

## Chinese regional security strategy: *zonghe anquan* and *hezuo anquan*

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### ***Abstract***

China is one of the few great powers that for centuries did not have a regional policy. The establishment of the People's Republic of China did not change it much since Beijing was more worried on getting international recognition and support from one of the superpowers. After the implementation of the policy of reform and open up by Deng Xiaoping and especially after the end of Cold War, China engaged in getting a role of world power for which it is essential a regional policy to Asia.

After the Tian'anmen events China was seriously condemned by western countries, so it had to find out new partners. That's when China's regional policy began following the end of Cold War. One of the most important elements of China's regional policy is security. According to my analysis, China's security strategy to East Asia is based on two main features whose meaning I'll explain here: comprehensive security (*zonghe anquan*) as its nature and cooperative security (*hezuo anquan*) as its way to act.

### ***Resumo***

A China é das poucas grandes potências que durante séculos não teve uma política regional. A proclamação da República Popular da China não alterou esse facto, uma vez que Beijing estava mais interessado em obter reconhecimento internacional e apoio de uma das superpotências. Com a implementação da política de reformas e abertura de Deng Xiaoping e especialmente com o fim da guerra-fria, a China começou a preocupar-se em alcançar um lugar de grande potência, para o que se tornava essencial uma política regional para a Ásia.

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Na sequência dos acontecimentos de Tian'anmen, a China foi seriamente condenada pelos países ocidentais, pelo que devia procurar novos parceiros, começando por ganhar a confiança dos países asiáticos. Foi quando a política regional da China começou a ser elaborada, a seguir ao fim da Guerra Fria. Um dos elementos mais importantes da política regional da China é a segurança. Segundo a nossa análise, a estratégia de segurança da China é caracterizada por dois aspectos principais cujo conteúdo explicarei neste artigo: segurança compreensiva ou abrangente (*zonghe anquan*) como a sua natureza e segurança cooperativa (*hezuo anquan*) como a sua forma de actuação.

### **Introduction**

For centuries and although China had a great role in Asia, it had not such thing as a regional policy. China was viewed as "a regional power without regional policy" or an "Asian power without an Asian policy"<sup>2</sup>. Maybe because the concept of "Asia" is a western construction, originally conceived by the Greeks and also because Chinese leaders have not tended to see their country as an Asian country but rather as a great power of international or global significance<sup>3</sup>.

According to Bin Yu, this lack of China's regional policy is due to three factors: Sino-centric mentality towards its neighbours based on China's cultural supremacy, the Cold War setting of bipolarity; and the lack of domestic stability since the mid-ninetieth century<sup>4</sup>.

The establishment of People's Republic of China did not change it much since there was a lack of domestic stability and international society was dominated by bipolarity. Chinese government was worried about domestic development and international recognition. According to its ideological orientation, Beijing emphasised relations with URSS and socialist countries. The

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<sup>2</sup> LEVINE, Steven – "China in Asia: The PRC as a regional power", in HARDING, Harry (ed.), China's Foreign Relations in the 1980's, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984, pp. 107-114; KIM, Samuel – China in and out of the Changing World, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 84; ROY, Denny – China's Foreign Relations, Lanham (Maryland): Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc, 1998, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> YAHUDA, Michael – "China's Attempts to Woo Asia", Daxiyangguo, 2003, n.º 3, pp. 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> YU, Bin – "China and its Asian Neighbours: Implications for Sino-U.S. Relations", in YONG, Deng e WANG, Fei-Ling (ed.), In the eyes of the Dragon: China views the World, Lanham (Maryland, EUA): Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999, pp. 184-186.

death of Mao Zedong and decreasing stress on ideology made it possible for Chinese leaders to promote economic reform. After approving policy of reform and open up in 1978, Chinese government started to stress economic development in detriment of ideology.

Although during the eighties there was an improvement of Chinese relations with western countries, the 1989 events meant international condemnation for Chinese government. Then China started to seek alternative partners, especially among those who had similar views on international issues: Asian countries. It's interesting to notice that Asian countries never really condemned Chinese government for repressing students' riots in Tian'anmen Square and right after it, Japan influenced western countries in international forums to soft repressive measures on Chinese government. Indeed Japanese government feared China would have a fierce behaviour due to western pressure.

