth. Chinese military capabilities have increased alongside its economy and can be considered the root cause of American securitisation of the military balance in Asia. The hacking issue can be considered indicative of the

\textsuperscript{146} Steve Tsang, ‘The U.S. Military and American Commitment to Taiwan’s Security’, \textit{Asian Survey}, vol. 52, no. 4, August 2012
United States’ fear of being overtaken in capabilities by the Chinese in a similar fashion to military matters, and the fact that the issue has featured so largely in American society shows that China is now considered the United States’ main global rival.

2.3 Securitisation: Other Important States

In the Asia-Pacific region, the United States and Japan are perhaps the most important for discussing the security dynamic with China in the area, for reasons outlined in the introduction to this chapter. This is not to diminish the importance of other states in the region, however in the interests of brevity these cannot be investigated in as much detail. In particular, China’s relationship with Taiwan, North Korea and the ASEAN nations are worth investigating; Taiwan because of the Chinese desire to assimilate it, North Korea as China’s relations with it are still a point of contention with the international regime, and the ASEAN nations because of territorial disputes with China.

The Taiwan issue, as we have seen, is one in which China, Japan and the United States are heavily involved. China lays claims to the islands while the United States and Japan guarantee its sovereignty. From a Taiwanese perspective, worries about China’s rapid economic and military growth are evident, as China is continually upgrading its capabilities in the Taiwanese strait which have been steadily increasing since the 1990s.\(^{148}\) As well as the threat of Chinese invasion which still occupies Taiwanese security concerns, they also claim sovereignty over islands in the South China Sea. As we shall see, Chinese response to these claims varies between peaceful attempts at multilateral diplomacy and more assertive responses. This is relevant as it has come to wider prominence in the period following China’s large economic growth. In common with Vietnam, the Taiwanese dispute falls into the latter category. As a response, Taiwan has begun construction of military facilities on the islands which has increased tensions

in the region, indicating that this dispute has been securitised by both sides.

North Korea is highly relevant to China’s rise due to the fact that its government is viewed with extreme suspicion and distaste by a wide majority of the international community, and the fact that China remains its closest international partner and ally.\(^{149}\) The United States and Japan are in favour of adopting a firm line with North Korea which is upset somewhat by their Chinese backing. On China’s part, while they put the onus on the United States to be more ‘flexible’ with North Korea, there is evidence that relations between Pyongyang and Beijing are becoming increasingly strained. Fractures in the China- North Korea alliance have developed largely as a response to North Korea’s pursuit of a nuclear weapon which is against China and the international regime’s wishes. Relations are now so strained that China would reportedly be open to accepting reunification of Korea with the South in control.\(^{150}\) Therefore, China’s relationship shows that it is capable of working with the international community when it sees fit, even if it often maintains a policy of exceptionalism.

The Association of South East Nations is regarded by many as integral to security in the Asia pacific region. Indeed, the lack of regional security leader means that the ASEAN is the most important institutional centre for security in the region.\(^{151}\) As we shall see, China the United States and Japan all seek dialogue with the ASEAN nations in terms of security matters, though that will be discussed elsewhere; this section is concerned with China and ASEAN’s handling of their territorial disputes. In this way a comparison can be made with the Senkaku Islands troubles. ASEAN-China territorial disputes are based around the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, about which China and a number of

\(^{149}\) Dick K. Nanto, Mark E. Manyin, ‘China- North Korea Relations’, Congressional Research Service, December 2010, retrieved from [http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=tYI_2_qeRIC&pg=PP2&dq=china+north+korea+allies&hl=en&s a=X&ei=TtILUsyXIqeS0AX2sYDIAw&ved=0CEsQ6AEwBA&v=onepage&q=china%20north%20kore a%20allies&f=false](http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=tYI_2_qeRIC&pg=PP2&dq=china+north+korea+allies&hl=en&s a=X&ei=TtILUsyXIqeS0AX2sYDIAw&ved=0CEsQ6AEwBA&v=onepage&q=china%20north%20korea%20allies&f=false)

\(^{150}\) Ibid, p. 3

ASEAN nations claim sovereignty.\textsuperscript{152} This dispute contains elements both of peaceful multilateral dialogue, in defiance of the trend with Japan over the Senkakus, and similarities, especially in China’s dealings with Vietnam.

In order to attempt to secure a peaceful dialogue over the issue, China and ASEAN formalised an agreement based on a mutual understanding of the dispute, known as the Declaration of Conduct (DOC).\textsuperscript{153} This creates guidelines for handling the various territorial claims on the islands based around multilateral diplomacy and an atmosphere of ‘peace, freedom, friendship and cooperation’.\textsuperscript{154} However, despite their aligned nature, the ASEAN nations are not yet one homogenous entity and there are discrepancies in the way the dispute has been handled from country to country. The dispute between China and Vietnam, for instance, has been subject to far more aggressive posturing than others. The dispute has been painted in terms of security by the Chinese, who feel that the islands could one day be used to ‘contain’ China’s naval presence, given increased Vietnamese ties with the United States.\textsuperscript{155} Similar securitisation has occurred from the Vietnamese side, with Vietnamese military units recently conducting drills in the region based around the possibility of a Chinese attack.\textsuperscript{156}

