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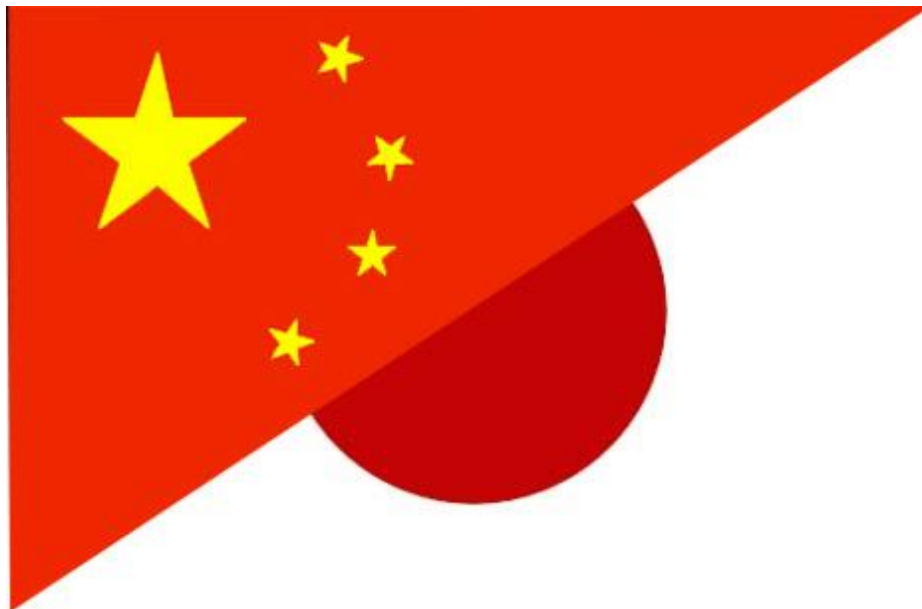
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The extent to which Japanese soft power is effective in Japan-China relations

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Abstract

The focus of this research is in the area of Japanese soft power in Japan-China relations.

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The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the extent to which Japanese soft power is effective on the bilateral relationship. Such a study is important in order to clarify how Japanese culture serves as a base for bilateral interactions and what types of problems are encountered in the promotion of Japanese soft power in China.

The research approach adopted in this dissertation includes constructivism, realism, interpretivism and induction. The findings from this research provide evidence that Japanese soft power contributes to an improvement in Japan-China relations from Japanese perspectives, whereas historical issues undermine the efficacy of Japanese soft power from Chinese perspectives. The main conclusion drawn from this study is that although Japanese culture is likely to be accepted by Chinese young people, it is necessary for Japanese citizens to look squarely to the history of war, in order to improve the Japanese image in China and enhance trustworthy relationship.

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this research

In 2012 and 2013 when high tensions between Japan and China arose from territorial disputes, the researcher had the good fortune of interacting with Chinese students in the U.K. While Japanese, British and other countries' media were emphasising the imminent outbreak of an armed conflict, those Chinese students who made friends with the researcher tended to show favour towards Japanese culture. For example, according to the Financial Times (2012), 'Hu Jintao, China's outgoing president, has called for the country to become a "maritime power" in language that will fuel concerns among its neighbours and in the US over how it deals with a host of territorial disputes', whereas all respondents of a questionnaire the researcher conducted in the U.K. unanimously agreed that Japanese modern culture is quite popular among Chinese young people. Furthermore, the latest data from the Genron not-for-profit organisation indicates that those Chinese having a negative image of Japan rose from 64.5% to 92.8% between 2012 and in 2013, but most of the respondents to this survey said that Japanese soft power has contributed to an improvement in Japan-China relations. Then, the researcher came to wonder how Japanese soft power is effective in Japan-China relations and decided to analyse the extent to which Japanese soft power is effective in improving the Japanese image in China.

1.2. History of soft power in Japan-China relations

For more than two thousand years, Japan and China have been interacting, exchanging information and affecting each other culturally, economically and politically. As the Chinese tributary system included Japan as well as the Korean peninsula, Japanese leaders paid tribute to the rulers of China in order to obtain knowledge of distant events and technology. Although sharing ideas helped the then Japan's development, the long-term unequal relationship contributed to fostering a sense of discrimination against Japan among many Chinese people (Vyas, 2011, p65). In the late 19th century, however, Japanese modernisation and Chinese decline reversed a one-way flow of ideas and soft power from China to Japan (Vyas, 2011, p65). After the Meiji Restoration, Japan established its original modern style, which China attempted to adopt by sending thousands of Chinese students, including future leaders, to Japan. In modern times, the

contrast of economic development between the two countries became clear, leading many Japanese people to disdain Chinese people and their culture. The above-mentioned superiority complex both Chinese and Japanese people have, has sometimes been an obstacle to the relationship between the two countries, and it seems that it will not be easily removed (Vyas, 2011, p66).

In modern times, as Vyas (2011, p68) argues, non-governmental organisations, such as Japanese NGOs and the Japan Medical Association, play a significant role in constructing and maintaining the links between the diplomatically and politically estranged countries, laying the foundation of the later blossoming exchange between the two countries. Following the normalisation of diplomatic ties between Japan and China, cultural exchange programmes were started, which promoted cultural interaction between Japan and China and strengthened the ties between them. In the 1970s and the 1980s, while Deng Xiaoping launched and advanced the policy of reform and of opening doors, there was a change in awareness of Japan among Chinese citizens, with increasing disclosure of information and increasing contact with the outside world, including Japan (Mouri, Zhang and Yang, 2004, p55). Chinese viewpoints of Japan have become diversified during the subsequent years, with the spread of the Internet and economic globalisation. Despite the fact that Chinese domestic reforms allow Chinese people to receive Japan's soft power, however, there are still many causes for concern about the growing tension between Japan and China. In particular, since the Tiananmen Square Incident (1989), the Chinese authorities have increased its reliance on nationalism in order to enhance its legitimacy ((Downs and Saunders, 2011, p131)). This essay will focus on the relationship between the diversification and Japan's soft power in the following sections.

1.3. Methodology

This essay will define power, hard power and soft power, and explore an international theory, or constructivism, in section 2. The researcher will analyse the Japanese perspective of soft power in China by studying a government-level organ – the Japan Foundation – and a non-government-level organ – the Japan-China Friendship Association in sections 3 and 4 respectively. In section 5, this paper will look into the extent to which the Internet has an influence on Japanese soft power in China. After evaluating the Japanese standpoint on Japanese soft power in China, the researcher will

study the findings from the questionnaire in which 16 Chinese students in Leeds participated. Employing idealism, social interpretivism and induction, the paper will investigate the extent to which Japan's soft power has helped improve the links between both countries in the following sections. In addition, the researcher will examine the Chinese perspective of Japanese soft power in reference to the latest data of an opinion poll conducted by the Genron not-for-profit organisation.

Section 2: Definition of soft power and theories of power in international relations

2.1. Introduction

In this section, the researcher explores the definition of power, hard power and soft power respectively, and investigates theories of power in international relations. Following the comparison of hard and soft power, this paper demonstrates viewpoints of constructivism, through which Japanese soft power in China is analysed.

2.2. Definition of power

When it comes to studying soft power in bilateral relations, it is quite important to define what soft power is, and investigate its limits and effects. In this section, the essay will first of all briefly explore the definition of power itself, compare hard power and soft power, and then analyse the effects of soft power, based on which the paper will introduce two power theories – realism and constructivism – in international relations in order to establish a theoretical basis for the understanding of soft power. In addition, since this essay deals with Japan-China relations, a focus is put on the definition of soft power in terms of international relations. In the case of international relations, power can be interpreted as what Keohane and Nye (1989, p11) call 'the ability of an actor to get others to do something they otherwise would not do'. This is an elusive concept because there are a multitude of factors which affect or are mixed up in the ability to gain what actors want to get. In order to further clarify the notion of power, thus it is essential to 'specify what is involved in power (the scope of power) as well as what topics are involved in power (the domain of power)' (Nye, 2011, p6). In this essay, the scope will be the Japan Foundation and the domain will be its activities in China, both of which will be analysed in the following sections. In addition, it is crucial to specifically state the resources of power, whether tangible or intangible, and investigate the strategies and skillful leadership of using power.

2.3. Definition of hard power

Based on the above-mentioned concept of power, this essay proceeds to define and consider hard power. Hard power can be associated with what Nye (2004, p5) calls 'inducements (carrots) or threats (sticks)'. More precisely speaking, hard power can be defined as the ability to make use of force or coercion to obtain a desired outcome,

according to Vyas (2011, p39). Coercive hard power is the traditional basis of the idea of power, which was assumed to be the only concept of power before soft power emerged as a concept. Generally speaking, as Nye (2011, p21) says, the resources of hard power are likely to be associated with 'tangibles, such as military, money and petroleum'. In other words, coercive hard power can be characterised by the use of the military and the imposition of economic sanctions. At this point, it should be noted that even if hard power is utilised indirectly, the users can force a targeted country to behave in a desired way. A prime example is the nuclear deterrent during the Cold War. The possession of nuclear weapons produced the fear of the ultimate war, leading to 'vast reserves of nuclear weapons in both the U.S. and the Soviet Union' (Sagan, 1996 cited in Vyas, p39). Even after the end of the Cold War, Vyas (2011, p40) argues that hard power is still highly valued because if nations are under direct attack or potential attack, hard power is quite useful and effective. However, it came to be realised, especially after the end of the Cold War, that hard power alone does not always produce desired outcomes. In the case of the Iraqi war, for example, the U.S. military invasion undermined its credibility because of its inefficiency of occupation and its abuses, according to Joseph Nye (2011, p86). At the same time, it came to be found that it is sometimes possible to gain desired outcomes without any tangible threats or payoffs (Nye, 2004, p6).

2.4. Definition of soft power

Although this way of attaining outcomes has existed for a long time, it had not been recognised as a concept of power until Joseph Nye coined the term – soft power. Soft power is by definition 'the ability to shape the preferences of others', according to Nye (2004, p5). In other words, power emanating from intangible assets – attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions – induces others to follow or change in a way the user of power desires. Nye (2004, p6) further argues that, 'soft power is more than just persuasion or the ability to move people by argument'. Whereas hard power results from threat or payments as shown in the preceding paragraph, soft power represents co-optive activities occurring between nations, and affects the practices and norms of those nations, according to Vyas (2011, p39). In this essay, 'co-optive' means people receiving and voluntarily adopting ideas and information for their own use. The epitomes of co-optive activities are cultural exchanges, educational exchange and political and economic co-operation through which nations can build up and reinforce a

mutual relationship. In addition, Vyas (2011, p40) states that soft power is closely related to the attractiveness of a country's identity, including a country's habits, practices and image. In fact, since 'anti-Japan sentiment is still swirling in China' (Yang, 2004, p64), it seems to be inevitable to carry out research into the relationship between Japan's soft power and Japan's image among Chinese people. To further clarify the concept of soft power, it is necessary to analyse the degree of the softness of power, which this essay will deal with in the next paragraph.