Furthermore Asian countries present markets where China can sell its products and also invest. Apart from proximity on economic and political issues, another important component of China's relations with Asian countries is security. Following the end of bipolarity, Beijing adopted a regional policy based on the strategy of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring countries and promoting a stable neighbourhood (*mulin youhao, wending zhoubian* 睦邻友好、稳定周边). The main reason for this policy is the necessity of a peaceful regional security environment so it may develop economically. Asia is a region specially important for China if it is to attain a place of world power on a broad sense.

According to Buzan's regional security complex theory, "security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters: security complexes. (...) Processes of securitization, and thus the degree of security interdependence, is more intense between the actors inside such complexes than it is between actors inside a complex and those outside it." <sup>5</sup> Still according to Buzan, the ending of Cold War meant a substantial transformation in the

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<sup>5</sup> BUZAN, Barry – "Security architecture in Asia: the interplay of regional and global levels", *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 16, n.º 2, 2003, pp.144-145.

Asian supercomplex: the three regional security complexes (Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia) became two regional security complexes – East Asia and South Asia. The ending of Cold War also meant a reduction of superpower penetration in Asia, from which China greatly benefited.

Since the end of Cold War, China adopted a security strategy to Asia. According to all *White Papers*<sup>6</sup> recently published by Chinese government, the main objective of defence policy is to safeguard state sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. Under no circumstances will Beijing allow to loose this or allow other State's interference. This also applies to regional security strategy. Furthermore, according to Zhang Yunling and Tang Shiping, China's regional strategy is underpinned by six main ideas: desirability of seeking comprehensive cooperation and partnership relationships with all regional states; responsible power role and demonstration of benign intention; peaceful coexistence with US as long as it does not threaten China's core interests; regional economic development strategy based on opening the market and becoming more economically integrated; embracing regional multilateralism namely participating in ARF and SCO; increasing activeness in global stage including multilateral institutions and security arena.<sup>7</sup>

China is increasingly playing an important leading role in East Asia, competing to US and Japan. Indeed nowadays Chinese point of view is always taken into account on regional affairs. Asian countries are regaining trust in Chinese government following its charm diplomacy and they feel that China understands them better than other countries. Chinese leading role in East Asia on economic and security affairs may become a springboard to become a world power or even a superpower.

Since the end of Cold War, Chinese security strategy to East Asia is composed by two main features: comprehensiveness as nature and cooperation as the method of dealing with security issues. Both comprehensive security and cooperative security are included in the designated *new security concept (xin*

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<sup>6</sup> Chinese government already published four White Papers on National Defense: 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004.

<sup>7</sup> ZHANG, Yunling and TANG, Shiping – “China's Regional Strategy”, in SHAMBAUGH, David (ed.), *Power Shift: China's and Asia's New Dynamics*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005, pp. 52-54.

*anquan guan* 新安全观)<sup>8</sup> adopted by Chinese government in the mid nineties. Enunciated by Jiang Zemin in 1997, new security concept's meaning was revealed in 1999 and included four elements: mutual trust, mutual benefits, equality and cooperation/coordination.

### **Comprehensive security**

In the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century international society underwent significant changings. Still during the Cold War, ideology started to loose importance in detriment of economy. National power notion must be broader including military, politics and also economy. To feel safe a State must be prepared on all these fields. Following the seventies' oil crisis which showed international system vulnerability to energy resources, "comprehensive security" concept was adopted. It was Japanese government under Ohira (1978-80) who took this concept as foreign policy principle. After the publication of the "Report on Comprehensive National Security" (1980), Suzuki government also adopted it as a security strategy. Recognising countries and especially Japanese vulnerability on energy resources, Tokyo defined security on a holistic way emphasising comprehensive threats to security, apart from military<sup>9</sup>. Afterwards, ASEAN also started to use "comprehensive security" concept to define its security approach, specially after three great changings after the end of Cold War: economy became security's main factor in detriment of ideology, security's core changed from inside to outside, security's scope changed from national to regional<sup>10</sup>.