The increased securitisation of territorial disputes between China and its neighbours has gained importance since China’s membership of the WTO and its subsequent economic growth. While these disputes have been important for many years, China’s expanding

\textsuperscript{152}Q & A: Spratly Islands Dispute’, \textit{BBC News}, May 2013, retrieved from \url{http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13748349} [07/07/2013]


\textsuperscript{154}Ibid.


economic and military power have exacerbated the situation so that diplomatic disputes have become more frequent recently. On China’s part, it has shown some willingness to resolve the disputes multilaterally and diplomatically, but this has achieved varying success depending on which nation is involved. Like the case with Japan, those countries which have a chequered past with China are more likely to securitise the issue. Taiwan, of course, deeply mistrusts China and Vietnam’s reaction to the territorial dispute is informed by their skirmish with China in the area which remains a controversial issue. While ASEAN has attempted to provide frameworks for dealing with the issue diplomatically, it is unable to deal with the issue of trust which pervades so many of China’s dealings in the region. This, combined with China’s increased economic and military potential, has had the effect that assertive territorial disputes have increased in the region.

2.4 The Securitisation of East Asia

An analysis of the East Asia region, informed by securitisation theory, shows that in the period during China’s accession to the WTO which led to its fast economic growth, there have been a number of issues which have been painted in securitising terms by a variety of nations. For Japan and members of ASEAN, territorial disputes with China have become more pronounced in the period of China’s increased growth, with Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam engaging in aggressive ‘wars of words’ with China which has led, if not to outright military conflict, then certainly to the deployment of military units in shows of force. From the United States’ perspective, it has begun to realign its military and foreign policy focus towards East Asia and, although they are careful to state officially that this is not to check potential Chinese assertiveness, the concern over Chinese military capabilities shows that this is the real reason behind the new deployments. United

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157 Friedrichs, , p. 761
States’ ill-feeling towards China in light of alleged Chinese hacking also informs American policy towards China, and deepens their mistrust of Chinese intentions.

Ultimately, it is lack of trust which motivates these securitisations. China has, after all, shown some willingness towards multilateral diplomacy and is enthusiastic in its pursuit of free market ideals. However, the remnants of the Cold War communist system still reside at the top of Chinese politics and lead many to distrust deeply Chinese intentions. Lack of transparency in their military capabilities and other areas also has a part to play in this dynamic, as do the role of nationalism and history between China and other nations in the region.

3 Interdependence

Interdependence as a concept has received a large amount of attention as an attempt to explain states’ behaviour towards one another. Essentially, interdependence refers to the way in which states become intrinsically linked together through trade and other international channels. Such interdependent relationships give large trade benefits which make them attractive, but infringe on individual states’ autonomy by creating costly benefits to breaking off interdependent relationships. As we have seen, according to liberal perspectives on interdependence, such a dynamic makes military power redundant, as the costs associated with it are too high. Realists may say the opposite, as vulnerability to other states based around the need to import crucial resources in an interdependent relationship may compel a state to use military force. Indeed, the idea of properly managed interdependence based on an overarching authority which would prevent states from acting aggressively towards one another by establishing rules and norms against this, is not a new one. Rousseau theorised that a form of social contract between interdependence states would allow them all to live peaceably and profitably.

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and would bring advantages that were ‘immense, manifest [and] incontestable’.\(^{159}\) Such an arrangement would consign wars to history and allow new ways of exerting power.

Increasing trade and communications in the post-war world has undoubtedly had a major effect on global interdependence, allowing for the many channels of communication between nations which are seen today.

As outlined in the opening chapter, this essay will utilize the liberal perspective on interdependence, namely that a high degree of interdependence will decrease the likelihood of conflict, enabled by an international regime based around its goals. As such, other power resources are used by states in interdependent relationships, based around economic and other means. It must also be noted that in the heavily globalised economy of the present day, many of the prerequisites for interdependence have increased since complex interdependence was first outlined. More countries contribute to the global market, channels of communication between states are more diverse and effective and there are less barriers to international trade than the 1970s, with the result that international trade increased to a large extent between the 1970s and 2000s.\(^{160}\) As such, the global economy finds states increasingly interlinked with one another, with the result that interdependence is at a high level and shows signs of increasing.

The essay will examine whether this increased interdependence has manifested itself in greater cooperation between China and the international order in terms of participation in International Organisations, or whether China shows signs of implementing its own policies. Overall, the section aims to determine whether interdependence has a tangible effect on China cooperating on the international stage, or whether this is not the case and that China shows signs of acting unilaterally with regards to its own interests. Participation in joint schemes as well as a willingness to subscribe to rules mandated by


International Organisations will be examined. Conversely, behaviour away from established rules and norms as prescribed by prevalent trends will also be examined. This will allow us to determine how China’s economic interdependence will affect security in East Asia and internationally. Into the future, analysis of current trends may give insight into how potential relations between China and other important international actors will unfold as China’s economic power grows.

This will be achieved using the guidelines of complex interdependence as outlined earlier, alongside a structural study of the Chinese economy. Once this is established, barriers to China’s freedom of action due to interdependence can also be analysed, and how this affects China’s relations with other states, as well as the practical options available to it in terms of carrying out its foreign policy objectives. The chapter will examine how interdependence has affected China during its period of increasing eminence on the World stage, both in terms of limitations on its ability to act in certain ways and the power resources which an economically strong state can use to further its goals in an interdependent relationship with others, It will then move on to examine what implications increased Chinese economic growth can be said to have on security in the future.

