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Introduction

China's rise to become a leading economy in the world and specifically in Asia and its establishment of a strong military makes it tremendously crucial player in international politics. China is also the largest holder of the US treasury bonds. This growth has made China the hottest topic for discussion in foreign policy debates. The spotlight of these debates has shifted from addressing the question of " Whether it will rise" to " how China is rising". There is also the impact of this rise in Japan and South Korea.

The rise of China is a threat to the world's superpowers in terms of military and economic power leading to what has been termed the " China Threat". Therefore, China, being authoritarian since Mao and a threat to the US and regional status quo, putting it on a collision course, further, deepens the wariness of its rise since it has constantly reiterated its ' peaceful rise policy'. This perhaps is the best course of action. Therefore, the paper addresses the United States, Japan and South Korea as the top three countries that will suffer the implications of china's rise. Their reaction to this issue is hence highly significant for discussion since Japan and South Korea are neighbors to China while the US is the world's superpower.

Significance of China Threat

Together with China's rise as a powerhouse on international relations, its perception as a threat has also risen.

This fact is evident in the ideology behind the conventional realist Western International relation theory. This ideology argues that since China is an unsatisfied power, it was bound to challenge the status quo where the US

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has to remain powerful (Mearsheimer 2003, 125). This would seriously disrupt international status quo causing regional and international political instability. The Asian-Pacific region has been a central issue in the rivalry among the world's superpowers and specifically the Asian states – Japan and South Korea. China, Japan and South Korea have often used the regional politics to struggle for dominance on a number of occasions. Since 1945 until recently, the region has been a platform for the Cold War. The United States and Russia have constantly fought in post World War I to settle scores in the region leading to Korea division.

China's stance of these wars is of critical importance as an emerging power in the region (Mearsheimer 2003, 125). However, it has never taken hard-line stances by taking sides. A complication compounds the rise of China and its impact on regional order. The US factor cannot, however, be ignored due to its foreign policy and substantial involvement in trade, peace, and stability in the region. It exercises leadership marked by long-term bilateral alliances.

Among the greatest implications of the rise of China has been its influence on South Korea and Japan policies. The elite and popular ideologies in the South Korea have seen it develop pro-China tendencies as China continues to improve its relations with many of its neighbors including India and Russia. Russia has even engaged in active military cooperation and sale of weaponry with China.

Based on the history between the US and Russia, this heightens to the US's perception of China as a threat (Mearsheimer 2003, 127). The Chinese approach to the Asian policies has been somehow intricate. China's wariness

of the international organization in Asia has gradually faded. Chinese leaders continue to avoid the close interchange with certain groups like the Annual Asian Security discussions in which the US has taken a leading role. On the other hand, China has changed many of its policies proving to be flexible on territorial disputes. This reached a notable height in 2002 after several years of assessing China's code of conduct concerning the South China Sea dispute. China has always flanked its new positive diplomacy in the Asian region with tough and opposition of the US's policies and interests in the region.

The Asian states have been reluctant to take a side against the US or China (Ross 2006, 388). They realize such tough stances could negatively affected China's interest at a time when it is anxious to explore more positive national security policies. China has softened its stance for some time now to become more moderate though it still works against the US.

America's Reaction to China's Rise

After the Cold War, Americans have marked the post-Cold War with a keen radar screen on China's rise in terms of the best foreign policy to ensure China is contained or accommodated.

Directed by the mainstream international relations theory of power struggles, it is obvious that a conflict between the US and China is unavoidable (Carpenter 2006, 103). Since the Bush administration and the post September 11 strategy to define foreign policy, the US has described China as a strategic competitor hence coining the term "China Threat". However, the meeting between the US and China's presidents in 2005 saw

president Hu Jintao of China present the “ peaceful rise” as a development strategy by China in the modern world to ensure no future conflicts (Carpenter 2006, 103). The theory has seen the long-time heated debate as whether China would be a threat once it rises culminate peaceful talks with China considered responsible partner in the international system. However, the question of whether China will remain peace once it has risen.

Japan’s Reaction

Japan’s reaction about the rise of China is the most apprehensive. Japan has been a leading player in the Asia-pacific area as a trading nation and a security agent.