Following the increasing importance of economy under Deng Xiaoping's leadership, Chinese government also adopted a broad sense of national power

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<sup>8</sup> MARTINS, Dora – "The new security concept: some considerations", in AMARO, Ana Maria e MARTINS, Dora (coord.), Studies on China VII, Lisbon: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, 2005, pp.565-606. (in portuguese)

<sup>9</sup> HU, Richard Weixing – "China in search of Comprehensive security", in HSIUNG, James (ed.) – Twenty-first century world order and the Asia Pacific: value change, exigencies, and power realignment, New York: Palgrave, 2001, p.314

<sup>10</sup> LU, Jianren – "ASEAN's new security concept", Contemporary Asia, 1999, n.º9 (陆建人, "东盟的新安全观", 当代亚太, 1999年, 第9期)

and national interest <sup>11</sup>. If China was to get a world power status, it should work out on several fields such as economy, politics, culture, science and technology. Although there was no official reference to this concept, Chinese government started to adopt a comprehensive perspective of national power. In the end of eighties some Chinese scholars even research on this topic such as Chen Chongbei, Hong Yi and Wang Youdi <sup>12</sup>.

Moreover, especially during the nineties, Chinese government adopted a comprehensive approach to security, the so called "comprehensive security" (*zonghe anquan* 综合安全). In order to respond to emerging transnational security threats not limited to traditional military issues, States need to adopt a broad perspective of security and must cooperate with other States to solve them. These transnational threats particularly affect East Asia, and include terrorism, environmental deterioration, diseases, contraband, drug trafficking, piracy, among others. To answer to these threats, States need a holistic security concept including economic security, environmental security, social security, etc. Chinese government also adopted a "comprehensive security" concept which, apart from traditional military security, includes non-traditional security issues or the so called "human security" according to some scholars <sup>13</sup>. Comprehensive security is one of the main components of China's "new security concept".

Considered by Chinese government as low politics, these issues have been subjected to a different approach from high politics. Inserted in the high politics level, issues like sovereignty and territorial integrity are from the exclusive domain of Chinese government, not allowing other states' interference. Human security is included in the low politics and surprisingly Chinese government often cooperate with other Asian countries in order to solve them.

Cooperation with Southeast Asian countries has been especially frequent in the last years, namely on a multilateral basis. Following the publication of a policy paper on the need to cooperate on non-traditional security issues in May

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<sup>11</sup> See YAN, Xuetong – Chinese National Interest Analysis, Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1997. (阎学通, 中国国家利益分析, 天津: 天津人民出版社, 1997)

<sup>12</sup> *Apud* LI, Fang - On China Comprehensive National Power, Hefei: Anhui Technology Press, 2002, p. 10-11. (李方, 中国综合国力方, 合肥: 安徽科学技术出版社, 2002).

<sup>13</sup> CHU, Shulong – "China and Human Security", in North Pacific Policy Papers 8, 2002, pp. 1-29.

2002 in ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), six months later China and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted a joint declaration to cooperate in this kind of issues. In this joint declaration, the defined priorities are combating illegal drugs, people-smuggling including trafficking women and children, sea piracy, terrorism, arms-smuggling, money laundering, international economic crime and cyber crime.

Furthermore, China has adopted measures on specific non-traditional security issues with neighbouring countries. After signing three United Nations (UN) Conventions on combating illegal drug trafficking, it was held in Beijing a meeting of UN Program of Drugs Control, on May 2002, jointly with Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia to discuss joint strategies. This problem is particularly serious on border regions, which makes cooperation between those countries very important. Besides, drug trafficking is related to other non-traditional security issues, such as transnational crimes and diseases quick expansion such as AIDS. On July 2004, China received a conference with more than 100 ASEAN promoters to discuss strategies to combat transnational crime such as drug trafficking.

Chinese government has also cooperates with Southeast Asian countries combating epidemics which affect all these countries including AIDS, SARS and birds flu.

SARS was a particularly typical case. Although right after the outbreak China denied how serious situation was, on April 2003 Beijing called a meeting with ASEAN leaders. Chinese prime-minister called for joint cooperation on health issues, namely through the creation of a pneumonia alert system, a program of prevention and treatment, cooperation in SARS research. This would be done through an investment of 10 million yuan by China. Furthermore there should be cooperation between Chinese government and ASEAN on health affairs particularly through border regions control<sup>14</sup>. Considering the implication this kind of events have in other sectors of economy, there was a meeting in June 2003 on Quarantine Administration in China and ASEAN and

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<sup>14</sup> “Speech by Premier Wen Jiabao of China at the Special China-ASEAN Leaders’ Meeting on SARS”, 2003, April, 29. In <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/zyjh/t25103.htm>

two months later a special meeting of tourism ministers of ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea about tourism revitalization in the region. Also on combating bird flu, Chinese government paid a great attention to this issue of health security and held a cooperation method with other Asian countries who suffered most and are still suffering with this epidemic.