While the details of interdependence theory have been laid out earlier in the essay, it is worth briefly justifying interdependence and its relevance to security in the modern age. After all, Power and Interdependence was written in the 1970s, so it would be easy to assume its lessons are no longer relevant. Indeed, liberal interdependence theory has come under a large amount of criticism since its inception from a wide array of sources.
3.1 China in the global economy

Since reforms made during the Cold War based around opening up trade with other nations, China has been an enthusiastic contributor to the global economy, and has seen huge economic growth since this time.\(^{161}\) This is borne out by its status as the world’s second largest exporter, behind the United States and ahead of Germany, which it overtook in 2010.\(^{162}\) This rapid growth has been attributed to high investment in its economy both by foreign investors and by large state savings, and by increasing productivity gains on the part of its workforce.\(^{163}\) China is the world’s largest manufacturer, supplying labour for foreign companies to exploit at rates far lower than would be possible in more developed countries.\(^{164}\) There are signs that this advantage over more developed countries is starting to wane somewhat, however, as wages in China show signs of increasing.\(^ {165}\) While Chinese wages are still far behind the more developed countries whose products they manufacture, the Chinese government has showed signs of wishing to move away from a manufacturing economy towards one based more on innovation and higher productivity, moves generally taken by more established states with higher labour wages.\(^{166}\)

Nonetheless, as of the moment China’s economy is still based to a large extent around its manufacturing base which can produce goods for international markets. China features a large percentage of foreign direct investment (FDI) in its economy, with foreign invested enterprises accounting for a high of 35.9% of its industrial output in 2003, and 21.7% in 2010. Notably, in the high-tech sector, foreign enterprise accounted

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\(^{163}\) Ibid, p. 5

\(^{164}\) Ibid. P. 10-11

\(^{165}\) Ibid.

\(^{166}\) Ibid, p. 12

China also holds around $1 trillion of United States public debt, which has been seen as a potential national security threat in the United States, though the holding of public debt by foreign interests is commonplace and simply based on trade levels.\footnote{Kenneth Rapoza, “Is China’s Ownership of U.S. Debt a National Security Threat?”, \textit{Forbes.com}, January 2013, retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2013/01/23/is-chinas-ownership-of-u-s-debt-a-national-security-threat/ [07/07/2013]}

Essentially, what these facts tell us is that while China owns a strong and growing economy, it is an economy which is rooted in the fabric of international trade. China’s growth is explained by its openness to world markets and its willingness to provide a manufacturing base to large numbers of international products, borne out by the large presence of foreign enterprise in its exports, particularly in high-tech goods which it does not produce itself. China is now heavily invested in the global economy for its economic growth and prosperity. While Chinese efforts to invest in innovation to alleviate this deficit in favour of domestic producers show signs of materialising, these will likely only take effect in the long-term, meaning that for the moment China can be seen as being in an interdependent relationship with many other states globally.

The level of involvement on China’s part with the international economy points to a large amount of economic interdependence, as it is clear that any attempt to leave this relationship would incur significant costly effects. Indeed, it would involve major restructuring of the Chinese economy as a whole which would be incredibly difficult and time-consuming. Given the benefits which the Chinese economy gains from this relationship, it is unlikely that China will attempt something like this in favour of an economic model which allows more freedom of action in terms of political initiatives.
Given that China’s interdependence has been established, it is worth investigating now if China’s behaviour politically conforms to what is to be expected of such an interdependent relationship, and how this has affected security issues. Areas of study include China’s involvement with International organisations and whether it uses economic power as a substitute for other hard power options.

3.2 China and International Organisations: Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Given China’s Interdependent status in the world economy, it is worth discussing its relations with other states and international institutions in regards to this. Notably, establishing whether China appears to be participating in International organisations in cooperative efforts and whether it shows signs of using economic means to exert power to achieve foreign policy goals is important for this next section of analysis. Trends towards greater cooperation in these areas alongside China’s economic emergence could imply that economic interdependence, borne out by China’s increasing participation in the world economy, has had reciprocal effects in terms of Chinese cooperation in multilateral initiatives, as per the theory of complex interdependence. In terms of China’s relationship with International Organisations, there are mixed messages. China has indeed shown a tendency since its reforms in the 1970s towards greater participation with IOs, as well as greater willingness towards multilateralism and the invocation of international law.\(^{170}\)