2.5. Degree of the softness of power

It is quite difficult to measure the degree of the softness of power because the relationship between power types and behaviour types is not always absolute. In fact, there are some cases where countries follow others that have commanding power. For example, Hujiwara (2006, p143) believes that the Japanese government subserviently supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq, believing the myth that following the U.S. would allow Japan to defend its national interests. In addition, the usage of power is another factor that makes it difficult to measure the degree of the softness of power. Although the resources that produce soft power rest with intangibles, such as culture, political value and foreign policy, the degree of power changes according to policies or usage. For instance, economic resources are sources of both hard and soft power. As Nye (2011, p21) discusses, economic assistance can create and strengthen a relationship of trust, whereas economic sanctions aim at coercing targeted countries, such as Iran and North Korea, to behave in a desired way. Therefore, it can be seen that certain power resources are not always absolutely associated with types of power. Still, it is possible to categorise power into hard and soft power, if attention is carefully paid to the fact that soft power is accompanied by the voluntary action of a targeted country. This criterion serves as an indicator of the softness of power because, as Nye (2004, p90) mentions, 'soft power rests on credibility'. Credibility can be gained with voluntary consent, but not under coercion. For example, although democracy and human rights policy can enhance the attractiveness of the U.S., imposing them on other countries would cause repulsion, as shown in the Iraq War. In short, the extent to which the power used includes co-optive activities greatly affects the entire spectrum of behaviour from coercion to attraction. In this context, it is necessary to clarify the definition of the attraction of power. Although it is important to explore the viewpoint of the party exercising power, the crux of the matter is that from

the viewpoint of the parties being influenced by the power, the voluntariness of consent depends on whether the power being exercised accords with their own interests. In other words, Ogura (2006, p49) argues that, '[n]o matter how attractive a given country may be, other countries will not accept its attractive power if it obstructs their freedom of action or adversely affects their economic interests'. As Nye (2004, p12) points out, for instance, Hollywood movies are subject to – whether partial or total – restriction in some countries, such as France and Muslim countries because their attractiveness can be detrimental to their national interests. This example demonstrates that the justness and legitimacy of the exercise of soft power stems from the judgment of those being affected by that power. When this essay assesses the degree of the softness of power, it is thus essential to analyse the softness of power from the perspective of those subjects on the receiving end of power as well as that of the party utilising power.

2.6. Characteristics of soft power

Based on that basic principle of soft power, it is possible to enumerate three characteristics of soft power's effects as follows. The first is that, unlike hard power, soft power has long-lasting effects. For example, the promotion of exchanges and dialogue between countries makes it less likely for people to embrace mistrust and prejudice, and contributes to deepening mutual understanding and learning about different cultures, thus leading to 'a less chance of conflict based on irrational fear of the unknown' (Flack 1976, Mukai 2003, cited in Vyas, p53). It should also noted be that it takes a long time to implement and see the effects of soft power, however. As mentioned before, soft power is thus much less effective than hard power when nations are in dire situations, such as an imminent attack. The second aspect is that 'the building up of soft power increases benefits rather than incurs particular costs', according to Vyas. (2011, p54). In the long term, in effect, it can establish a basis for highly profitable exercises, such as international trade and exchanging of ideas. In contrast, the use of hard power may incur a lot of financial costs. For example, according to the Los Angeles Times (2013, March), the U.S. is facing financial costs from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars that are estimated to amount to between $4 trillion and $6 trillion. The last aspect of soft power's effects is that soft power is likely to work well in a relatively open society. In other words, since soft power is based on the exchange of information and goods, Vyas (2011, p54) maintains that the effects of soft power can be reduced or unseen in nations where the transmission of

information is closely controlled. In global politics, the degree of the openness of society has been growing more and more important because Nye (2004, p75) argues that, 'power is passing from the "capital-rich" to the "information-rich"', with communication technology dramatically improving worldwide.

2.7. International theory - Constructivism

Considering the above-mentioned three characteristics of soft power's effects, it seems that soft power theory can fit into constructivism, while soft power approaches are theoretically inconsistent with realism approaches, for the following three reasons.

First of all, as Dent (2008, p32) argues, constructivism emphasises non-materials, such as ideas, values, beliefs and identity-formation, based on which it analyses international phenomena and relationships. In other words, 'constructivism focuses on shared ideas of self and other in society' (Rathus, 2011, p28). On the other hand, realism depicts international affairs as a struggle for power among self-interested states, according to Walt (1998, p31). At this point, a constructive approach can be more consistent with a soft power approach that is closely associated with a non-materialistic exchange, especially culture. Furthermore, there is a significant difference between constructivism and realism because Nye (2004, p8) argues that realists are prone to highly value tangibles, such as military resources, power resources and manpower resources, and to ignore intangibles, such as culture, value and the attractiveness of identities. It is true that since soft power is just one way to gain desired outcomes in global politics (Nye, 2011, p82), Watanabe (2011, p46) maintains that soft power – for example, in the form of public relations – has been utilised in the field of warfare. However, in theory, since realist approaches highly value the importance of tangibles and underestimate that of intangibles in international relations, it is reasonable to argue that soft power approaches fit into constructivism approaches more than realist approaches.

The second point is that since they are based on non-materialistic exchange, constructive approaches are closely associated with what Dent (2008, p33) calls 'the sense of regionness'. As an exchange of information is progressing, the notion of regional community can begin to form in a certain region. A prime example is the creation of the European Union. Vyas (2011, p53) argues that the multitude of cultural and political exchanges and programmes between its members has contributed to creating regional cohesion. As a result, Nye (2011, p85) believes that the European Community has gained

a reputation of being a paradigm of world cooperation, attracting once communist countries, such as Slovakia, Czech and Poland, and leading to their voluntary democratisation. Given the example of the European Union, it is obvious that the emergence of a sense of 'regionness' emanating from sharing common values can contribute to the promotion of international interactions in terms of politics as well as culture. In case of Japan-China relations, sharing cultural values, including Confucianism, forms the cultural and social framework in which Japanese soft power can play a significant role in China. A prime example is that Chinese and Japanese identical written characters contribute to the creation of cultural affinity among Chinese people, who are more likely to accept Japanese culture than other countries, such as the U.S. and European countries, which have few cultural aspects in common (Christensen, 2011). This case demonstrates that the sense of 'regionness' began to arise in terms of culture, though Rathus (2011, p29) holds that political mistrust is still an obstacle to the formation of high levels of inter-societal trust between Japan and China. In short, it is evident that regional identity is closely related to soft power. Therefore, it is the perspective of constructivism that can explain how Japanese soft power affects Japan-China relations.

Finally, in addition to the emergence of a sense of 'regionness', it is crucial to note that constructivist approaches describe states as consisting of many and different actors, and not a single actor, according to Vyas (2011, p56). In fact, the emergence of regionalism is closely associated with a wide range of institutions, which Rathus (2011, p29) says are 'a material manifestation of the underlying regional ideational structure … of the regional identity'. In other words, the sense of 'regionness' is not created by one single factor. In examining Japan-China relations, it is thus quite important to focus on the different roles and activities of multitudinous agents. Thus, this paper employs constructivism approaches to investigate actors that are involved in Japan-China relations. Such actors can be classified into state- and non-state level organs, each of which will be looked into in section 3 and section 4 respectively. State-level agents, such as the Japan Foundation, are dependent on the government's foreign policy, whereas non-state-level ones, such as the Japan-China Friendship Association, are completely independent from the state. The viewpoint of constructivism can expound those different roles and characteristics. In order to clarify how agents utilise Japanese soft power in China, it can thus be argued that constructivism is the most pertinent theory.

Considering those above-mentioned three points of constructivism, it can be said

that constructivism provides a basis for the theoretical understanding of soft power in international relations. Then, based on the above-mentioned basic principles of soft power and international theory, namely constructivism, the following sections will analyse Japan's soft power in China.

Section 3: The state-level agent; The Japan Foundation

3.1. Introduction

In this section the author analyses Japanese soft power from the perspective of Japan. As constructivism goes, the state – Japan in this paper – consists of a variety of organisations that transmit Japanese soft power to China. The relevant Japanese institutions can be classified into two types; a state-level agent and a non-state-level agent. Then, this section explores the characteristics of the state-level agent and the non-state-level agent, and investigates how a Japanese state-level organ sends Japanese soft power to China.

3.2. Characteristics of the state-level agent and the non-state-level agent

It may be a matter of course that different level agents have diverse characteristics, especially in terms of purposes, methods and aims. For example, a state-level agent that is usually associated with governments and their foreign policies is likely to have broad remits, whereas a non-state-level agent is likely to have narrowly defined purposes, according to Vyas (2011, p 130). Vyas (2011, p6) further maintains that the state-level institution works as a bureaucratic faction of government and thus can be regarded as an integral part of the state, whereas a non-state institution controls its own finances and actions, and thus can be seen as being independent from the state. Out of many organisations, the Japan Foundation is a pertinent example of a state-level agent of Japan's soft power, while the Japan-China Friendship Association is a prime example of a non-state-level agent, as will be examined in the next section.

3.3. History of the Japan Foundation

According to Vyas (2011, p79), the Japan Foundation has its roots in the *Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai* (KBS), which was a Japanese agency set up in 1934 with the aim of '[promoting] the "Great East Asia Prosperity Sphere"', [especially] the production of language materials for the areas under Japanese occupation at the time, but 'its activities were drastically curtailed' after the end of World War Two. As a result, cultural activities for the promotion of Japanese soft power abroad began to taper off. However, through social and economic vicissitudes such as the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games and a high rate of economic growth, it came to be realised that Japanese influence was still weak in terms of diplomacy and culture for its economic scale in international society. Furthermore, as Vyas (2011, p80) points out, 'Nixon shocks' – the normalisation of U.S. and China relations and unpegging the value of the dollar from the price of gold without notifying Japan in advance – caused the necessity to improve on the serious communication with

the U.S., Japan's closest ally. Following those incidents, there had been a discussion about establishing an organ that would promote Japanese culture abroad. According to the Japan Foundation's historical information, in 1972 when the normalisation of Japan-China diplomatic relations was reached, the Japan Foundation was established as a government-affiliated corporation (*tokushu-hojin*) under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and was turned into an independent administrative corporation (*dokuritsu-gyosei-hojin*) in 2003.

3.4. Activity of the Japan Foundation as a state organ

Based on the wide network established by MOFA, and more than 20 overseas and domestic branches, the Foundation, basically as a governmental institution, follows MOFA's policies and goals, with the purpose of promoting Japanese ideas and culture abroad, and then enhancing diplomatic relations. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), 'through the Japan Foundation, [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs] is dispatching Japanese language education specialists overseas, carrying out training within Japan for overseas Japanese instructors and students, donating and developing Japanese language education materials and holding Japanese speech contests at overseas diplomatic establishments'. One example is that the Japanese Language Test of Proficiency (JLTP) has been used to promote the Japanese language in China. The JLTP is an internationally recognised test of Japanese, which is mainly designed to measure academic ability in Japanese. According to the Japan Foundation's Beijing Office, those taking the test have dramatically increased in number from around 87,000 in 2003 to 330,000 in 2009. Vyas (2011, p96) argues that the increase in these numbers is due to the credibility of the Japan Foundation, though is partly attributed to the general improvement in literacy due to Chinese modernisation and economic growth. As the statistics (the JLTP website) indicate that around 60% of examinees want to join university courses and find jobs, the JLTP has a highly probative value as a language test. Since the Japan Foundation is a state agent, the Japanese government adopts the JLTP as an official proof of Japanese ability when non-Japanese take national exams, such as dentists, nurses, pharmacists and so on, according to the JLTP website. Although those Chinese wanting to find such jobs in Japan are obliged to take the JLTP, it can be argued that the Japanese language is an attractive soft power source, not least because Vyas (2011, p96) maintains that they want to learn Japanese for their own purposes, such as business and education in a voluntary

manner. In short, being a state organ enables the foundation to serve as go-between for those Chinese who are attracted to Japan and the attractive soft power – Japanese.