Apart from health security, non-traditional security issues included in "comprehensive security" notion also contain environmental security. China faces serious environmental problems namely environmental deterioration, floods and lack of water in some regions. Realising that environmental problems could negatively affect economy, China as paid great attention dealing with these issues, in cooperation with Asian countries. There has been joint efforts to control CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which cause acid rains. Furthermore, China signed Kyoto Protocol in 1998 and approved Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2002. It has also cooperated with Asian countries in natural catastrophes assistance, for example in monsoons, droughts, fires and tsunami. For example, following December 2004 tsunami which affected many Asian countries, Chinese government donated 60 million USD of humanitarian help.

A good example of regional cooperation to jointly develop river resources and develop economic potential between China and neighbouring countries is based in Mekong River (or *Lancang* River in Chinese) which starts in Chinese territory. Since 1996 China is a dialogue partner of Mekong River Commission and since 2002 it shares information on waters level in flood season, which is very helpful in preventing catastrophes. Chinese government actively participates in the program of Great Mekong Sub-region from Asian Development Bank and also in the development program of Mekong Basin from ASEAN. This last program includes regional economic development projects, especially on production and electricity transport and also regional infrastructures construction in net including regional highways and Mekong River opening to navigation of big commercial ships.<sup>15</sup> Chinese interest in this

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<sup>15</sup> In 2001 China offered 5 million USD to help navigation in the superior course of Mekong River in Laos, Myanmar and Thailand.

project is related to its economic importance once. China is constructing several hydro-electric stations that will produce 14,100 million Kw yearly. This is particularly important due to China's energy needs. Furthermore these projects cause some environmental problems such as waters reprising, waters course control, aquatic water deregulation and sedimentation<sup>16</sup>. Consequently there must be collaboration between China and neighbouring countries on this issue.

Lack of energy resources is another major security concern, so energy security may be included in the non-traditional security issues. This is an issue of East Asian counties concern, especially China whose energy resources' demands gradually increase due to rapid economic growth. One of the main energy resources is oil. In 1993, China turned from oil exporter to oil importer and 10 years later it was already world's second largest petroleum consumer. For every one percent increase in GDP, energy demand grew by over 1.5 percent which had world repercussions, China has accounted for roughly one-third of global incremental crude demand over the past 5 years<sup>17</sup>.

In order to meet these energy needs, Chinese government has adopted some strategies: diversifying import sources and import locations; building up oil reserves to avoid unexpected interruption; promotion and strengthening of regional and bilateral energy cooperation; and participation in the Energy Charter Treaty<sup>18</sup>. Although it is not easy multilateral cooperation on energy affairs, great need for energy security can make in necessary. Consequently there has been cooperation between China and Central Asia neighbours on energy issues. China cooperate with Kazakhstan to build a cross-border pipeline and Russia is building a pipeline that will bring oil from Siberia whether to Nakhodka (route supported by Japan) or to Daqing in Northeast China (route supported by China). Furthermore, knowing that 75% of Chinese oil importations cross Malacca Strait, Chinese government is developing cooperation with Southeast Asian countries in order to promote transportation

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<sup>16</sup> GOH, Evelyn – “China in the Mekong River Basin: the regional security implications of resource development on the Lancang Jiang”, Working Paper n.º 69, Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2004, July. In <http://www.ntu.edu.sg/idss/publications/WorkingPapers/WP69.PDF>

<sup>17</sup> LOGAN, Jeffrey – “China's Quest for Energy Resources”, *Daxiyangguo*, 2005, n.º 8, pp. 31-44.

<sup>18</sup> XU, Yichong – “China's energy security”, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2006, June, vol. 60, n.º 2, pp. 273-274.

security in this area. There has been indeed energy cooperation among Asian countries, such as Qingdao initiative held in June 2004 between foreign ministers of the 22 countries which belong to "Asian Cooperation Dialogue", including China, Japan, India and South Korea. This initiative aims to cooperate on energy issues such as energy exploitation, exploration and conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energies, pipelines construction, strategic reserves creation, transportation security as well as the study of a possible regional electric net and an energy regional transportation net.