With that said, there is evidence that China only uses such institutions when it has something to gain, and is not whole-heartedly in favour of international institutions,

though of course this is the case with many powerful states. China’s first signs of openness towards multilateral initiatives were shown by its promotion of non-proliferation treaties beginning in the 1980s. Since then, China has remained serious about the Conference for Disarmament, though it has been speculated that this is simply because its aims fall into line with Chinese security concerns, rather than because of a desire to participate in international initiatives. As such, Chinese participation in the Conference for Disarmament can be attributed to a number of factors, and is not necessarily purely down to the cooperative influence of interdependence. Indeed, when attending the CD China remained unaffiliated with any major bloc, be it East or West, and was unique in this respect. China regarded itself as a ‘one nation group’ at the Conference for disarmament. This indicates that early movements made by China towards multilateral action were still tempered by Chinese exceptionalism, and that China saw itself as removed from others in the international community. From 1986, China increased its participation in non-proliferation measures by acknowledging their own need to disarm as well as by advocating greater arms control measures for developing states and increased international discussion on the issue. This greater participation was reciprocated by the CD making China chairman of the group of seven, with the Chinese using this to call for measures guarding against further nuclear arms races in space-based weapons. This period marked further Chinese enthusiasm towards international dialogue as opposed to confrontation in the creation of norms advocating nuclear disarmament, and reciprocated by allowing IAEA safeguards on a number of its own nuclear reactors. Coinciding with this, however, China continued to develop its nuclear arsenal and even continued nuclear testing into the 1990s, incurring the displeasure of other CD members who accused it of hypocrisy.

Ultimately, China agreed to halt tests after the removal of aid from Japan, indicating that the displeasure of the international community may hold some sway in influencing

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171 Kent, p. 72
172 Ibid, p. 74
173 Ibid, p. 76
174 Ibid, p. 79
foreign policy in China, along with the economic repercussions incurred from Japan.\textsuperscript{175} China’s signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban in 1996 has been followed by ‘general agreement’ that China allowed ‘significant diminution’ of its sovereign rights and indeed was seen by Chinese officials this way.\textsuperscript{176} This was the first time that China had multilaterally agreed to such a measure.\textsuperscript{177} Among reasons given for this relinquishing of national sovereignty, the Chinese wish for a stable international order has been advanced, as a necessary prerequisite for their economic growth.\textsuperscript{178} As such, this shows both that China saw value in international organisations, and that they were a means to achieving the end of increasing their economic potential.

Into the 2000s, China’s faith in the value of international authority was, however, undermined by United States’ increased flouting of international norms in favour of unilateral action under President Bush, in particular with regards to its efforts to begin an Anti Ballistic Missile Programme against the wishes of anti-proliferation measures.\textsuperscript{179} There was also scepticism regarding the double-standards of the prevailing international system which many in China saw to be merely catering to the wishes of the United States and other Western nations. Support for Israel’s nuclear deterrent by the United States, or at least failure to condemn it, while denouncing Iran’s similar goals has been viewed as an indication of institutional bias.\textsuperscript{180}

This had the effect that while China officially increased its support for cooperative international efforts with regards to security issues, in practice it pursued measures in opposition to the framework of multilateral security measures.\textsuperscript{181} China’s motives in

\textsuperscript{175} Ibid, p. 81
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid, p. 82
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid, p. 83
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid, p. 88
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid, p. 93
relation to international institutions regarding nuclear proliferation are therefore difficult to determine. While certainly making significant efforts on the part of the CD, in practical terms China may have been guilty of some hypocrisy. Its continuation of nuclear tests along with updating its nuclear defence systems, as well as claims that China may have made efforts to aid the nuclear programmes of certain nations imply that China was still prone to acting in its own self-interest at times and was not totally in compliance with international norms. What is clear, however, is that China’s enthusiasm for multilateral initiatives rose steadily after opening up their international trade in the 1970’s, and that the continuation of their economic growth has been a factor in this.

3.3 China and International Organisations: The WTO

It is clear that China’s further integration into the international economic system that its increased growth and enthusiasm for IOs brought could have had two outcomes. China could attempt to manipulate the system in order to further its own ends or attempt to integrate more seamlessly into the system. In the event, even given the speed in which it took to entering international markets, China surprised realist predictions by a relatively friction-free entrance into the world economy of international trade and investment until 1994. Between 1994 and 1999, however, this integration slowed down owing to factors including its sluggish progress at being admitted to the World Trade Organisation. This perhaps indicated that China’s ultimate goal was only partial integration, a popular prediction at the time. This partial level of integration implied that China would pursue international trade and investment initiatives for practical reasons and seeks to retain the core of national sovereignty while making sure integration would be monitored carefully. Partial integration would see China only accepting certain limits to its

183 Ibid, p. 162
sovereignty in other areas and thus diminish to some extent the effects of interdependence, and thus would be less favoured by International Organisations and the international community. In the event, China integrated perhaps more thoroughly than many would have imagined, but still retains a core of national sovereignty and exceptionalism, as we shall see.

While integration up to 1994 had positive effects which engendered enthusiasm for further compliance with international incorporation, this impact was not without backlash.\textsuperscript{184} Indeed, partial integration seems to have been favoured by the PRC leadership at the end of the 1990s, as well as by nationalistic elements of the political system that were wary of the costs of further integration and of U.S. hegemony. The net result was that attitudes swung between further integration and more protectionist tendencies.\textsuperscript{185} Ultimately, while external influences did have an effect on opening up China to international integration, domestic factors had been the most crucial in explaining its relationship with integration.\textsuperscript{186} Where external factors did have a role to play, it was market forces rather than foreign governmental ones which had the most effect, though governmental and IO pressure did have influence in terms of changing Chinese actions. For instance, the idea that more Western resources may be invested in China if greater transparency was achieved encouraged some reforms in this area.\textsuperscript{187}