3.5. Exchange programmes of the Japan Foundation

In addition to the Japanese language test, the Japan Foundation has increasingly promoted Japanese culture in China, such as by sending Japanese music and dance performance groups since the restoration of diplomatic ties between Japan and China. At the early stages, the cultural exchange was not a one-way process but was reciprocal, not least because cultural infiltration by Japan could cause 'a certain wariness on the Chinese side' due to the historical fact that 'during the Japanese occupation of China, Japanese culture had been forcibly introduced into China' (Vyas, 2011, p89). In other words, the Japan Foundation was likely to face a sense of resistance against Japanese culture among Chinese. However, as Vyas (2011, p90) maintains, the demand for learning Japanese and the popularity of Japanese culture dramatically increased in China, as Japan came to be regarded as a model of development for China, especially during the 1980s. The economic growth of Japan, especially in the 1980s, led to an exponential increase in Japanese learners in China. In addition, in terms of culture, an insufficient supply of domestic children's entertainment programmes in the 1980s, and digital piracy in the 1990s elevated the popularity of Japanese pop culture among the younger generation in China (Nakno, 2008, p113). In response to the willingness of Chinese people to accept and digest Japanese ideas, information and culture, the Japan Foundation created a guideline of Japanese education in China and established a new institute – the Beijing Centre for Japanese Studies, according to The Japan Foundation, leading to a foundation from which to transmit Japan's modern ideas and information. Vyas (2011, p90) argues that even when the Japanese economy began to become stagnant in the 1990s, the expansion of economic exchanges, including the Japanese outsourcing of production to China, augmented the number of Japanese ideas and information promoted in China. In short, rapid Japanese economic growth and increasing economic exchange between Japan and China have provided the opportunities to expand cultural exchange, which the Japan Foundation has exploited in order to facilitate Japan-China relations.

3.6. Effects of the exchange programmes

It may be debatable whether the cultural activities by the Japan Foundation are

directly linked to the improvement of Japan-China relations. However, it is obvious that they have 'indirectly' affected the bilateral relations in a positive way. According to the Japan Foundation, there are a wide range of cultural activities provided by the Japan Foundation, such as the promotion of Japanese language, the promotion of television and film, the promotion of traditional arts and popular culture, and holding conferences and seminars. Among these cultural activities is the promotion of a student exchange programme in China that seems to be the most crucial factor for improving the bilateral relations in terms of diplomacy. Precisely speaking, as a part of Japanese language education, exchanges of students, artists and scholars, which are what Iriye (1996, p56) calls 'people-to-people diplomacy', can greatly affect international relations in the long term because those studying in Japan are likely to be future business and political leaders (Betzler and Austin, 1997 cited in Vyas, 2011). For example, Kitto (2012, p6) believes that Zhou Enlai, the first premier of the People's Republic of China, who studied in Japan for approximately two years, is said to have had a 'special' feeling for Japan, and devoted himself to the normalisation of Japan-China diplomatic relations. The Zhou Enlai case can be applicable to the activities of the Japan Foundation. In fact, the latest example was in 2013 when Wang Yi, who completed his doctorates in Japan and can speak Japanese fluently, was appointed as Foreign Minister, being expected to deal with 'the alarming deterioration of Japan-China relations, triggered by a territorial dispute' (Liu, 2013). Thus, it can be said that cultural exchange supported by the Japan Foundation is likely to have a positive effect on international relations.

3.7. Japanese animation in Hong Kong

In addition to those two elite-level exchanges, Japanese pop culture promoted by the Japan Foundation has the potential to improve Japan-China ties. These days, the Foundation has been promoting Japanese pop culture in China, which can possibly create a positive image of Japan, especially among young people. One example is Hong Kong, which was the first Chinese city to broadcast Japanese television series. A former British leasehold began to import Japanese pop culture earlier than mainland China, and consequently the young people were influenced earlier than those on the mainland. In 2005, for example, a senior government official from the Home Affairs Bureau delivered a speech at the opening ceremony for the Hong Kong-Japan Year, recalling her memories of Japanese cartoons (Nakano, 2008, p 125). This case shows that exposure to Japanese

culture has affected children – the would-be opinions of leaders – and contributed to the creation of a positive image among Hong Kong citizens. Certainly, it is difficult to compare China to Hong Kong because they have different political systems and different levels of freedom of speech. However, considering that in 1980 Japanese pop culture, such as cartoons and animation, began to be imported into mainland China, it may be possible that the growing import of Japanese culture is gradually building a positive image of Japan among Chinese children, the would-be opinions of leaders in the decades to come.

Judging from the above-mentioned two cases, it can be clear that the cultural activities supported by the Japan Foundation indirectly contribute to improving Japan-China relations, with its activities cultivating influential young elites in China, and possibly fostering a positive image of Japan among Chinese citizens.

3.8. Limitations of the Japan Foundation as a state-level agent

Despite the above-mentioned successes, however, there have been problems since the Japan Foundation has served as a state organ. As Vyas (2011, p102) argues, the infiltration of Japanese soft power into China may be limited, if it is regarded as a mere state organ or a mere governmental agency. The reason is that since the Foundation acts as a state agency under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, as mentioned before, the Foundation's funding activities are vulnerable to diplomatic affairs. In case of Japan-China relations, in particular, there are a great deal of sensitive issues, such as territorial disputes and historical issues, which place a limit on cultural activities organised by the Japan Foundation. With growing anti-Japanese sentiment in 2008, for example, a Japanese language course that was supposed to be held at some Chinese universities was cancelled for fear that identifying the supporting organisation with a Japanese governmental organ would fuel anti-Japanese sentiment (Vyas, 2011, p91). This example demonstrates that being a governmental agent can restrict the latitude of activities organised by the Japan Foundation in China, though its activities, as shown before, have been – whether partially or indirectly – conductive to the enhancement of Japan-China relations. As a matter of course, in contrast, a non-state-level agent has such limitations when acting in China. In the next section, then, it will be investigated how a non-state-level organ serves as a conduit of Japanese soft power in China and to what extent its activities affect Japan-China relations.

Section 4: The non-state-level agent: The Japan-China Friendship Association

4.1. Introduction

This section also analyses Japanese soft power from the viewpoint of Japan. While section 3 dealt with a governmental organ, or the Japan Foundation, this section researches a non-governmental organ, or the Japan-China Friendship Association by exploring

characteristics of the non-state-level agent and studying how the Japan-China Friendship Association acts as a transmitter of Japanese soft power to China.

4.2. Characteristics of the non-state-level agent

In Japan-China relations, non-state-level organs are as important actors as state-level organs. Although they serve as actors which are independent from a state, there are several types of organisation, such as a for-profit (company) and a not-for-profit organisation (NGO). This section concentrates on NGO-type agents for the subject of research on non-state organs because as Vyas (2011, p9) states, 'NGOs tend to reflect the ideals of their members more' than other types of organisation, especially companies, in Japan-China relations. Furthermore, as Vyas (2011, p9) maintains, NGOs are usually likely to prioritise the creation of a positive image of mutual benefit rather than the pursuit of profits that companies value so highly. Thus, it can be said that it is appropriate to choose NGOs for the subject of study on non-state-level organs. Among many Japanese NGOs working in China is the Japan-China Friendship Association, which seems to be a pertinent example for closely examining how the Japanese NGOs transmit Japanese soft power to China. The reason is that that compared with other Japanese NGOs, this non-state organization has a long history and has greatly contributed to creating links between Japan and China. Then, this section will briefly explore the characteristics and activities of the Japan-China Friendship Association (JCFA), and analyse how it has acted as a non-state organ vis-à-vis the state organ – the Japan Foundation.

4.3. The history of the Japan-China Friendship Association

The establishment of the JCFA dates back to 1949, when the Chinese Communist Party had taken power and the first meeting was held, according to the Japan-China Friendship Association. Following these events, there was the first conference that a wide range of delegates, including politicians, business people, artists and academics, attended. The stated aims of the JCFA are to deepen mutual understanding between Japan and China and promote an amicable relationship, contributing to the peace and development of Japan, China and the world, according to the Japan-China Friendship Association. On the basis of these aims, the organisation has launched a multitude of activities designed to promote Japanese soft power in China and consequently conducive to strengthening links between the two nations. Before the normalisation of Japan-China diplomatic relations,

'the activities and efforts on the part of the JCFA during the 1950s undoubtedly improved its standing with the Chinese authorities and contributed towards its later efforts to convey Japanese ideas and soft power to China' (Vyas, 2011, p143). By 1958, for example, the JCFA had given assistance to the identification and return of those Japanese stranded in China after the war and helped approximately 35,000 Japanese people return to Japan in cooperation with the Red Cross, Beijing Broadcasting and other NGOs, according to the Japan-China Friendship Association. As a result of these activities, the independent agent gained a reputation in China as well as Japan, further promoting exchanges between the two nations.

4.4. The role of the Japan-China Friendship Association

Furthermore, Vyas (2011, p145) says that the dispatch of cultural coterie, such as traditional Japanese *kabuki* dance groups, was organised, and a youth exchange programme was carried out, which are said to have paved the way to cultural exchanges and mutual understanding. These activities played a significant role in Japan-China relations in the absence of diplomatic relations during the period 1949 to 1972. In addition to cultural interactions, it is important to note the support of the JCFA for international trade with China. In 1952, when the first Japan-China Non-Governmental Trade Agreement had been signed, the JCFA in particular greatly contributing to establishing trade links and exchanges with China, Japan – the Yoshida Cabinet – decided to comply with the order from the U.S. to impose a complete economic embargo on China (Wang, 2004, p39). Since the then Japanese government had no diplomatic relations with China, it was impossible that governmental organisations would act to promote Japan-China relations. Since the normalisation of Japan-China relations in 1972, the JCAF has expanded its cultural exchange activities between Japan and China, ranging from Japanese education, to young people's exchange programmes, to sports exchanges. As Vyas (2011, p149) mentions, among the many activities it is the youth exchange that seems to be more closely associated with Japanese soft power. In 2005, for instance, the JCFA cooperated with the JICA to hold a one-week seminar in which 80 Chinese students participated. As mentioned in the preceding section, it can be anticipated that youth exchange activities will lead to the reinforcement of political, business and cultural ties because participants are usually likely to be future political, business and cultural leaders. Thus, it can be seen that the JCFA has greatly contributed to promoting Japanese soft

power in China.

4.5. The difference between the JCFA and the Japan Foundation

When it comes to a comparison of the JCFA with the Japan Foundation, an important point to note is that the JCFA is a non-governmental agency, whereas the Japan Foundation is a governmental one. That difference can underscore the different efficacy of soft power transmitted by these two organisations. Although both organisations support similar activities, especially cultural interaction, each of them can be characterised by this difference. Then, this paper chronologically explores what the JCFA has done in Japan-China relations since its establishment.