Energy transportation can also be seriously affected by terrorist acts. After 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, terrorism became an especially hot issue on international forums but this is a relatively common event in East Asia. Even before September 11, China, Russia and Central Asian countries decided to cooperate in combating the called three evils: terrorism, separatism and religious extremism. Following the Agreement on strengthening confidence in the military field (1996) and the Agreement on mutual reduction of armed forces in border areas (1997), China, Russia and three Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) started annual meetings to discuss issues of common interest and to solve clashes on a peaceful way.

On 15<sup>th</sup> June 2001, Shanghai 5's informal meetings were transformed into an organization also including also Uzbekistan: the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Based on cooperation, dialogue and consensus, SCO's priority is regional security, encouraging effective cooperation on political, trade-economic, scientific-technical, cultural, educational, energy, transportation and ecological issues as well as combating terrorism, separatism and extremism. SCO also develops cooperation in preventing illegal arms and narcotics trafficking, illegal migration and other types of criminal activities. These are non-traditional security problems that particularly affect Central Asian countries and to solve them there is a need to cooperate. SCO's importance for China has to do with the need to maintain stability in Central Asia due to regional geopolitical importance, region of energy resources transportation and source of terrorist action from uygur groups.

Being established right before September 11 attacks with the objective to combat terrorism, among others<sup>19</sup>, SCO could have played a more active role combating terrorism. However there was a lack of substantial measures and SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure was formally established just in June 2004 in Uzbekistan capital, Tashkent, after the inauguration of the SCO Secretariat in Beijing in January. Moreover in the last years, SCO has been broadening orientation to economic field, especially by Chinese leaders' influence. On September 2003, Wen Jiabao even proposed the establishment of a Free Trade Area among member states, including: facilitation of trade and investment and reduction or elimination of non-tariff barriers; setting of large projects on economic and technological cooperation; setting of long-term objective for regional economic cooperation and gradual establishment of free trade zone within SCO<sup>20</sup>.

On other multilateral meetings however, Chinese government has been particularly active promoting anti-terrorist measures in order to get support on its fight against domestic terrorist groups. Just one month after September 11, China took an active role in promoting an anti-terrorist declaration in APEC meeting in Shanghai and in July 2002 it signed an ARF statement pleading a joint campaign against terrorism financing.

From this analysis we can conclude that since the end of Cold War China is adopting a concept of regional security dominated by comprehensiveness, including not only traditional but also non-traditional issues. The way to solve regional security issues also changed, being characterized by cooperation on a bilateral and also multilateral way, as long as its national interests are not threatened.

### **Cooperative security**

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<sup>19</sup> It's interesting notice that right after the September 11 attacks, there was the first meeting of Heads of government of SCO member-states in which they limited to discuss matters of regional trade and economic cooperation, apart from a single statement condemning terrorist attacks but not taking substantial measures afterwards.

<sup>20</sup> "Chinese Premier proposes free trade zone within SCO", September 23, 2003 *in* Peoples Daily Online <[www.peopledaily.com.cn](http://www.peopledaily.com.cn)>.

As one of the elements of “new security concept”, according to Chinese leaders cooperation it is the ideal way to handle security issues. According to the Chinese government’s policy paper on the *new security concept*, cooperation or coordination “means that all countries should seek peaceful settlement of their disputes through negotiation and carry out wide ranging and deep-going cooperation on security issues of mutual concern so as to remove any potential dangers and prevent the outbreak of wars and conflicts.”<sup>21</sup> Cooperative security (*hezuo anquan* 合作安全) is defined as the ideal way to handle security issues including a peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as consultation and coordination on issues of mutual concern to prevent conflicts. Indeed “cooperation” was recently considered a Chinese foreign policy principle<sup>22</sup>, besides “peace and development” (*heping yu fazhan* 和平与发展).

According to Michael Yahuda, this new Chinese thinking about security “may be seen as a response to three broad developments: first, the continued emphasis on stability and economic development at home; second, the emergence of a less hostile international environment that was more welcoming to China’s integration in the international economy; and third, the experience of multilateral consultative security arrangements in both continental and maritime Asia.”<sup>23</sup> Chinese cooperative behaviour is particularly important to stimulate neighbouring countries trust as well as a peaceful regional security environment, which ultimately will encourage China’s economic development. Peace is the necessary condition to development which will ultimately also stimulate peace on a domestic, regional and also world basis. In the last years Chinese government has been adopting a cooperative way to handle traditional and non-traditional security issues, even on a multilateral basis.