Beyond the 90s, China made further headway into international assimilation through its acceptance into the World Trade Organisation in 2001 after a prolonged negotiating process, opening a new phase in opening up its markets to foreign trade.\textsuperscript{188} This implies that reservations about the American focus of the WTO and the international regime have lost out to the potential economic benefits of membership.\textsuperscript{189} As well as this, there

\textsuperscript{184} Ibid, p. 190
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid, p. 191
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid, p. 192
\textsuperscript{187} Ibid, p. 193-194
\textsuperscript{188} Chia-Hsing Huang, Shu-Shian Lin, ‘The Impact on WTO on International Interdependence Degree Amongst United States, Korea and China’, \textit{Applied Financial Economic Letters}, vol. 4, issue 6, p. 451
\textsuperscript{189} Wang, Blythe, p. 3
is evidence of a growing liberal academic base in China which prizes the role of international organisations, globalisation and economic interdependence. This may have a growing influence in championing these factors as alternatives to the Marxist ideology which persist in China and indeed is the official viewpoint of the state.\textsuperscript{190}

In the event, China’s membership of the WTO has been successful, and its assimilation has had huge benefits for the Chinese economy as a whole. Indeed, ascension to the WTO certainly ‘deepened Chinese integration of the Chinese economy into the global economy’ and had major effects in allowing China to move towards a ‘rules based system’ of economic development.\textsuperscript{191} The effect of WTO membership and the increased integration into the world economy that this brought saw Chinese economic growth increase markedly. As we have seen, increased FDI, especially with regards to the manufacturing industry, had a large effect on this. This, coupled with the opening up of further domestic markets to foreign competition which WTO membership brought, meant that international Chinese trade increased more than threefold in the period 2001-2007, clearly a vast growth rate.\textsuperscript{192} The net result was that, by 2007, China was one of the main drivers of global economic growth and had in turn itself become a role model and integrating force for other developing countries.\textsuperscript{193}

However, while economically WTO membership has been a boon for China, it has not been without friction with other states. While it raised hope around its succession by making reforms and signing up to multilateral rules, it has failed to meet these expectations by flouting international norms in its domestic policy by continuing to deny certain freedoms to its own population, thus causing some controversy with the international community at large.\textsuperscript{194} As well as this, pressure has come from the United

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{190} Ibid, p. 5
\item \textsuperscript{191} Chunlai Chen, \textit{China’s Integration with the Global Economy: WTO Accession, Foreign Direct Investment and International Trade}, (Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009) p. 1,
\item \textsuperscript{192} Ibid, p. 5
\item \textsuperscript{193} Ibid, p. 6
\item \textsuperscript{194} ‘Shades of Grey: It was right to let China in, but now it needs to grow up’, \textit{The Economist}, December 2011, retrieved from http://www.economist.com/node/21541408 [07/07/2013]
\end{itemize}
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States and the EU on China to revalue its currency which it has shown some problems in achieving in a timely fashion.\textsuperscript{195}

Ultimately, despite these problems China’s tenure in the WTO has shown little indication that it wishes to reform the practices of the institution to fit its own agenda. Rather, it has largely shown itself to be a ‘system maintainer’, generally adhering to the common practices of the regime except in areas that substantially infringe on its ‘sovereignty and dignity.\textsuperscript{196} There have been instances where Chinese diplomats have alluded to the perceived Western-centric nature of the body as a whole, especially the Transitional Review Mechanism aimed to ensure Chinese compliance. In one case, a senior member of the Chinese delegation referred to the TRM process as ‘neo imperialism’, indicating how unpopular the mechanism is in China where it is often seen simply in terms of Western espionage on China.\textsuperscript{197}

Where criticism of integration into global economic institutions has arisen, it has manifested itself in terms of infringement on China’s sovereignty, as one would expect. Efforts at compliance by the WTO are seen as Western meddling in China’s affairs, as is denouncement of China’s record on matters such as human rights. Evidence of China’s willingness to accede to the demands of other WTO members comes with the dispute over Intellectual property rights. China agreed to create ‘major’ new laws to protect intellectual property after pressure from the US and other major members of the WTO, despite previously having no laws to this effect and there being some speculation that protection of intellectual property is alien to Chinese culture.\textsuperscript{198, 199} What this points to is that while China expresses certain misgivings about WTO membership, given its

\textsuperscript{195} Chen, p. 7
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid, p. 251
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid, p. 326
perceived U.S.-bias and compliance measures which are seen as dubious, it has nevertheless played by the rules of the game to a large extent. China has also benefited enormously since WTO membership, as its growth figures show testament to. Indeed, it has been stated that China’s rapid growth in the 21st century could not have been achieved without accession to the WTO.\(^{200}\) These enormous benefits mean that China’s heavy integration into the economic community which occurred with its WTO accession has overall been seen as a positive step in China. The benefits of this membership are seen to far outweigh the costs imposed by the relationship, meaning that steps away from integration are unlikely in the near future.

In terms of security, WTO membership serves to make China far more economically interdependent with the West. The bilateral trade imbalance between China and the USA, along with the current account deficit in the United States, serves to tie the two nations economically together and integrate the Chinese economy further with the global economy at large.\(^{201}\) While the relationship has been marred somewhat by the 2008 financial crisis (indeed, it has been touted as a factor in it), the mechanism outlined here goes some way into establishing a ‘capitalist peace’ based around Chinese economic integration, according to interdependence theory.\(^{202}\) While the co-dependence between the de-facto ‘G2’ of the global economy took a hit from the financial crisis, both countries now seek to restructure their economies to limit the trade imbalances between them while remaining important partners.\(^{203}\) Indeed, China seems on balance to have remained an advocate of free trade despite the crisis and has not lost faith in the global economic system, recently pledging to oppose protectionism while


\(^{202}\) Ibid.