Japan is apprehensive about the powerful Chinese military and its intimidating implication of the regional stability and security. These implications remain the focus of Japan’s domestic debates but so far, there is no solid consensus about the measures worth taking against China (Ross 2006, 388). The school of “ China Threat” is more dominant in Japan despite the many opinions about the subject. Japan leaders often publicly express their concern about the rising of China’s economic and military strength and the possible implication in the region (Carpenter 2006, 103). The former prime minister Taro Aso as a foreign minister gladly accepted the US’s theory of “ China threat” by explicitly declaring that it was clear that China was becoming a considerable threat. He also declared on television that it was difficult to tell why China was investing so much in military. That clearly spelt a threat on the neighboring states (Carpenter 2006, 104).

The current Japanese Premier Junichiro Koizumi on his part claims he does not consider China's economic development as a threat. Aso's remarks saw Japan declare that it did not consider China as a security threat just to clarify any misconceptions that could imply intent to attack. China does not have such intention.

Korea's Response to China's Rise

Korea's reaction to the rise of China has shown rather appealing characteristics compared to Japan and the US. Firstly, China has never been a central concern in South Korea's politics and even foreign policies.

China ranked far much, behind when it came to this. Secondly, China has not been controversial as US and Japan since it takes most liberal stances on issues hence not regarded as a highly politicized or partisan nation. South Korea does not largely hold strict Pro-China or Anti-China sentiments (Chung 2006, 94). It is more moderate. Few individuals have polarized views against (Ross 2006, 388) while some have pro-China views. Thirdly, while South Korea is aware of the rising power in Asian-pacific region and the possibility that it will be a force to reckon in the next decades, it does not take China's dominance in the region as a threat though some individuals have fears. For instance, some South Korean security experts have explicitly declared that China was a regional security threat (Chung 2006, 94). They consider China as a partner, which will see South Korea prosper.

Therefore, South Korea is destined to benefit more from the rise of China as opposed to suffering.

Measures Taken

A superficial look into the perceptual reactions to China's rise by Japan, South Korea and The US has exposed compelling realities. The elite and the public alike in these countries agree that China will be a leading power in the next two of three decades.

This does not mean people are ready to accept China's peaceful rise. To some extent, the perception that China is a threat remains alive. The perception of China is more inclined to the negative – a threat rather than a partner in economic development. The international literature reveals some of the measures that have been suggested and taken address the issue of rising of China. Engagement: This policy relies on the reasoning of the economic interdependence. This policy hence supports the optimal cause by every country to encourage China to open its economy to the rest of the world.

It is doubtful that china will overturn the systems in place today or even try to evoke hegemonic conflicts with other powers like Japan or the US. It has so proven to be a responsible stakeholder on the global scene. Other economic power houses are working together to ensure that China's external trade is brought into balance (Morrison " China-US trade" 2003, 3). Even though China claims that it ran a surplus of 33 billion dollars in trade with the rest of the world, the US alone suffered \$162 billion deficit with China. It is obvious that China has often understated its trade surpluses. Therefore, other countries are contently pushing China to comply with its commitment to the World Trade Organization agreement (Morrison " China-US trade" 2003, 3).

From this, the US and Japan are talking about enforcing the intellectual property rights, and use more flexible foreign exchange practices to decrease China's trade surplus and China's dollar assets in government. A higher value for China's currency can diminish the entice of the Chinese economy as a cheap-labor manufacturing hub, which has attracted mass movement of companies from Japan, South Korea and the US leading to a bandwagon effect. This will ensure that China conducts its trade according to the world standards though not necessarily slow its growth (Morrison "China-US trade" 2003, 3). The present upward valuation of China's Yuan has gotten much attention already (Morrison "China's Exchange Rate" 2005, 5). As the US dollar continues to depreciate proportionally to the reducing GDP, the duty to adjust currency has shifted Japan, South Korea and other directly concerned nations (Morrison "China-US trade" 2003, 3).

China has responded to its critics by strongly supporting the regional organization like ASEAN and APEC. This move is as a gesture to win the trust of Japan and South Korea. China has also worked against devaluing its Yuan as the region suffer Asian financial crisis as in an attempt to convince its neighbors that it is a constructive and valuable player in the international commerce and politics (Fishman 2005, 25; Gifford 2007, 57).

Accommodation: This policy incorporates contact engagement and recognition that there is a need for mutual existence as such other countries can adjust to the needs of others. Therefore, this policy in essence advocates for mutual adaptation of states in equal terms (He 2007, 2). Many states have accepted the position of China and are simply adjusting to the increasing power of China through its traditional hard power resources as

well as its appeal for peaceful rise (Kurlantzick 2007, 71). This perception has seen China gradually return to its original function as a regional superpower where it benevolently exercises power thus influencing the politics of the region (Kang 2007, 87). Currently foreign policies by Japan and the US have focused on military planning, strong alliances, controlling the exports and even increasing engagement with South Korea, Japan and the US.