However, we should notice that the concept of cooperative security is based on what Michael Yahuda calls “the Westphalian ethos of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, that emphasise sovereignty, the diversity of

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<sup>21</sup> “China’s Position Paper on the New Security Concept”, Geneva, 6 August 2002, in <[www.nti.org](http://www.nti.org)>.

<sup>22</sup> LI Zhaoxing – “Peace, Development and Cooperation -Banner for China’s Diplomacy in the New Era”, in Foreign Ministry of People’s Republic of China Website, 2005, Agosto, 22. <[www.fmprc.gov.cn](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn)>

<sup>23</sup> YAHUDA, Michael – “China’s Attempts to Woo Asia”, *Daxiyangguo*, 2003, n.º 3, p. 6.

political systems, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit.”<sup>24</sup> Although promoting a cooperative way to handle security affairs, Chinese leaders always stress sovereignty and territorial integrity as its basic security principles, not allowing foreign interference. Having a realist point of view, under no circumstances will it allow others interference on domestic affairs or on territorial integrity which includes hot issues such as Taiwan and South China Sea islands. Cooperative behaviour will just be used as long as there is no threat to China’s basic interests or principles.

China’s main security issues are located in East Asia and involve territorial sovereignty: Taiwan and the islands of South China Sea and of East China Sea. If possible Chinese government seeks to solve these issues through cooperation and peaceful means. If it feels national interests are threatened, Beijing allows itself the possibility to use force or threat of force.

One of the most serious security issues of East Asia still not solved is Taiwan question. The lost of administration over Taiwan under Japanese or later under Nationalist Party was perceived by Beijing government as a lost of face, which it’s imperative to recover. Nowadays there is a typical situation of irredentism in which one State claims part of other territory where part of the nation lives.

Following United Nations (UN) substitution of delegations in 1972, Taiwan’s international influence has been decreasing. Moreover Beijing demands as conditions to establish diplomatic relations its recognition as the sole Chinese government as well as immediate cessation of diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The island is now internationally relatively isolated, being recognised only by 25 countries, without almost any international influence, the most part of which located in Latin America and Caribbean.

Taiwan’s importance is related to its geopolitical location, a door which controls access to Chinese east coast. This explains other power’s interest such as US who approved “Taiwan Relations Act” to ensure protection against a mainland attack. For Beijing, Taiwan is also a question of face, therefore considered like domestic issue and not allowing foreign countries’ interference.

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<sup>24</sup> YAHUDA, Michael, *ob. it.*, p. 8.

Since mid eighties Chinese government has adopted a more or less cooperative method to solve this complex question, the so called formula "one country, two systems, peaceful reunification" (*yiguo liangzhi, heping tongyi* 一国两制、和平统一) which was reinforced in Jiang Zemin Eight Proposal on the Reunification of China (1998).

China and Taiwan used cooperative and more proactive ways to solve this question peacefully through discussion on non-governmental level. In the beginning of nineties two semi-official institutions were established to promote contact and cooperation between both sides of the Strait: Strait Exchange Foundation in Taipei and Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait in Beijing. Following more than a year of negotiations and an agreement on "one China" principle<sup>25</sup>, there was a meeting in Singapore in 1993 between the two associations and four agreements were signed mainly on administrative issues. However Chinese military exercises in Taiwan Strait in 1995/96 made them decrease. On the other hand, China is promoting economic diplomacy to overcome the island by trade relations and investment. Recently Beijing has welcomed Taiwan opposition leaders to visit China in order to break the ice and promote collaboration if elected. In 2005, Nationalist Party chairman Lien Chan and People's First Party chairman, James Soong, visited mainland China. Beijing is adopting Sun Zi's strategy of subduing the enemy without fighting, using a cooperative way at its own way.

Although Chinese government stressed cooperation in solving sensitive Taiwan issue, it won't abdicate on sovereignty rights over the island, using violent means if necessary. Fearing reactions of independence after Lee Tenghui's visit to US and Taiwan's presidential elections, Beijing held military exercises in the Taiwan Strait in 1995/96 as a warning. Recently, Chinese government adopted Anti-Secession Law which clearly states four conditions for improving relations with Taiwan: non hesitation on one China principle; never

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<sup>25</sup> In November 1992, these two semi-official reached a verbal agreement on support of "one China" principle but they did not specify what this meant for each side.

give up on peaceful reunification; never lose hope on Taiwan people; always oppose to independence secessionist activities.<sup>26</sup>

Another sensitive security question for China is sovereignty over Spratly, Paracel and Diaoyu. Apart from strategic location in the South China Sea and East China Sea respectively, these islands' importance is accrued by its potential energy resources reserves like oil and gas. The numerous intervenients in these issues opted for cooperation as preferential way to solve it, even on multilateral basis.