During the period from 1949 – the time the JCFA was established – to 1972 – the time the normalisation of Japan-China relations was reached, the Japanese government officially deemed Taiwan as a de jure government of China. As a matter of course it was thus impossible that a official trade agreement between the two governments would be signed. However, calls for economic ties with mainland China, especially from business interests, were strong, as evidenced by the fact that, as Iriye (1996, p53) says, 'the bilateral trade did even go on'. Then, the trade framework, which Wang (2004, p8) calls 'the separation of politics and economics (*seikei-bunri*) in Japan', was adopted by the Japanese government, though drawing stringent criticism from domestic interests, as well as the Chinese authorities that hoped for the resumption of diplomatic ties. Under that framework, the JCFA, along with other NGOs such as the Japan Cultural Exchange Association, helped promote cultural interaction as well as trade exchanges with China. As a result, there was a great progress in bilateral relations, such as 'Japanese trade with mainland China [exceeds] that with Taiwan in 1956' (Iriye, 1996, p53), and '100 Japanese Diet members visited mainland China during the two years from 1955 to 1956' (Wang, 2004, p60). This example represents that the diplomacy by private citizens acted as a bridge between Japan and China in the absence of diplomatic relations. If state-level agencies, such as the Japan Foundation, had existed before 1972, it would have obviously been impossible that they played the same role because there were no diplomatic ties between the Japanese government and the Chinese authorities.

4.6. The superior points of the JCFA over the Japan Foundation

After the normalisation of Japan-China diplomatic ties, it seems that the activities

and exchanges of the JCFA were more effectively transmitting Japanese soft power to China than those of the Japan Foundation. As Vyas (2011, p145) mentions, it is true that the JCFA was unable to directly contribute to the process of normalisation, not least because some members, especially left-wing ones, did not reconcile with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). This case shows the case that a disagreement between a government and non-governmental organ sometimes cause problems. However, the fact of being a non-state agency gives the JCFA a great advantage over international interactions. Since the state is basically unable to intervene in the interests and activities of NGOs (Charnovitz, 2006, p 22), it seems that independence from the state can reduce the perceived degree of coerciveness in transmitting Japanese culture. As shown in section 3, the Japan Foundation is vulnerable to foreign political incidents, as long as it is a state-level actor. Its activities are likely to be regarded as coercive, just because the Foundation is linked with the government. On the other hand, the JCFA has served as a liaison with China, while substantially unaffected by foreign policies or a clash of interests. As Vyas (2011, p153) maintains, 'the Japan-China Friendship Association has certainly been representative of how knowledge of each other's countries' cultures, ideas and other attractions can help overcome enmity caused by state activities'. As a vital conduit of Japanese soft power, the JCFA has supported cultural interaction and exchanges with China, even when sensitive issues, such as territorial disputes and historical problems, came to discussion. In 2012, when territorial disputes broke out, for example, the JCFA increased and maintained its exchanges of Japanese and Chinese youth, business people and politicians, even while political ties were worsening, according to the Japan-China Friendship Association.

4.7. A theoretical analysis of the JCFA and the Japan Foundation

In contrast to the Japan Foundation, which has suffered from a deterioration of political ties, the JCFA has been able to expand and maintain the connections between citizens in Japan and China. At first sight, it seems that diplomacy by a non-governmental agent serves as a more effective conduit of Japanese soft power than that by the Japan Foundation, considering that there are still political problems, such as territorial disputes, between the Japanese and Chinese governments. According to the view of constructivism, however, both organisations – the Japan Foundation and the Japan-China Friendship Association – are useful and necessary for Japanese soft power in China. Given that the

recipient – China – is willing to accept Japanese soft power, it can be seen that both Japanese organisations are important to Japanese soft power with a theoretical approach for the following two reasons. First, as the theory of constructivism describes in section 3, sharing ideas and information within a certain area can create a sense of what Dent (2008, p33) calls 'regionness'. The purposes and activities of the two Japanese international institutions aim at promoting that basic principle of constructivism in Japan-China relations. Thus, it can be said that they both serve as channels for Japanese soft power in China.

The second point, which may be more important, is related to the state consisting of a wide variety of institutions. As mentioned in section 3, on the one hand, being a state-organ adds credibility to the Japan Foundation, which manages the Japanese language test, whereas that type of credibility does not lie in the Japan-China Friendship Association because of its being a non-state-level organ. On the other hand, an agency under the control of the government is vulnerable to the effects of diplomatic situations, without which a non-governmental organisation can work effectively to build bilateral relations. In short, the Japan Foundation and the Japan-China Friendship Association are different but complementary organisations in Japan-China relations. Therefore, it can be argued that the two different types of cultural institutions are both crucial in promoting Japanese soft power in China.

Section 5: The Internet and soft power in China

5.1. Introduction

In this section, this essay examines how the Internet affects Japanese soft power in China. Following a general explanation of the Internet's influence on society, the researcher discusses both the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet for Japanese soft power in China as follows.

5.2. The association of the Internet and soft power

Since soft power is conceptually based on what Nye (2011, p21) calls intangibles, especially ideas and information, it seems to be reasonable to assume that the proliferation of the Internet has helped Japanese soft power infiltrate Chinese society. In this section, the extent to which the Internet is associated with Japanese soft power in China will be examined, after its advantages and disadvantages are both analysed based on examples.

5.3. The effectiveness of the Internet in society

The development and spread of information technology has transformed the way people share and use ideas and information. In particular, the introduction of the World Wide Web with its user-friendly surface has made the Internet accessible to a mass audience, thus causing a social change in various fields, such as politics, business and education. According to Joseph Nye (2004, p82), for example, 'the information revolution is bringing an end to the hierarchical bureaucratic organizations'. Advanced technology, especially the Internet, has made it difficult for the authorities – if not impossible – to control information, not least because, as Chase, Mulvenon and Hachigian (2006, p65) argue, '[the Internet] allows users to exchange information without a centralised point of contact'. With the use of the Internet, it is possible for ordinary citizens to gain access to information without media under the control of the government. As an illustration, 'the tide of mass protests that swept through the Middle East in early 2011 highlighted the distinct role of modern information-communication technologies (ICT) and digital social media tools and networks' (Stepanova, 2011 May, p1). This case demonstrates the change in the balance of power between authorities and citizens, along with which the world, including China, has seen a corresponding expansion of freedom of speech, to various degrees. Damm and Thomas (2006, p5) maintain that the number of Chinese Internet users has doubled every year since the mid-1990s, with Chinese Cyberspace the second largest in the world. As of 2013, China's population of Internet users has grown to 591 million, according to statistics presented by Time (2013, July 17). It is a well-known fact that the Chinese authorities attempt to place that huge virtual community under government surveillance, such as by '[deploying] an army of cyber-police, hardware engineers, software developers, web monitors and paid online propagandists to watch, filter, censor and guide Chinese Internet users', according to the

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Economist (2013, April 6th).

5.4.The effectiveness of the Internet in China

However, there is no denying that ideas and information relating foreign matters, especially business, education and culture, are readily available in Chinese contemporary society, considering the liberalisation of the media market. Tok (2010, p26) hold the view that market-oriented reforms in the Chinese press industry were made in the 1980s, while control over other types of media companies were gradually loosened. The media deregulation was attributed to the realisation that China's opening up to the outside world was an integral part of their economic growth. In order to attract foreign investment, it was necessary for the regime to integrate China into the global information infrastructure, including the Internet (Liu, 2011, p17; Chase, Mulvenon and Hachigian, 2006, p66). Thus, the Chinese regime, though prohibiting ideas deviating from its line, has encouraged the profit-driven media, and has even 'allowed financial cooperation with foreign sources', according to Harwit, Clark, Chase, Mulvenon and Hachigian. (2006, p28 p66). Unsurprisingly, despite strict restrictions on political matters, the opening-up policy was adopted by Chinese cyber policy because, as Chase, Mulvenon, and Hachigian (2006, p66) note, the Chinese regime believes that 'information technology is the driving force behind economic development', and 'an indispensable element of [its] quest for recognition as a great power'. In fact, the Chinese authorities have encouraged citizens to use the Internet mainly for business and education, both of which are expected to greatly contribute to economic growth. For example, online shoppers reached 194 hundred million in 2011, increasing by 20.8% compared with the end of the previous year, while online payment users and online bank users for the whole year increased to 167 hundred million and 166 hundred million respectively, according to the statistical report of the China Internet Network Information Centre (CNNIC) (2012, p5). Hence, it can be seen that the liberalisation of the Internet, even though some political content is restricted, has dramatically increased the volume and availability of information for Chinese citizens, who can then share ideas and information within China and without. In short, any online content not deemed to be 'offensive' and 'subversive' is so readily accessible that Chinese Internet users can gain knowledge of the outside world, including Japan.

5.5. The relationship between the Internet and Japanese soft power in China

In fact, as well as the Japan Foundation and the Japan-China Friendship Association, it seems that the Internet is a crucial factor which has promoted Japanese soft power in China, especially in terms of culture. Liu (2011, p25) argues that access to the Internet opens up gaps for information, such as films, dramas and soap operas, which used to be dominated by Chinese state and existing media. In other words, the Internet gives Chinese users easy access to Japanese materials, such as cartoons, animation and dramas. As a result, Nakno (2008, p115) state that, 'through extended exposure to Japanese anime and *manga*, Chinese children unconsciously experienced "Japan" in action'. As Tok (2010, p22) point out, it is true that Chinese education is associated with a negative image of Japan in order to prove the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party, which is said to have beaten Japanese militarism and liberated Chinese citizens. However, Japanese materials that are transmitted through the Internet can, to some extent, dispel misunderstandings and arouse a feeling of curiosity among Chinese people. For example, Nakano (2008, p117) say that the Japanese TV drama 'Tokyo Love Story', which was first broadcast in Shanghai, led many Chinese viewers – especially university students – to comprehend and hanker after the modern life-style of Japan (Tokyo). Although that drama was broadcast on television, it can easily be assumed that it was uploaded onto the Internet, which spread it across the whole of China and improved the Japanese image. The reason is that the Internet in China has become what Liu (2011, p48) calls an 'entertainment superhighway'. In other words, the Internet serves as a conduit of entertainment information in the same way as a highway serves as a conduit for vehicles. As Chase, Mulvenon and Hachigian (2006, p65) mentioned before, the Internet allows ordinary citizens to obtain information without existing media. For instance, thanks to relatively loose policies, as mentioned before, online video sites have greater freedom of content, of which microblogs and SNS have become important distribution sites in China, according to a statistical report by the China Internet Network Information Centre (2012, p45). Hence, as in the case of Japanese cartoons, animation and dramas, through the Internet ordinary Chinese citizens can bypass the state media and have easy access to ideas. Liu (2011, p48) further notes a high proportion of Chinese users' searches are for entertainment-oriented information, based on statistics indicating that 62.6% of the Chinese users go online for online videos. So it can be inferred from the above-quoted data that the Internet has facilitated the conveyance of Japanese pop culture – cartoons,

animation and dramas – to China, thereby arousing an admiration for Japanese culture among Chinese viewers. Thus, it can be argued that the Internet contributes to the creation of a positive image of Japan in China.