These are measures suggested in worst-case scenario of addressing China's rise. However, the idealistic policies have aimed at increasing the ideologies of democracy, promotion of the liberal market economics and safeguarding human rights in China (He 2007, 2). These policies come from the concept of the globalization-peace hypothesis, which speculate a process of development that begin from the lowest level (the agrarian level) then grow to become a global economy leading to the sustained economic development and rise of the middle class and the democratic government. The hypothesis posits that, in a world of democracy, there is no fight between nations. In this perspective, efforts to exercise democracy would eventually result in peaceful relations with other states (Goh 2007, 116).

This makes the core logic behind the liberalization of trade and facilitation of China's membership in the world trade organization as well as other international and regional institutions like ASEAN. Communication has also been encouraged through this policy like the Beijing talks on a number of fronts (Goh 2007, 116). There is, however, a negative perception of accommodation with many nations remaining reserved on the issue and not overly balancing against China (Goh 2007, 114; Mochizuki 2007, 230). Other

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countries are afraid that by declaring hard stances they could be the target of larger and more aggressive powers like China. Containment: this is the third policy measure. The policy of containment bases itself on the argument that is incumbent upon the current powerful states to restrict the ambitions of the emerging powers. Accommodation or accepting new powers increases their ambitions. The existing powers will have to engage in war if the rising powers have to be checked (Mochizuki 2007, 230).

In this regard, the rise of China is a force of destabilizing the international politics. The rapid progress of China can result in unpredictable and risky phase of superpower rivalry where China will be competing for power from states like Japan and the US (Emmott 2008, 58). Containing China has the support of states that deem China as a threat. Japan has been supporting this view so that there is a foreign policy of deterrence and containment of China's growth. This seems similar to the Cold War containment strategy that used military to extend political and economic issues.

China's economy rise provided resources that have seen it strengthen its military (Emmott 2008, 58). At the end of Cold War and rapprochement of Russia since its collapse and focus is shifting to China. With the US troops in South Korea and Japan's seeming perception that China is a threat, China has continued to arm itself in preparation for conflict. Investment in the military is quite extravagant in China (69). Still conflict between China and Japan or China and the US remains a possibility particularly considering the unsettled historical issues that China has with Japan and the US (Gries 2004, 102). For a state like South Korea, containment and engagement are unrealistic policies since there is no nation that can manage or afford to

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singly deal with China's rise in economic terms. No evidence is available to indicate that South Korea has been working on containment (Gries 2004, 102). Furthermore, that would be extremely expensive and perilous that even powerful and richer states cannot initiate (the US Security 2005, 6).

South Korea remains with hedging and accommodation as policies to deal with China's rise. Best Policy for addressing the issue of China as a rising power is accommodation. It is accepted knowledge that China will become a superpower in the next 20 to 30 years (Gries 2004, 102). The US, South Korea and Japan have agreed this fact though they still have a problem of accepting that China will not harm them once it has risen despite the highly popularize "peaceful rise" premise. Besides the reasons highlighted in the essay, there are other sensitive reasons that have caused this disquiet and comfortlessness among its neighbors (the US Security 2005, 6).

The China's rise has reshaped power statuses in the region hence challenges the usual perception of China (Emmott 2008, 58). The usual superiority complex felt by Japan and South Korea is no more. It is risky and costly to contain China. Besides, China has not openly shown any indications of attacking others though it continues to make much exaggerated investment in military (Gries 2004, 102).

To prove it was a responsible player in international politics, China has actively involved in regional organizational agreements and has acted on the recommendation by concerned states to prove it has been genuine in its dealings (Gill 2007, 79; Kynge 2006, 66).

Conclusion

Different nations experience China's rise differently. Japan and South Korea have had complex interactions with China's regimes in history. The rising of China causes fascinating insights in the regional balance of power. With China warming up to the US's and South Korea's policies, the possibility of enforcing containment as policy for dealing with China diminishes. China is increasingly interdependent with South Korea and the US. It is also in support of the regional organizations that bring it in close ties with Japan. The consequences of containing China will hence be higher incongruity in scope.

Accommodation resulting in integration is, therefore, the best way of handling China's rise, as this will bring competition that is more positive and responsible economic and security developments.

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