Occupied by Japan from 1895 and 1945 and afterwards since 1972, China and Taiwan also demand sovereignty over the Diaoyu islands. This is due to its strategic location and also to the detection of oil and gas reserves in the sixties. In 1992 Chinese government approved the Law on Territorial Waters which includes Diaoyu Islands (Senkaku in Japanese) in Chinese continental platform and gives Chinese government the right to move invaders by force if sovereignty is threatened. In response to this measure, in July 1996, Japanese government ratified UN Convention on Law of the Sea<sup>27</sup>, claiming an exclusive economic zone of 200 miles, including Diaoyu Islands. To avoid worsening of this situation, both countries decided to cooperate.

However cooperation is not always possible due to some issues troubling Sino-Japanese relations: Japanese government attitude towards the past not completely assuming it and challenging China through frequent visits to Yasukuni Shrine; US military support of Japan, renewed in February 2005 and assuming a common point of view on a possible support to Taiwan's defence against mainland China; Japanese more assertive critics on China, identifying it together with North Korea, as major security concerns in the National Defence Programme Outline in December 2004; Japan's wish to become a permanent member of UN Security Council. Indeed this was a pretext to fire great Chinese demonstrations against Japan on China in April 2005. Finally when meeting Japanese prime-minister Junichiro Koizumi, Chinese president Hu Jintao reinforced the development of friendly cooperative relations between their

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<sup>26</sup> "Hu Jintao Four-point Guideline", *China Radio International Website*, 2005, March, 26.

<sup>27</sup> In May 1996, China also ratified Convention on the Law of the Sea, but its legislation did not mention Taiwan's continental platform to avoid disputes on Diaoyu.

countries, suggesting five proposals: Japanese government should forge a friendly and cooperative relationship with China abiding by the documents signed right after the establishment of diplomatic relations; Japanese government should regard history as a mirror to the future expressing real remorse; Taiwan question should be correctly handle without foreign intervention; differences between the two nations need to be resolved through dialogue and peaceful negotiations; two countries should further strengthen communication and cooperation.<sup>28</sup> Although in a period of relatively instability, recently Chinese and Japanese governments agreed on a peaceful and consensual resolution of territorial disputes and even a joint development of East China Sea resources, making also cooperative security its best way to deal with the issue.

Regarding Spratly (*Zhongsha* 中沙 and *Nansha* 南沙) and Paracel (*Xisha* 西沙) Archipelagos, until 1958 no country had challenged Chinese sovereignty. However suspicions of energy resources' existence originated neighbouring countries' greed. Paracel archipelago is claimed by China and Vietnam and Spratly by six States: China (which occupied nine islands and claims sovereignty on all), Malaysia (that occupied three and claims sovereignty on twelve islands), Philippines (which occupied eight and claims all), Taiwan (that occupied one and claims all) and Brunei (that claims part of South China Sea by its territory and included in its continental platform and exclusive economic zone). These territorial claims have originated some violent clashes. Using the same historic argument as in Taiwan, China uses Law of Territorial Waters (1992) to argue its claims on Paracel and Spratly.

Although for a long period refusing multilateral means to solve sovereignty issue on South China Sea islands, since the end of cold war China adopted a more cooperative attitude towards Southeast Asian countries through ASEAN. According to the policy of friendly and stable neighbourhood, Beijing began to show a more participative behaviour in regional multilateral forums and organizations. Furthermore it needed to recover Southeast Asian countries'

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<sup>28</sup> "China initiates 5 proposals on ties with Japan", 2005, April, 24, in People's Daily Online <[www.english.peopledaily.com.cn](http://www.english.peopledaily.com.cn)>

trust following Chinese occupation of Mischief Reef in 1995, also claimed by Philippines.

After the 1997 Joint Statement of the Meeting of the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of ASEAN and China, Beijing finally agreed to subscribe the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in November 2002. According to this Declaration, the parties commit to resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force, through friendly consultations and negotiations according to principles of international law namely UN Charter and UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Furthermore, the parties reaffirm to actively undertake cooperative activities such as marine environmental protection, marine scientific research, safety of navigation and communication at sea, search and rescue operation, and combating transnational crime<sup>29</sup>. Indeed in December 2004, it was established a Joint Working Group China-ASEAN to study and recommend measures to put into practice provisions proposed in the Declaration.