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stimulating further growth. As such, China can be said to be economically interdependent. As interdependence is defined as the costs imposed based on leaving a relationship, it is clear that China would face huge costs for retreating back into economic isolationism, given the high level of FDI and the fact that the economy is largely manufacturing-based. The benefits of this interdependence have also been largely beneficial for China, and it is clearly seen that the relinquished authority inherent in an interdependent relationship is worth the economic boon. As such, China can be seen as sensitive to the costs associated with leaving the framework of interdependence, in accordance with complex interdependence theory. This economic interdependence is a double-edged sword in terms of security in the Asia region, as while it lowers tensions due to the generally accepted pacifying nature of free trade, it has also resulted in a more economically powerful China.

3.4 China and the U.N.

Given China’s increasingly interdependent status with the global regime, it is worth assessing whether there has been a subsequent knock-on effect with China’s relationship with other International institutions, particularly with recourse to the UN. Given China’s vastly different political setup when compared to the other major players in these institutions, it is interesting to see how it handles norms established by the international regime in areas away from economic matters. In the event, it is clear that China’s relationship with the international community in these areas is far more state-centric and based around national sovereignty and adherence to its own unilateral norms than its membership of economic institutions.


The issue of Human Rights in China is an example of this. While it is true that recently the issue has faced greater domestic coverage in China, with leaders promising moves towards a ‘harmonious society’ based around equality and justice, external pressures on China to work towards such goals in line with their own expectations have been met with resistance.\footnote{Ibid, p. 97} International regime criticism of China on matters of human rights has been seen as a cynical attempt to besmirch the name of China on the international stage by a majority of Chinese citizens.\footnote{Ibid, pp. 107-108} Chinese involvement in the U.N. is also constrained by a number of their stated policies which are at odds with the international regime. These include their ‘one China’ policy regarding their wish to assimilate Taiwan, as well as their tacit support for North Korea, a global ‘pariah state’ and the issue of Tibet.\footnote{Michael Fullilove, ‘China and the United Nations, Stakeholder Spectrum’, \textit{The Washington Quarterly}, vol. 34, no. 3, summer 2011, p. 66}

As for China’s Security Council membership, China holds a powerful position as a permanent member of the Security Council, but is hampered by the informal norm which has developed among the P5 to not veto resolutions, as well as the increasing number and intensity of humanitarian peacekeeping operations.\footnote{Manuel Irman, \textit{China as Nuclear Power and its Security Council Membership}, (Munich, GRIN Verlag, 2011) pp. 10-11} Nevertheless, while China has remained sceptical of the Western-bias of the organisation it has used its veto sparingly and only when deemed highly necessary, notably over proposed sanctions imposed on Syria over the civil war there.\footnote{Rick Gladstone, ‘Friction at the UN as Russia and China Veto Another Resolution on Syria Sanctions’, \textit{New York Times}, July 2012, retrieved from \url{http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/20/world/middleeast/russia-and-china-veto-un-sanctions-against-syria.html?_r=0 [07/07/2013]}} As such, China has begun a policy of generally abstaining from votes which do not involve it directly, able to both send a message and avoid alienating allies.\footnote{Yitzak Shichor, ‘China’s Voting Behaviour in the U.N. Security Council’, \textit{Association for Asia Research}, October 2006, retrieved from \url{http://www.asianresearch.org/articles/2947.html}}
With all that said, while it is true that Chinese involvement in International Organisations remains at a low level outside of economics, there is a slow but steady trend towards further integration with the United Nations. China does, for instance, deploy around 2,000 of its troops under the banner of the UN in peacekeeping operations around the world.\footnote{International Crisis Group, ‘China’s Growing Role in UN Peacekeeping’, \textit{Asia Report no. 166}, April 2009, p. i} It has recently offered its largest contingent of peacekeeping troops ever to the U.N., at 500 soldiers as a response to the Mali crisis.\footnote{‘China Offers Troops for Mali Crisis’, \textit{Daily Telegraph}, May 2013, retrieved from \url{http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/mali/10076187/China-offers-troops-for-UN-Mali-mission.html} [07/07/2013]} While Chinese motivations for sending its troops range from promoting a multilateral agenda to isolating Taiwan, it is clear that this signals a greater degree of integration with the international regime than a strictly isolationist policy would imply. As such, China’s greater integration with economic organisations can be said to have had at least some knock-on effect in terms of China’s U.N. role.

3.5 Does Interdependence Prevail in East Asia?

Given that we have established China's high economically interdependent status, it is worth analysing if the predictions of complex interdependence hold true in the case of China. The three main outcomes of interdependence as outlined by Keohane and Nye are that multiple channels connect societies including international organisations, that military security is not the main preoccupation of states, and that military force is not seen as a viable foreign policy option where complex interdependence prevails.