5.6. The Internet and a Japanese opinion leader in China

In addition to cartoons, animation and dramas, Japanese people, as well as Chinese, can have influence over Chinese public opinion through the Internet. The more information technology has progressed, the more opportunities Japanese people have gained to earn the confidence of Chinese people. One example is *Aoi Sora*, a Japanese porn actress. According to the Economist (2012, September 22, p67), on Chinese social media, she issued an appeal for angry Chinese demonstrators to calm down, and received sympathetic comments when territorial disputes broke out after the Japanese government decided to nationalise the disputed *Senkaku* islands in Japanese, or *Daioyu* in Chinese. The Economist's article (2012, September 22, p67) further said that, 'Ms. Aoi, unlike her government, has done nothing to hurt the feelings of the Chinese people, or at least the young men among them' and that, 'She has more than 13m followers on *Sina Weibo*, a Chinese microblog, and her public appearances have caused near-riots with a rare pro-Japanese slant'. This example shows that social media led the Japanese female actress to be an opinion leader in China and helped her create a positive image among young Chinese males.

According to the definition of soft power as formulated in section 2, these two cases can deemed to be Japanese soft power in China. Through the Internet, Chinese net users can have access to Japanese dramas, cartoons and animation, and voluntarily listen to the voice of a Japanese. In addition, these two cases demonstrate that the attractiveness of Japanese online materials and the Japanese porn star are, whether indirectly or directly, linked to the improvement of the Japanese image in China. As mentioned in section 3, it can be expected that those Chinese who are exposed to Japanese culture are potential leaders who feel friendly towards Japan and exert a great deal of influence on Japan-China relations. As mentioned before, then, the Internet can raise the prospect that this type of potential leader will increase in number. In short, it can be said that the Internet is an important factor which can contribute to the improvement of the Japanese image and of Japan-China relations in the long term.

5.7. Is the Internet really helpful to Japanese soft power?

In reality, however, it should be noted that increasing nationalism in Chinese cyberspace – especially in relation to territorial disputes and historical problems with Japan – has an adverse effect on Japanese soft power. Despite attempting to restrict political opinions of disaffected citizens, the Chinese regime cannot ignore nationalistic voices because, as Reilly (2010, p53) argue, 'authoritarian leaders tend to rely more upon nationalist rhetoric than democratic leaders to sustain popular support and justify their rule'. Under the regulated regime, resorting to popular nationalism is one of the best ways for political participation, without strict governmental regulation. As Liu (2011, p164) maintains, 'within authoritarian regimes, such as today's China, nationalism, especially popular nationalism, may represent people's expression of their wishes for democratic participation, which is otherwise unfulfilled'. The crux of the matter is that Chinese nationalism is usually concerning countries that are perceived as being anti-Chinese, including Japan. According to Liu (2011, p166), Chinese national leaders arouse nationalism by drawing upon the last century's humiliation at the hands of the West and Japan, in the expectation that sharing memories among the people can strengthen the unification of the state. As a way to increase the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party, then, the regime is prone to criticize Japan, whenever sensitive issues, such as territorial issues and historical problems, come to discussion. With the rise of official nationalism, a trend of growing nationalism is growing among the citizens. Furthermore, the Internet can help express people's patriotic fervour on an unprecedented scale, and may undermine the efficacy of Japanese soft power. Even though the authorities favour Japanese soft power for their development, they are often goaded by popular nationalism on the Internet into denying and rejecting everything Japanese.

5.8. Case study – Japanese Shinkansen in China

Here is a typical example – a high-speed railway line in China. In 2002, Chinese officials began to embark on a project of a high-speed railway from Beijing to Shanghai, with Japan, Germany and France making bids for its construction. Reilly (2010, p55) says that 'Chinese officials openly warmed to the Japanese bid' at first, but Japanese companies failed to win as many contracts as had expected. *Shinkansen* – the Japanese high-speed railway – is renowned for its high technology, its cost performance and its safety in China as well as in the rest of the world. For those three merits, in fact, Kon (2006, p101)

maintains that Chinese officials and engineers – at first – fully supported the Japanese bullet train, which can be regarded as Japanese soft power in the light of the definition of soft power. However, this example of Japanese soft power – the Japanese high-speed train – was undermined by the rise of popular nationalism online. The name of the Japanese high-speed railway evoked feelings of anti-Japanese among Chinese Internet users, who were able to share similar opinions and easily raise petitions to cancel the Japanese bids, all thanks to the Internet. It was impossible for the Chinese government to ignore the online opinions, not least because, as Tai (2006, p95) states, nationalism has historically served to bolster public support for the authorities and divert attention from domestic problems. This case demonstrates that public sentiments reflected in Chinese cyberspace are hard for the Chinese authorities to circumvent.

5.9. A theoretical analysis of the Internet and Japanese soft power

The above-quoted example illustrates that the Internet helped enable anti-Japanese feelings to affect Chinese foreign policy and neutralise the efficacy of Japanese soft power. So it can follow from the three examples that the Internet acts as a facilitator of Japanese soft power in positive and negative ways. It remains to be ascertained whether the Internet has direct positive effects on Chinese foreign policy towards Japan, whereas the Japanese *Shinkansen* case indicates that the Internet has direct negative effects on Japan-China relations. In short, this section can come to the conclusion that the Internet in theory can contribute to the improvement of Japanese image by facilitating mass communication, and yet in reality there are cases where it can undermine the efficacy of Japanese soft power.

Section 6: Research method

6.1. Introduction

Following the previous sections that explored how Japanese soft power is transmitted to China, this section will investigate the degree to which Japanese soft power affects Chinese society, based on the results of the questionnaire. Before the analysis of the results, the researcher will explain the research methodology, approach and design that were adopted for the study, demonstrate the process of collecting primary data, and illustrate the results of the questionnaire.

6.2. Research methodology

Research methods can be classified into two main categories; quantitative and qualitative analysis. According to Schreier et al. (2012, p15), the most important difference is that quantitative analysis focuses on manifest and literal meaning, whereas qualitative analysis revolves around latent meaning. In other words, the viewpoints of a quantitative approach gives clear meanings based on objective information, such as a numerical value, whereas those of the qualitative approach offers manifold interpretations with the use of subjective ideas, such as personal experiences. Snape and Spencer (2003, p14) further argue that quantitative methodology 'investigates the social world in ways that emulate the "scientific method" as used in the natural sciences', whereas the qualitative methodology 'reject[s] the natural science model and … concentrate on understanding, rich description and emergent concepts and theories'. In addition, Flick et al. (2009, p25) hold the view that quantitative methods cannot explain the relations they find without qualitative methods, whereas qualitative methods can solely expound socio-political topics without the later use of quantitative methods. In the case of Japan-China relations, for example, the quantitative method focuses on facts and numbers, such as trade and investment amounts, while the qualitative method offers a diversity of perspectives, such as historical backdrops and arguments used by politicians. In this sense, the qualitative method is an appropriate methodology for this study because the key objective is to measure the extent to which Japanese soft power is influential on Chinese society. This research will clarify whether ordinary Chinese citizens accept Japanese culture, identify the factors of Japanese soft power that contribute to the improvement of Japan-China relations, and suggest what further steps Japan should take in order to improve its image in China. This section attempts to analyse the feelings Chinese people have about Japanese culture and Japan-China relations, rather than concentrating on the facts and data of Japan-China relations. Thus, it can be said that qualitative research is more appropriate for this study.

6.3. Philosophical assumptions

It is important to understand philosophical assumptions because, as Creswell (2013, p15) states, they "inform our choice of theories that guide our research'. The assumptions are beliefs which can be categorised into two theories; ontology and epistemology. This section will explore each of them and ascertain whether they are appropriate theories for this study as follows.

6.3.1.Ontological considerations

According to Creswell (2013, p 21), ontology can be characterised as a belief that 'reality is multiple as seen through many issues'. It is concerned with ways of understanding the nature of social phenomenon, or reality, and provides ideas about assumptions researchers are prone to make about the world. Snape and Spencer (2003, p16) discuss two aspects of ontology, viz. realism (objectivism) and idealism (subjectivism).

- Realism (objectivism) means that 'an external reality exists independent of our beliefs or understanding' and that 'a clear distinction exists between beliefs about the world and the way the world is'.

- Idealism (subjectivism) means that 'no external reality exists independent of our beliefs and understanding' and 'reality is only knowable through the human mind and socially constructed'.

This research is related to the study of social science and international relations, which are directly linked with a wide range of institutions and individuals. According to constructivism as presented in section 2, the state consists of a variety of organs and actors that have different interests and roles to play in international relations (Vyas, 2011, p56). As demonstrated previously, the various agencies and actors – the Japan Foundation, the Japan-China Friendship Association and the Internet – are factors that affect, whether directly or indirectly, international and domestic incidents in Japan-China relations. Hence, in this context it is reasonable to assume that the actors, or interviewees, are part of reality, which needs to be understood regarding their feelings and socially constructed meanings regarding Japanese soft power. To adopt idealism will help this research understand how Chinese citizens regard Japanese soft power in Chinese society and Japan-China relations. Therefore, it can be argued that idealism is an appropriate approach for this study.

6.3.2. Epistemological considerations

Creswell (2013, p21) specifies the characteristics of epistemology – 'subjective evidence from participants; researcher attempts to lessen distance between himself or herself and

that being researched'. Epistemological stances are concerned with how to justify claims and know about the world. As Snape and Spencer (2003, p16) note, an epistemological assumption can be perceived in the following two ways – positivism and interpretivism (social constructivism).

● Positivism can be characterised in four ways, as follows.

1. 'The world is independent of and unaffected by the researcher.'.

2. 'Facts and values are distinct, thus making it possible to conduct objective, value free inquiry'.

3. 'Observations are the final arbiter in theoretical disputes'.

4. 'The methods of the natural sciences (e.g. hypothesis testing, causal explanations and modelling) are appropriate for the study of social phenomena because human behaviour is governed by law-like regularities'.

● Interpretivism (social constructivism) can be also characterised in three ways, as follows.

1. 'The researcher and the social world impact on each other'.

2. 'Facts and values are not distinct and findings are inevitably influenced by the researcher's perspective and values, thus making it impossible to conduct objective, value-free research, although the researcher can declare and be transparent about his or her assumptions'.

3. 'The methods of the natural sciences are not appropriate because the social world is not governed by law-like regularities but is mediated through meaning and human agency; consequently the social researcher is concerned to explore and understand the social world using both the participant's and the researcher's understanding'.

Positivism is similar to realism (objectivism) in that an external reality, or the world, is independent from researchers and those researched. In addition, both theories highly value the distinction between beliefs, values and facts. The most important point to note is that positivism follows scientific approaches to understanding social phenomenon. On the other hand, interpretivism (social constructivism) focuses on the differences among humans, rather than objects and facts. In an interpretivism study, it is believed that facts and values are inseparable, so that the researcher's perspectives affect findings. Opposed to positivism, hence, interpretivism (social constructivism) denies the possibility of objective, value-free research and the methods of the natural sciences. In short, interpretivism is congruent with idealism (subjectivism). Thus, since this study focuses on the viewpoints of Chinese people concerning Japanese soft power, interpretivism is an appropriate methodology for this research.