Assuming a cooperative way, Chinese government has also actively participated in the discussion of regional affairs, promoting talks and also involving it on regional forums and organizations.

Beijing has been very active in regional affairs in which it is not directly involved such as the Korean peninsula division and North Korea missiles program. However it is undeniable Chinese interest in those issues and its implications to China. The future of Korean peninsula is crucial to China's ability to sustain a tranquil environment in Asia. Officially Chinese government supports Korean peninsula reunification but is mainly supports peace and stability in this region by its side. Since December 1997, Beijing participates in four party talks, including also US apart from 2 Koreas, with the objective to substitute armistice by real peace. China promotes a peaceful and cooperative resolution of this issue. It benefits from the current *statu quo* because it has a relatively good relationship with North Korea, its only ally, to whom it provides help and energy resources, and an even better relationship with South Korea

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<sup>29</sup> "Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea", in ASEAN website.

since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. South Korea needs Chinese energy resources, at the same time China needs south-korean electronic products to avoid dependence on Japan.

Wishing for a peaceful Korean peninsula, China also played an active role in promoting talks on North Korea missiles program. Since 2003, China has developed a mediating activity on three party talks and six party talks<sup>30</sup>. Although there was still no conclusion, it's interesting to notice China's active role promoting talks, on more an example of cooperative security.

China has also been more active participating in regional security forums and organizations on a cooperative way. Chinese participation depends on the interest in the organization objectives as well on the decision structure. China has been more participative in organizations with economic goals and with a flexible structure. Indeed the most part of Asian organization have very flexible structures and adopt non coercive decisions, which is according to *Asian way*, Chinese included. On the other hand, Asian forums and organizations foster countries equality, no matter economic situation or political options, and not being against third countries. This is the basic structure of organizations such as ASEAN, ARF, Boao Forum and Track II institutions in which China participates. These features make the distinction between cooperative security and collective security whose decisions are obligatory. According to Janne Nolan, cooperative security aims to deter aggression and to minimize the scale of international violence, and collective security aims to deter aggression and to defeat it if it occurs.<sup>31</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Since the end of the Cold War, China started to define a regional policy. As a main element of regional policy, security is characterized by two main features: comprehensiveness and cooperation. China has indeed adopted a broader approach of security towards East Asia including not just traditional but

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<sup>30</sup> Apart from China, the other countries involved are North and South Korea, US, Russia and Japan.

<sup>31</sup> NOLAN, Janne E. – *Global Engagement Cooperation and Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1994, *apud* BRADY, Linda – “Engagement, Marriage, or Divorce after the Cold War?”, *Merston International Studies Review*, n.º 39, 1995, p. 146.

also non-traditional issues. Furthermore, China is trying to conquer neighbouring countries trust through charm diplomacy because it needs a peaceful regional environment to develop.

In the future, according to Michael Yahuda, Chinese leaders will face three sets of dilemmas in their cooperative approach to security issues in the post-Cold War period: whether the new approach is little more than an additional layer of security, an attempt to promote particular Chinese security interests rather than an alternative to traditional security approach of alliances; whether it will be possible to introduce the degree of transparency in the political domain without political change; whether this approach incorporates fundamental challenges to American interests in the region without addressing the implications of what that entails.<sup>32</sup>

Indeed if China will continue to adopt a cooperative security way, it must consider US presence in Asia. According to He Fangchuan, "nothing is more important than Sino-american relations for China to establish the stable East Asian security structure. That means the positive and stable development of Sino-American relation essentially guarantees East Asian security."<sup>33</sup>

Considering US factor and the features of China's security strategy – comprehensiveness and cooperation – the question is how China will deal with regional security issues namely involving sovereignty. Finally China has a realist perspective and it will not allow other countries interference in sovereignty or territorial integrity, and it will use force if it is necessary.

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<sup>32</sup> YAHUDA, Michael – "Chinese Dilemmas in regional security architecture", *The Pacific Review*, 2003, Vol. 16, n.º 2, p. 191.

<sup>33</sup> HE Fangchuan- "China and the Security of East Asia", *Daxiyangguo*, 2004, n.º 5, p.22.

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