As to the first outcome, that multiple channels connect societies and that the role of International Organisations gain in importance because of this, there are mixed signals regarding China. The section on securitisation is relevant here, as securitisation ‘speech acts’ can come from a range of different sources from across society, including
established trends in media and comments by relatively junior politicians and relevant actors. As well as this, the importance of transnational banks and corporations is important in China.

Consider the level of FDI present in China’s economy since accession to the WTO. This is largely important in a hypothetical security dilemma between, say, China and the United States. From the United States perspective, any military action would cause their corporations who have invested in China to presumably remove their investment, thus costing huge amounts of money. From the Chinese perspective, such a scenario would also be catastrophic given the integral nature of FDI to their economy, given that a large proportion of China’s economic growth can be attributed to foreign investment and the manufacture of foreign goods. The transnational channels are thus present and important for understanding the security of the region.

Interstate and transgovernmental channels are however less well established in the security dynamic. This can be attributed to the degree of exceptionalism and lack of transparency inherent in Chinese government workings, as well as the vastly different political backgrounds of between Chinese government and its politicians and its main potential rivals. The Chinese political system is, after all, still largely based on a Marxist viewpoint, one that is usually seen as incompatible with the values outlined by the democratic nations. While informal talks have been undertaken between the leaders of China and the United States, this is less likely to be of importance further down the political ladder.²¹⁴ Language and vastly different history and political realities mean that there is still an element of the unknown about China from a United States perspective. The historical and cultural differences are perhaps less pronounced between China and other major nations in East Asia, but China’s continued communist political system precludes further informal ties at this level. As China gains in importance, of course, this dichotomy is likely to recede somewhat, though.

The second stated characteristic of complex interdependence, that military security does not dominate the agenda between states in a region, is true in the case of East Asia, though it certainly still plays an important role. The line between domestic and international issues has indeed become blurred, for instance issues over China’s human rights record which then went on to become international disputes.

China has not been overly entirely preoccupied with security matters over the last decade, and has made political efforts towards a number of contrasting issues. Indeed, it has been stated that the Chinese leadership’s, ‘top ten issues are domestic’.\textsuperscript{215} Post 2008, one of the main issues in Chinese policy was undoubtedly recovery from the effects of the economic crisis, which they managed to achieve quickly in comparison to Western nations and can be considered more important to China than security interests at this time. China has also been open to cooperation with the United States on a number of issues, for instance environmental and energy initiatives. What this shows is that, while security is showing signs of increased importance in East Asia, it has not been the main preoccupation of China over the last decade.

That said, military and security issues are undoubtedly still of real importance to China and became even more so given the territorial disputes with Japan. China is, of course, arming itself steadily and its deployments of vessels and aircraft to the Senkakus shows that it is willing to employ hard-power coercion methods when appropriate or when it feels threatened. The dispute over the Senkakus along with the nationalistic rhetoric which went along with it shows that the threat of military force is still present in the region, even if actual conflict is a somewhat remote possibility. It is believed that the increasingly militarised dispute is being used by the Chinese to instigate a discussion over the sovereignty of the islands, which may in the future lead to China being able to

\textsuperscript{215} Fullilove, p. 66
take control of them. The dispute can be therefore blamed partly on nationalistic tendencies rather than firm security objectives, as the islands are generally considered to be of little strategic value.

Nevertheless, ownership of the islands is a foreign policy objective, and the instrument used to achieve this objective is the military. However, the lack of real military options to achieving foreign policy goals is apparent in China’s increased willingness to use the U.N. to work towards foreign policy objectives. Consider, for instance, one of the proposed explanations for China’s peacekeeping missions at the U.N., that it hopes post-conflict governments will open up relations with China rather than Taiwan after peacekeeping initiatives.

As such, there is an incomplete picture of interdependence in the East Asia region regarding China. On the one hand China enthusiastically pursues multilateral economic policies based around free trade and large integration with the global economic regime. On the other hand, relations with the United States and Japan as well as other states in East Asia remain fraught, based around a lack of transparency regarding military capabilities and a feeling that China will use its burgeoning might to dominate the region as a whole. Many of the contradictions inherent in the study of interdependence relating to China can be traced back to the dichotomy which pervades all analysis of the issue. This is that China’s leaders feel uncomfortable with the concept of interdependence and seek ‘independence, sovereignty and self-reliance’ above all else. This is, however, tempered by the fact that they need access to Western know-how and markets, as well as the great economic benefits China gained from sacrificing its sovereignty in the name of growth. Ultimately, this results in China adopting both interdependent and statist policies. Economically, they are happy to engage with IOs and champion the free market. Politically, and in terms of security, they wish to remain isolated which explains the lack

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of transparency and connection to security-based IOs which they distrust as too Western-centric.

### 3.6 What this means for Security

The interdependent nature of China economically tends to reduce the security dilemma to an extent in the region, based around the perceived costs to using military force to achieve objectives from all sides in the region. Realists assert that the fact that using economic measures over military ones are untenable as they would incur too high costs on both sides, though this also precludes military conflict as this would also incur great costs to all parties involved, along with the inherent destruction that such a conflict would create.\(^{218}\) That said, while the risk of great power conflict in the region is low given the effects of interdependence, tensions in the region have undoubtedly risen in the light of Chinese economic growth. China deals less with International organisations which are not based around economics, and as such remains isolated from the international security regime at large to an extent. China’s increasing military might, along with doubts about their intentions based around their seemingly incompatible political persuasions have led both Japan and the United States to regard China as a threat to their pre-eminence in the region, as the section on securitisation attests to.