6.4. Research approach

Schreier (2012, p25) states that in quantitative research questions or categories derive from theory or prior research, whereas in qualitative research data collection begins with non-directional questions. In this context, it seems that while a deductive approach is suitable for quantitative study, an inductive approach is relevant to qualitative study. Schreier (2012, p25) holds the view that the deductive process involves a set of options that standardise the way that those researched respond, but on the other hand Creswell (2013, p45) maintains that the inductive process contains open questions that enable a researcher to collaborate with the participants interactively so as to shape the theme or abstractions from the process. So this distinction between deduction and induction shows that a deductive process is related to positivism, whereas an inductive approach is associated with interpretivism (social constructivism), which this research adopts. Deduction and positivism are similar in that they both investigate the social world based on prior research and natural sciences respectively, whereas induction and interpretivism both focus on the descriptions of those researched, without standardised questions or natural sciences, according to Snape and Spencer (2003, p14). Therefore, since this study employs interpretivism (social constructivism) as mentioned before, an inductive method is adopted in this paper.

6.5. Data collection

This research project adopted an ethnographical data collection method, which Flick (2006, p21) argues is to collect data from focus groups and documentary evidence. Flick (2006, p22) further notes that interpretivism (social constructivism) depicts the making of social situations, with the use of focus groups and collected documents. Thus, since this study employed interpretivism (social constructivism) as a research method, document-based data collection is an appropriate approach. Therefore the researcher utilised online data collection for this qualitative research because, as Creswell (2013, p159) holds, 'qualitative data collection via the Internet has the advantages of cost and time efficiency in terms of reduced costs for travel and data transaction'. Creswell (2013, p159) further states that participants can have enough time to consider and respond to requests for information. In other words, online data collection provides participants with more time to answer questions specifically and accurately. Hence, the data was collected via the Internet in this research.

The website where the data collection took place was Facebook, of which all of those researched had accounts. As most responders, as well as the researcher, were busy with dissertations, the most efficient and convenient way of data gathering was to utilise Facebook. Those chosen for this study were 16 Chinese students who study at the University of Leeds. The reason for choosing these 16 Chinese is that more than 16 respondents can standardise the way of research and analysis. According to Flick (2006, p13), vast quantities of data and results are associated with empirical social research that is mainly based on standardised surveys. In other words, as Flick (2006, p13) discusses, in order to guarantee the objectivity of the study those researchers obtaining a huge amount of information are prone to eliminate different perspectives of individuals surveyed. Since this research project highly values the importance of individuals' viewpoints, it limited the number of those researched to 16, which should provide an adequate number and diversity of perspectives for this study. Therefore, 16 Chinese students were chosen for the survey.

The 16 target subjects are all 20-something, and postgraduate students who are theoretically influenced by Japanese soft power and leaders in a wide range of fields for the following two reasons. First, since 1978, China's reform policy has been promoted to open up to the outside world, resulting in a increasing number of young people exposed to outside things, including Japanese culture. Since the 16 respondents are from a generation after the launch of the Chinese reform programme, it is quite reasonable to

assume that they are familiar with Japanese soft power. Second, Master's degree holders are likely to have a far-reaching impact on Chinese society, according to Kon (2006, p113). As discussed in section 4, soft power has the potential to affect, if not immediately, those young people who will be leaders in a variety of areas. An analysis of young people who are exposed to Japanese soft power will uncover the viewpoints of future Chinese leaders. Thus, the 16 chosen Chinese are appropriate respondents for this survey.

Section 7: Analysis of findings

7.1. Introduction

This section analyses findings from the questionnaires used for this study. Whereas sections 3, 4 and 5 investigate Japanese soft power from the perspective of Japan, this section looks into Japanese soft power from that of China, based on three themes which emerge from the 16 responses. These three themes are as follows:

1. Japanese culture is conducive to improving the Japanese image among Chinese young people.
2. Understanding the historical background can be a key factor in Japanese soft power.
3. There is still substantial room for improvement in international communication between Japan and China.

In the next section, through an inductive approach based on interpretivism (social constructivism), an analysis of each point will uncover the details of the findings.

7.2. Coding

The purpose of this section is to present the findings of the qualitative investigation through identifying key points of this research – coding. As Schreier (2012, p59) discusses, the qualitative method leads a researcher to 'select certain key aspects of [one's] material and to focus on them', instead of attempting to keep track of everything. In addition, coding is appropriate to the analysis of open questions used in this questionnaire. As Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p224) note, coding captures dimensions or contents that have already been precisely defined. In other words, the coding method enables the categorisation of open-ended answers in a questionnaire. Coding lets the author avoid being overwhelmed with a vast amount of information and allows him to focus on the essential points. Hence, coding is an appropriate methodology for this research.

In this study, the main code is the analysis of the degree to which Japanese soft power infiltrates Chinese society. In order to clarify that as much as possible, it is necessary to make what Schreier (2012, p60) calls 'subcategories' in the questionnaire because, as Schreier (2012, p60) maintains, 'subcategories specify what is said about the aspects that interest you, i.e. your main categories'. Creswell (2007, p64) maintains that the qualitative researcher identifies and focuses on one core phenomenon and then creates categories around it. To be more precise, the combination of the main category and the subcategories allows the researcher to grasp the key aspects of social incidents. Thus, this section analyses the findings of the questionnaire based on 5 questions (subcategories).

7.3. Subcategories and findings

Based on the main code, as mentioned before, the subcategories can be classified into 5 key points, which are briefly explored along with the gist of 16 responses as follows. (For the question transcript, see appendix 1)

7.3.1. The first question is whether Japanese soft power contributes to the improvement of the Japanese image in China.

7.3.2. The second question is whether Japanese soft power affects Chinese domestic and foreign policy.

7.3.3. The third question is whether Japanese culture is popular in China and why there is anti-Japanese sentiment in China, despite the popularity of Japanese culture.

7.3.4. The fourth question is what causes the anti-Japanese sentiment as mentioned in the third question.

7.3.5. The fifth question is whether Japan should take action in order to improve the Japanese image in China.

Table 7-1.

	Question1	**Question2**	**Question3**	**Question4**	**Question5**
Respondent1	Partly yes	Partly yes	Yes	History	Yes
Respondent2	Partly yes	No	Yes	History	Yes
Respondent3	Yes	No	Yes	History	Definitely yes
Respondent4	Partly yes	No	Yes	Chinese Government	Partly yes
Respondent5	Yes	No	Yes	No answer	Yes
Respondent6	Partly yes	No	Yes	History	No
Respondent7	Yes	No answer	Yes	History	No
Respondent8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Cultural proximity	Yes
Repondent9	Yes	No	Yes	History	Yes
Respondent10	Yes	Yes	Yes	History	No
Respondent11	Yes	No	Yes	Remerging militarism	Yes
Respondent12	Almost yes	Partly yes	No	History/Political mess	No

Respondent13	Yes	Partly yes	Yes	History	No
Respondent14	Yes	No	Yes	No answer	Yes
Respondent15	Yes	No	Yes	History	Yes
Respondent16	Yes	No answer	Yes	History/Political conflict	Yes

7.4.Findings analysis

7.4.1 The first theme

As the above table indicates, all the participants agreed that Japanese soft power has contributed to improving the Japanese image in China. It may seem that this finding is contradictory to questions 3 and 4, both of which are based on the statistics from the BBC (2006). The BBC data demonstrates that many Chinese people have a negative image of Japan. However, the BBC survey targeted Chinese people regardless of their age and social class, whereas this research focused on those Chinese young people studying at a postgraduate level, as discussed before. In other words, although Japan is subject to a negative image among a whole generation of Chinese, highly educated Chinese young people are likely to accept Japanese culture in a positive way. In fact, as Sonoda (2005, p79) argues, the Asia Barometer's data (2003) indicates that 58.9% of Chinese 20-somethings say that Japan has a positive influence on China. In this context, then, the researcher looks into the extent to which Japanese soft power is related to the improvement of the Japanese image in China.

An analysis of the results reveals that Japanese pop culture and products are the main factors which lead Chinese young people to feel well-disposed towards Japan. For example, Respondent 1 says that there are a large number of Chinese who follow Japanese culture, such as animation, films and pop music. She further says that the Chinese fans of Japanese things are likely to dream of their imaginary Japanese society – modern life – and consequently are favourably-disposed towards Japan. From the standpoint of Respondent 1, those Chinese liking Japanese pop culture are likely to long for Japanese modern society. A similar tendency was illustrated in section 5 – the Japanese TV drama 'Tokyo Love Story in Shanghai'. In addition, the vogue for Japanese modern culture is

said to be instrumental in the increase of Japanese learners in China. Respondent 14, for instance, claims that Japanese modern culture, such as cartoons and fashion, are significant factors which encourage Chinese young people to learn Japanese. Her statement can be supported by the data of the Japan Foundation (2009), which shows that more than 70% of high school students who start to learn Japanese, cite Japanese comic books and animation as a motivation. Furthermore, the popularity of Japanese comic books and animation has made Japanese familiar for Chinese people. Nakano (2008), for instance, recounts in her article a story that even Chinese students who have never learned Japanese can say some casual Japanese words, such as 'Jyaa-ne' (Good bye), which they learn from Japanese animation or drama discs. Considering the above-quoted answers, it can be said that Chinese young people are likely to accept Japanese soft power. However, it is also to be questioned whether Japanese culture is really allowed into Chinese society as far as individuals from the perspective of young people.

As discussed in section 2, the important point of soft power is that the party being influenced accepts others' power for their own interests. Even if sources of power – such as culture, cuisine and political beliefs in this paper – are attractive to individuals, it does not follow that the whole of a country, or the government, lets them infiltrate their country. For example, Respondent 12 mentions, '[M]ore input of Japanese culture and language could also lead to a backlash against these things, simply for the sake of not allowing Japan to "invade" China to further influence Chinese people'. In fact, her opinion is illustrated by the fact that the Chinese authorities sometimes ban the import of Japanese soft power into China. According to Kobayashi (2012), in 2006 the Chinese government began to stop some foreign series of animation, including Japanese ones, from being aired on prime-time television, out of concern that children were being exposed to negative influences. As a consequence, Kobayashi (2012) further maintains that the restriction also aimed at boosting home-grown creativity in China. On the side of the Chinese authorities, Japanese animation is so attractive to Chinese young people that it should be subject to restriction. In this context, it remains to be ascertained whether Japanese soft power, viz. animation, has a great deal of positive influence on Japan-China relations at a government level, even though it is creating a positive image of Japan among Chinese young people.

In addition to the state level, it is necessary to further analyse how Chinese young people regard the popularity of Japanese pop culture. As discussed before, it is true that Japanese modern culture is extremely popular among young people. Of those who admire

all things Japanese, many tend to attach a high value to Japan. However, the crucial point to note is that the popularity of Japanese soft power may be associated with the culture and products themselves, rather than Japan as a nation. As Respondent 2 points out, Chinese people welcome Japanese culture and products not because they come from Japan, but because they themselves are attractive and have a high quality. Respondent 4, for example, says, 'Japanese skincare products are very popular in China, such as Shiseido, because they are more suitable for Asian women than European or American products'. Furthermore, Kobayashi (2012) argues that those Chinese young people who seek Japanese culture are likely to draw a line between culture and history. In other words, Chinese young people may appreciate the attractiveness and importance of Japanese modern culture and products, and yet have a low opinion of Japan as a nation, especially when sensitive issues, such as territorial disputes and historical problems, turn into political ones. According to an opinion poll conducted by the Genron not-for-profit organisation (NPO) in 2013, for instance, those Chinese having either a negative image or a relatively negative image of Japan increased from 64.5% to 92.8% between 2012 and in 2013, during which there were ongoing territorial disputes between Japan and China. Although this result mirrors the popularity of Japanese modern culture as discussed before, this seemingly contradictory phenomenon can be illustrated by the second and third themes respectively.

7.4.2 The second theme

The second theme is the historical issues between Japan and China. In the event of Japan-China relations, historical issues evoke bitter war memories from 1937 to 1945. In this theme, the researcher focuses on and analyses three points regarding historical issues as follows.

1. There is a perception gap between the Chinese and the Japanese.
2. A misunderstanding arises from this different perception.
3. The misunderstanding causes a lack of understanding of Chinese victims on the part of Japan.

First of all, the Chinese and the Japanese rank different factors according to importance in terms of Japan-China relations. On Chinese side, history is the most

important factor. Chinese people are likely to take a historical perspective on the bilateral relationship. In fact, 11 of the respondents say that the historical issue is a main factor which leads to a worsening in Japan-China relations, according to Table 7.1. For example, Respondent 1 mentions, 'Both China and South Korea were invaded by Japan, and to many people, especially older people, the memory is still vivid. To people in both countries, they may be familiar with being asked to memorise history, which may be connected with their patriotism'. Her opinion can be linked to the opinion poll of Genron-NPO (2013), which indicates that more than 50% of Chinese respondents associate Japan with the Nanjing Massacre, and more than 20% regard Japan's now-defunct Imperial Army as Japan's image. By contrast, the Japanese are likely to deem things relating to daily life as important factors in the bilateral relationship. For example, Kudo, a representative of the Genron-NPO, (2013) says that more than 70% of Japanese respondents associate the Chinese government's poorly supervising food sanitation with the overall Chinese image. Conversely, only 6% of Japanese respondents associate the Japanese-Sino war with the Chinese image, and just 6.7% deem Japan's historical awareness and education as causes for concern in Japan-China relations, according to a poll conducted by the Genron-NPO (2013). In short, there is a perception gap of history between Japan and China.

The second point is that a difference in awareness causes misunderstandings between Chinese and Japanese people. On the Chinese side, there is a misconception of the Japanese government's apology for the war. Respondent 14, for example, mentions, 'I think the government of Japan should admit to the war of aggression'. Furthermore, Respondent 15 argues that the Japanese government cannot reduce hostility without an apology to China. These two opinions can be demonstrated by the opinion poll of the Genron-NPO (2013), according to which 63.8% of Chinese respondents have a negative image of Japan because they assume that Japan has not reflected on and apologised to China for the past invasion. Based on the history the Japanese government and the Chinese government agree on, it can be argued that the Japanese government has admitted to and apologised for the past atrocities. In the normalisation of diplomatic ties, for example, Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei officially stated in the Japan-China Joint Communique of 1972 that 'The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself", according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

Japan (MOFA). Kito (2012, p164) maintains that although the Chinese Prime Minister offered a waiver of the right to claim war reparations, the Japanese government has provided – instead of paying war reparations – financial support for China in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA). The Chinese leaders and authorities have accepted Japan's apology and praised Japan's financial support. For example, Prime Minister Wen Jiabao stated in a public speech in the National Diet of Japan that, 'since the normalisation of China-Japan diplomatic relations, the Japanese government and Japanese leaders have put out their positions of historical issues many times, officially admitted the invasion and expressed profound remorse' (Embassy of the Peoples' Republic of China in Japan). In short, historical issues have been already solved in terms of intergovernmental relations. Ironically, however, the Japanese economic aid did not improve Japan's image in China, but created a difference in awareness of war reparations between the Japanese and Chinese people (Mouri, Zhang and Fujiwara, 2004, p11).

In this context, it seems to be impossible to presume that Japan has finished apologising for its damage to China because Japan has not satisfactorily listened to the voices of Chinese citizens, especially victims and their relatives. On the Japanese side, in effect there is a misunderstanding of historical issues. Since the Japanese government apologised to the Chinese government for their past crimes, Japanese people are prone to assume that historical problems have been already completely solved, though Chinese people have a deep antipathy towards Japan's historical perspective. According to the opinion poll of the Genron-NPO (2013), for example, 48.9% of Japanese respondents say that Chinese criticism of Japan for historical issues creates a negative image of Japan. In other words, the Chinese criticism of Japan for the history is unreasonable in the eyes of the Japanese. However, it seems that a lack of understanding of Chinese feelings prevents Japanese people from seeing the reason why Japan's attitudes towards history can breed antipathy among Chinese citizens.

The third point is that a lack of comprehension of Chinese feelings makes it difficult for Japanese people to precisely understand anti-Japanese sentiment in China. The deep-rooted hostility to Japan stemming from the memory of war can be explained by two factors: Chinese nationalism and Japan's attitude. First of all, as also discussed in section 5, Chang (2012) argues that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has stoked hatred of Japan with unrelenting indoctrination in schools, and with incessant propaganda in society. In order to maintain the unification of China, the CCP has emphasised Japan's past crimes

during the war, especially after the Tiananmen Square Incident (1989). As a result, Christensen (2011, p6) states that 'the intensity of anti-Japanese sentiment in China has not decreased markedly as World War Two becomes a more distant memory'. It should be noted that institutionalised nationalism is not the only factor that generates anti-Japanese sentiment in China, however. In fact, without understanding the feelings of Chinese victims, the demand for the Chinese authorities to make its education more objective would be a less persuasive argument. Although the Chinese authorities have certainly encouraged patriotism, especially in the field of education, it is necessary for Japanese people to look squarely to their history with China on an individual basis.

The second factor – Japan's attitude – is another crucial element of anti-Japanese sentiment in China. In this paper, this factor is focused on, not least because the researcher is investigating how Japan wins confidence from China. Thus, this paper is mainly investigating areas for the improvement of Japan in terms of historical issues. Despite emphasising the importance of Japan-China relations, the Japanese leaders and government have often sparked Chinese outrage and caused frustration. According to Christensen (2011, p6), for instance, 'during their November 1998 summit in Tokyo, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi refused to offer an apology to China's President Jiang Zemin that used the same contrite wording as the rather forthright apology Japan offered to South Korea earlier in the year'. Christensen (2011, p6) further says that this divergence in apologies may have confounded historical issues between Tokyo and Beijing. This kind of Japanese governmental attitude generates strong resentment from Chinese citizens. Respondent 3, for example, says 'The annual visit to Yasukuni Shrine by the Japanese Prime Minister and parliamentary officials is hugely disrespectful'.

However, it is difficult for the Japanese to comprehend the sense of grievance against the Japanese government's attitudes, thus causing a conflict of opinion between Japanese citizens and Chinese citizens. According to the opinion poll of the Genron-NPO (2013), for example, 46% of Japanese respondents agree that the Prime Minister visits Yasukuni Shrine in his official role, and 27.5% agree that the Japanese leader visits Yasukuni Shrine as a private citizen, whereas 62.7% of Chinese respondents demand that the Japanese Prime Minister should not visit the controversial shrine either in his official role or as a private citizen. This perception gap not only reveals the seriousness of historical issues, but also exposes a lack of understanding about the background of the anti-Japanese sentiment in China on the part of Japan. In addition to the institutionalised

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nationalism as discussed before, personal experiences are important elements of anti-Japanese sentiment in China. Respondent 3, in fact, says that, 'A typical [Hong Kong] family consists of grandparents that migrated from mainland China to the then British-occupied-[Hong Kong] during the two world wars and the later domestic unrest, [such as the Maoist Cultural Revolution]. So we are all grandchildren of war immigrants. I learnt of my grandma's unfortunate wartime experience from her'. She further maintains that, '[M]y grandma, for example, her mum and brother were tortured to death under Japanese occupation. She saw rapes, tortures, looting, innocent people killed in the most inhumane ways'. Her statements can exemplify personal experiences passing on the anti-Japanese sentiment of Chinese victims to their offspring, particularly considering the fact that 'unlike the mainland history curriculum, that of Hong Kong focused on British colonial rule more than the Japanese invasion of China, making anti-Japanese nationalism a less notable theme from the start', according to Shen (2010, p99).

In this context, even in mainland China, where patriotic education is strongly encouraged by the government, it is noteworthy that the personal feelings of Chinese victims and their relatives are a crucial element of anti-Japanese sentiment, as mentioned before. In fact, Kito (2012, p162) remarks that the waiver of war reparations was not publicly announced in China, out of concern that Chinese citizens would vent their frustration. Quoting a statement by a Chinese activist, Kito (2012, p162) further argues that the Chinese authorities have suppressed the hatred of Chinese citizens – especially victims – towards Japan for the good cause of Japan-China friendship. However, Sonoda (2005, p80) maintains that since Jiang Zemin started to launch the patriotic movement, an emphasis has been put on the savagery of the Imperial Japanese Army. In other words, the patriotic campaign has let victims and their relatives express their bottled-up frustration as well as created 'nationalism', as mentioned before. Without knowing the above-mentioned background of hatred toward Japan, Chinese anti-Japanese sentiment is incomprehensible in the eyes of Japanese citizens, and consequently they are prone to tolerate the provocative conduct of Japanese politicians and neglect to make an effort to understand the victims.

7.4.3 The third theme

The third theme is that there is still substantial room for improvement in international communication between Japan and China. From the findings of the questionnaire there

emerge two points: looking squarely at the historical background, and further promoting cultural interaction between Japan and China at a private level. First of all, as discussed in the second theme, understanding the history from the perspective of Chinese people is a prerequisite for reinforcing a trustworthy relationship between Japan and China. Indeed, despite the fact that Japanese pop culture is quite popular in China, as mentioned before, it is also the case that feelings of resistance towards Japanese culture and products arise from Japan's attitudes towards history. Ding (2003, p43) argues that Chinese people cannot accept Japanese pop culture without considering ethnic sentiment, whereas they can accept South Korean modern culture without doing so. Shen (2010, p100) also maintains that the Chinese remain rather resistant to Japanese culture, but more receptive to South Korean culture. In case of Japanese culture, it is necessary to respect the Chinese perspective of the history – the perspective of the victims, and conversely, to face a past marked by war may lead to an improvement of the Japanese image, thus increasing its cultural popularity in China. In other words, sharing historical understanding with Chinese people can be a form of Japanese soft power, thus adding value to Japanese culture.

However, it is quite difficult for the Japanese government to further acknowledge its past mistakes in war. From the viewpoint of the Japanese government, the Chinese government has attempted to thwart the expansion of Japan's role in international society by playing the history card. As Kitaoka (2007, p4) holds, for example, the Chinese counter-campaign criticising the Japanese perspective of history at the UN hampered Japan's attempt at Security Council reform. In regard to this point, the crux of the matter is that the history of the war triggers political games between the Japanese government and the Chinese government. In this case, historical issues tangle the web of national interests between Japan and China, leading to worse diplomatic relations. So the second point – promoting cultural interaction – takes on importance. In order for Japanese people to understand the Chinese perspective of history, it is necessary to boost mutual understanding and relations of trust between Japan and China. Since cultural interaction involving soft power are unconnected with 'stick and carrot' as discussed in section 2, people of the two countries can get to know each other through cultural exchange, without biased consideration.