However, while Chinese economic growth, despite interdependence has increased tensions in the region, China does show an increased tendency towards interaction with IOs and indeed has been involved in cooperation with other states in a way which would probably have not been the case without its opening up of trade. Ultimately, if China increases to liberalise in this regard, it is likely that tensions will decrease to an extent.

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4.0 The Overall Security Picture in East Asia

This section will sum up the findings of the essay at large before making conclusions as to the relationship between China’s economic growth and the security relationship in East Asia.

4.1 Is China Really a Military Security Threat?

Disregarding efforts to paint China as a legitimate military threat to other nations, it is worth examining how far this assertion is grounded in reality, and over which issues confrontation may occur. Securitisation, after all is a speech act and can therefore be utilized for a variety of different means, not all of them honest.

On balance, territorial disputes and the fate of Taiwan are perhaps the most likely route to conflict. The Senkaku Islands dispute is one problematic area, and one which is often cited as an issue in which real military confrontation is a possibility. In short, as a result of the dispute, ‘Japanese and Chinese Militaries are interacting in closer proximity than ever before’, a situation that leads Japanese defence planners to ‘worry about unintended consequences of the increased Chinese maritime activities’, as well as ‘the potential for these relatively minor grievances based around the Senkaku Islands to develop into more intense political and diplomatic crises’. Adding to the issue is the fact that given the United States’ stated responsibility to defend Japanese interests under their alliance structure, in all probability any sort of clash would bring the United States into the conflict as well, as would any Chinese conflict with Taiwan. This does

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220 Ibid. p. 370
not rule out skirmishes which may develop in the vicinity of one of the disputed islands however, which have the potential of escalating into greater crises. Given that the United States is allied with Japan and Taiwan this is a potentially troubling state of affairs. In a worst case scenario, a skirmish over the islands could escalate into a wider conflict which would then involve intervention from the United States.

While as we have seen there are various attempts to securitise the island disputes, knowledge of the current interdependent nature of China informs us that pre-emptive aggression is highly unlikely. The costs associated with any aggressive action are simply too high to justify any potential benefits. As such, while China is certainly increasing its armed forces and refusing to back down in these territorial issues, China is unlikely to be committed to any deliberate military expansion in East Asia.

4.2 Conclusion

In answering the essay question as to what effect Chinese economic growth has affected international security in East Asia, a number of effects have been ascertained. Essentially the major developments to security in the region can be traced to a significant extent to China’s emergent status as a potential regional hegemon. In concluding, it is useful to attempt to answer the main questions mentioned in my introductory section, in order to outline what the research has shown.

In terms of assessing whether Chinese economic growth has increased tensions in the region, it is clearly hard to prove decisively one way or the other due to problems in applying causation, however it seems fair to say that Chinese economic growth is a factor in certain destabilising developments in the region. China’s economic growth had a knock-on effect in terms of their military expenditure, which saw China viewed more suspiciously than before. China’s military growth can be viewed as a major factor in the
refocusing of the United States on the Asia-Pacific region. This in turn led to wariness in Beijing regarding United States’ plans which led them to adopt a more assertive stance toward territorial disputes. Evidence of increased tensions in the region is provided by the increasing frequency of the territorial disputes, as well as the rhetoric applied in responding to these.

However, China’s economic growth is not solely to blame for these tensions. Indeed, we have seen that China is a relatively compliant state in regards to international organisations, especially those dealing with economic matters. Though it distrusts the international regime to an extent as it views it as too Western-centric, there is evidence of greater engagement. China’s attempts to resolve some of its territorial disputes with ASEAN diplomatically are also relevant here. Rather, it is a combination of China’s increasing economic and military potential and other factors which lead to a general distrust of Chinese intentions and can be blamed for increasing tension. China’s still avowedly communist government is often connected with Cold War tensions, and the regime’s stance on human rights does not engender them to outsiders. Historical issue and nationalistic sentiment also have a part to play.

In answering whether China is interdependent with other important states in the region, it is clear that since its WTO accession the Chinese economy has been heavily interdependent with the global market. Trade between China and Japan and China and the United States is at a high level, and China owes much of its economic success to foreign investment. China can also impose costs on other states given its vast economic resources in the international market. What this means is that according to complex interdependence, military force is unlikely to be used between China and a number of other relevant states.

As we can see, Chinese economic growth has affected security in the region in a number of ways, and it is not as unproblematic as to say simply that China’s rise is likely to cause
conflict or increase tension in the area. Indeed, the period of China’s economic liberalisation saw it engage far more with other states multilaterally and in a spirit of diplomacy. While there is a core of statism at the heart of Chinese politics, there is evidence that more liberal viewpoints may be forthcoming.

In any case, the likelihood of conflict in the region, while remaining a possibility, is low. Similarly, the idea that China may expand aggressively is highly unlikely and based on alarmist tendencies, as the Chinese government is reported to be mainly interested in domestic politics. Interdependence is integral to the Chinese economic system, which is a further pacifying influence. What is likely is that China will continue to grow and affect the security landscape even further. It will be a challenge to the rest of the region to adjust to this.

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