In fact, as well as looking squarely at the history of the war, transmitting ideas concerning what Japan is now to the Chinese people through cultural interaction is needed

in order to promote mutual understanding between the two countries. However, although intercultural interaction is facilitated by both state-level and non-state-level organs, and by the Internet as discussed in sections 3, 4 and 5 respectively, the findings of the questionnaire expose a lack of understanding about Japan. Respondent 10, for example, remarks that 'due to [a] lack of cultural interaction between [Japan and China], China has been overlooking the improvement in Japanese power, and many Chinese people still see Japan from [a] historical view, which makes them [feel] hostility towards everything [relating] to Japan'. Her opinion can be supported by statistics from the Genron-NPO (2013), according to which Chinese people have little understanding of modern Japan. For instance, less than 20% of Chinese respondents know about the Japan-China Peace and Amity Treaty, and only 2.1% of Chinese respondents associate Japan's pacifist Constitution with the image of Japan. This data exposes the necessity to enhance the visibility of what Japan is now, and the fact that Japan has pursued the path of peaceful development.

In this context, it can be said that international exchange activities, especially at a private level, carry significance in Japan-China relations because the range of main information sources is confined to the mass media. Ning argues in an interview with Asahi shibun (2012) that a distorted image of both Japan and China derives from the mass media, which emphasises just a part of the situation. Ning, for example, remarks in an interview with Asahi shinbun (2012) that the Chinese media is prone to giving massive coverage with a right-wing bias, for example by highlighting an increase in military budgets, while the Japanese media has a tendency to emphasise the outrageousness of China's side, for example by depicting destructive activities in some anti-Japanese campaigns as national ones. There are two good examples, as follows. On the Chinese side, the People's Daily (2013), a daily newspaper in the People's Republic of China, censures Japan for calling August 15 'End of the Pacific War Day' rather than 'Defeat in the Pacific War Day', adding that 'End of the Pacific War Day' obscures the point of Japan's responsibility for the war. In reality, however, Shinagawa (2006, p150) believes that 'End of the Pacific War Day' indicates the determination that Japan will never wage another war, whereas 'Defeat in the Pacific War Day' conveys a nuance of revenge. It can be seen that the analysis of the Chinese paper is precisely the opposite interpretation of the Japanese peaceful message. On the Japanese side, on the other hand, Yomiuri Shinbun (2013), one of the five national newspapers in Japan, argues that China unreasonably demands the

cancellation of the Japanese Prime Minister and politicians' visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, even though Japan has already apologised for its atrocities in China. However, it can be seen that the Japanese newspaper has a lack of understanding towards the feelings of the Chinese victims and their relatives.

In short, the limited sources of information can create prejudice and cause a lack of understanding, consequently forming a negative image of each other. Thus, it is essential to bring about a situation where there can be a dialogue. On the Chinese side, for example, Ning, a Chinese activist, called for Japanese and Chinese people to discuss territorial disputes and issued a 'Joint Declaration of Citizens from Japan and China', according to Asahi shibun (2012) (See appendices). On the Japanese side, on the other hand, the Genron-NPO (2013) has presented the results of the Japan-China joint citizens' awareness public opinion poll for the purpose of facilitating discussion. From the standpoint of constructivism, as discussed in section 2, an exchange of ideas and opinions can contribute to the development of a certain region – Japan-China relations in this paper. Hence, in order to exert Japanese soft power in China, it is necessary for Japan to increase the opportunities for discussion through cultural interaction. To summarise this section, the findings of the questionnaire reveal that although Japanese modern culture, such as animation and comic books, is quite popular in China, it is necessary to share perspectives of the history of the war with Chinese people and transmit ideas concerning what Japan is now to China at a private level. In other words, understanding the history from a victim's perspective and exchanging opinions are the key factors that can enhance the efficacy of Japanese soft power in China.

Section 8: Conclusion

Considering the analysis of Japanese soft power in sections 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7, it can be concluded that although Japanese modern culture and products are likely to be accepted in China, it is necessary for Japan to look squarely at the history of the war and make more efforts to understand the historical perspectives of Chinese victims and their relatives, so as to enhance Japanese credibility in China. In section 2, the researcher defined power, hard power and soft power respectively, and explored constructivism for a theoretical understanding of soft power in international relations. Based on the definition of soft power and constructivism as discussed in section 2, this paper investigated from the perspective of Japan a governmental-level organ, viz. the Japan Foundation, and a non-governmental-level agency, namely the Japan-China Friendship Association, with the roles and activities of each organisation studied in sections 3 and 4 respectively. All in all, it can be said that both agents serve as channels for Japanese soft power in China because the two Japanese international institutions aim to promote sharing ideas and information between Japan and China. Furthermore, since constructivism regards a state as an aggregate of various institutions, it can be argued that the two different cultural bodies, though having different roles to play, contribute to the improvement of Japanese image in China.

In section 5, this essay analysed the relationship between the Internet and Japanese

soft power in China. Despite the fact that Chinese online society is still under the supervision of the authorities, it is the case that the emergence of the Internet has ushered in a new era of information and Japanese soft power in China. The spread of the Internet through China increases the exposure of the Chinese to Japanese culture, and provides Japanese people with more opportunities for transmitting their ideas to Chinese people. However, it should be noted that the Internet can adversely affect Japanese soft power in China. The more easily users can communicate with each other and share information, the more easily nationalism can spread and affect the foreign policy of the Chinese government towards Japan. From the viewpoint of constructivism, the advancement of information technology, including the Internet, can lead to an increase of information-sharing between the two countries and improve their bilateral relationship, despite the fact that the Internet can undermine the efficacy of Japanese soft power.

In section 7, the researcher analysed the findings of the questionnaire, the 5 questions of which were answered by 16 Chinese students at Leeds University. With idealism and social interpretivism taken as a research methodology and a research approach, the scrutiny of the results revealed the three themes as follows.

1. Japanese culture is conducive to improving the Japanese image among Chinese young people.
2. Understanding the historical background can be a key factor of Japanese soft power.
3. There is still substantial room for improvement in international communication between Japan and China.

An analysis of the above-mentioned themes underlined the crucial fact that although Japanese soft power, or Japanese modern culture, is likely to be accepted in China, historical issues are detrimental to the improvement of the Japanese image in China. It is true that a national patriotic policy is a significant factor which contributes to growing anti-Japanese sentiment. However, in order to improve the Japanese image in China, it is necessary for Japanese people to look squarely at the historical perspective of Chinese victims and their relatives, because understanding their feelings is the best way to increase Japanese credibility in China. As discussed in section 7, Chinese victims and their relatives have grievances towards Japan, which the Chinese government stifled under the pretext of Japan-China friendship relations. What is worse, it is quite difficult

for Japanese citizens to comprehend such indignation over Japan's attitude towards the history of the war, not least because there is a misunderstanding between Japanese and Chinese people as discussed in section 7. The best way to straighten out the misunderstanding between the two countries is to increase cultural interaction and opportunities for discussion between Japan and China, given that historical issues are part of a political game. Cultural exchange can serve as a conduit for Japanese soft power and shorten the psychological distance between Japan and China. Finally, the researcher strongly believes that the enhancement of Japanese soft power in China is a key factor in eliminating transparent barriers between Japanese and Chinese people.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1- Questionnaire about Japanese soft power in China

Dear participants,

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

1. Research Project Title:

"How important is Japanese soft power in Japan-China relations?"

2. The project's purpose:

To analyze how Japanese soft power has become embedded in the society of the receiving country and how it has affected the receiving country directly.

3. The voluntary participation:

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

4. Confidentiality:

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or

publications'.

5. What will happen to the results of the research project?

They will be used only for the dissertation.

Questions

① Do you believe that Japanese soft power – cultural interactions and language education – has contributed to improving the image of Japan among Chinese people?

② How do you think Japanese soft power has led to a change in Chinese domestic and foreign policy?

③ Since the normalization of diplomatic relations, Japan-China interactions have been increasing, with an increasing economic and cultural exchange between the two countries. Then, do you think that Japanese products and culture are popular in China? If yes, could you explain the contradiction between Japanese culture's popularity and anti-Japanese sentiment in China? (In particular, could you explain the reason why Japanese language education is quite popular in China?)

④ According to the poll conducted by BBC (2006), Japan received high ratings of negative influence from China and South Korea, while receiving a quite high rating of positive influence from other countries, such as the U.S, Canada and Spain. What do you think causes the distinct difference between China and those countries showing a more positive attitude toward Japan?

*A major BBC World Service poll (2006) [online] [Accessed 8th July] Available from http://www.globescan.com/news_archives/bbc06-3/index.html

⑤ Do you think that Japan should take steps to try to change the anti-Japan sentiment in China? If yes, could you give me your opinion?

Thank you for your cooperation

__Appendix 2 – Joint Declaration of Citizens from Japan and China__

Joint Declaration of Citizens from Japan and China

Today - September 29th 2012- is the 40th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and the People's Republic of China.

In the past 40 years, Japan and China have cooperated with each other to achieve remarkable economic growth and development. When we look back at this outcome, we'd like to express our appreciation to the people whose efforts achieved this normalization of diplomatic relations.

Japan and China which are only separated by a narrow stretch of water share a long history of interaction and amity. It has been a significant achievement for both countries to overcome their sorrowful history in the late modern era and build mutual cooperative relations. This also contributes to the lessening of tension in Asia and to world peace.

However the recent strained relationship between Japan and China is a very worrying issue. No one will benefit or be satisfied if we lack consideration for each other. Misunderstandings and resentment would be detriment to the peaceful relationship built in the past 40 years.

We have therefore gathered on our own volition and exchanged opinions in a sincere and frank way. We confirmed how important it is to treat our neighbors with sincerity, kindness and mutual respect. Today we shall present our declaration as shown below.

1. Sharing a sense of crisis in Japan-China's relations, we strive to deepen mutual understanding and muster our wisdom to develop the relationship.

2. We admit that there are differences of awareness about the existing issues. We will try to work for both governments and citizens to maintain a sincere dialogue and solve problems peacefully.

3. We strongly condemn all violent behavior in both countries and will stand firmly against it.

4. We will work with both governments and all citizens in a concerted effort to avoid behavior that could lead to warfare.

5. We encourage civil interaction and an increase of opportunities of

dialogue between Japan and China.

6. We strongly demand that media reports are based on facts, and deepen mutual understanding through objective and multifaceted reporting.

7. We think it is particularly now time to have dialogue and to strive to build mutual understanding and trust through various channels and means. We will maintain a constructive dialogue, disseminate the results of discussions and activities, and have an open mind for a diversity of opinions.

8. We believe that this declaration and related activities will be well received by all sensible citizens from both countries and contribute to a new development in the Japan-China relationship.

Sep 29th 2012, Tokyo

Japanese voluntary citizens   Chinese voluntary citizens