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The (inter)national self

Negotiating the *Japanese* narrating *China*

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Abstract

Unpacking and reconstituting different aspects of the *Japanese* narrative on *China* within the context of the Yasukuni controversy between 2001 and 2006, this thesis concludes that the constitution of *China* is an inherent part of the negotiating processes of the “Japanese we”. With a methodological framework comprised of grounded theory and narrative analysis; in its merged form referred to as grounded narratology, a theoretical framework derived from the constitution of “threat”, “dependence” and “shame” dimensions of the narrative is put together. The theoretical framework is constituted by theories of identity, security, ontological security, routinisation and banal nationalism.

This thesis contributes empirically though presenting a material that the author has not seen utilised to this date. Methodologically, it contributes with the fusion of grounded theory and narrative analysis and theoretically through merging fragments of different theories into a network that suggests further research to be done on routinised nationalist security relations, a dynamic that the author argues is crucial to understanding the current developments of the *Japanese* image of *China* as well as Northeast Asian dynamics as a whole.

Keywords: grounded theory, narrative analysis, Diet records, *Japanese* national identity, routinised nationalism

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1 Introduction: the thesis

This thesis in its widest sense belongs to the intersection of identity studies and Japanese studies. It examines the way in which *Japanese* national identity is constituted in relation to its perception of *China*, defined as the negotiation of the *Japanese* narrative on *China*. Since there are many competing outlooks of what should be defined as the “Japanese” and the “Chinese” and there is no way to define one fixed category respectively including all these, what I perceive as the Japanese and the Chinese throughout the study, is my interpretation of the reconstitution of Japanese identity in relation to China that I have made based on a total of 284 contributions to debates in the Diet and its committees derived on the basis of the keywords “Yasukuni”, “China” and “2001-2006”. Yasukuni refers to the Yasukuni controversy, one of the most contested issues facing Japan and China today. The reason for choosing a controversy, is that I assume conflictual behaviour to be more polarising than that of non-conflictual settings, providing me with clear examples of the dynamics in play. This is merely an assumption, though. Since I only have this material to refer to, I have nothing to back up that statement. “China” was chosen for Japan to relate to. Identity theory identifies the need for elements to relate to as not belonging to the self (Campbell 1992:50) in order to organise one’s perceptions of the self (Kinnvall 2004:746), either on the individual level or as a state (Steele 2005:519f). Routinising these relationships, as we will later see in the outline of the case, becomes an attachment (Mitzen 2006:341) based on an assured sense of security derived from the knowing (McSweeney 1999:13-15, 17f) of how to define China and precisely here lays the motivation to a study of the “Japanese” securitisation of “China”. As the alien other of the “Japanese” China appears for the first time in *Kojiki*, the first printed matter of Japan. Through the background of this history of alienation (that persists still today (Rozman 2008:217)). Given the thorough historical of these two countries (I will not go into this here. Let us just say that Japan has “imported” a large part of its cultural heritage from this country, through the Korean peninsula). The time period chosen, former prime minister Jun’ichiro Koizumi’s time in office, was given the case an obvious choice. Koizumi, as we shall later see, had a severe impact on its dynamics and it has never been as overtly contested as during his time in office. Other than Yasukuni, contested textbook history writings and Japan’s denial to acknowledge war-time prostitution (frequently referred to as the “Comfort women” case) are among the three more challenging today.

1.1 Analytical aspects

The theoretical part of this paper consists of a conceptual framework outlining and relating the core concepts of the study. Based on the methodological framework comprised of grounded narratology; the fusion of the approaches of grounded theory and narrative analysis, the concepts are derived from the data analysis and the compiled into a framework for further analysis. *Narrative*, or narrativity, in this context, is defined as the drive to render experience cohesive and coherent (Patterson-Monroe 1998:328), and focuses on our quest to explain our being and acting in relation to the outside world (Somers-Gibson 1994:61f). *Identity production* is defined as the process that takes place between subjectivity and social knowledge (Kinnvall 2004:746), in this thesis, as already stated, defined as the negotiating process producing and reproducing *Japanese* national identity. *Security*, in this context, is defined as one such process of identity production based on the alienation of a chosen “other”, in this case *China*. *Ontological security*, or the security of being (ibid.), is the processes of identity and security production in joint concert. *Routinisation*, the dimension in which these relationships are becoming dependent of each other, for example, in which Japanese and Chinese domestic policy become attached to the Yasukuni controversy in order to justify their own nationalist agendas (Rose 2007:24-25, 45). *Banal nationalism*, providing an account of how these routinised relationships become incorporated into our every day lives, in addition also adds the dynamics of mass mobilisation. Since most identity is embedded in complex, multi-dimensional systems to make sense (Waever 2002:24), the analysis takes on a multi-layered character consisting of the unpacking and reconstitution of the interpretation of meaning in the *Japanese* narrative on *China* within the context of the Yasukuni controversy.

1.2 Delimitations

There are a few things that need to be said about the Japanese. What is today referred to as “Japanese” identity has, just like many other cases of national identity, not always been the same. There no doubt are competing versions of *Japanese* national identity even without including *China* in the picture. There are the groups with Ainu heritage, groups identifying themselves as *Okinawans*, groups of so called *Nikkei* immigrants, groups of women, as well as many others defining their particular sense of belonging to society somewhat different to what we shall see in this study, that are situated inside of what is referred to as the “Japanese” context. These unfortunately fall outside of the scope of this study. I say unfortunately, because this happens not because they are any less relevant. This happens only in order to make this study feasible at all within its limitations.

The national identity interpreted as the “Japanese” in this paper, is to be seen as produced by a small, hetero normative group of predominately males of respectable age, and, thus, has to be interpreted as such. Since vital groups are excluded, the narrative cannot be taken as evidence, but has to be interpreted as a limited representation merely illustrating the case. No generalisations in terms of some all-encompassing “Japaneseness” can thus be made on the basis of the material (Patterson-Monroe 1998:327).

1.3 Methodology and material

Entering “China” and “Yasukuni” into the Japanese government’s search engine for Diet protocols as well as delimiting the scope to 2001-2006, generates 284 hits. Reading through these contributions, 138 are deemed irrelevant, mostly on the basis of their irrelevancy – either on the basis of them mere being referred to in relation to other topics, or because the key words are not interrelated. An additional five contributions are left out due to the failure to understand their intended messages. These exclusions leave us with 141 contributions distributed as follows: 20 remaining hits in 2001, 21 in 2002, 11 in 2003, 27 in 2004, 45 in 2005, and 21 in 2006. The protocols vary in terms of length, content, depth, and creativity, and the numbers are not to be interpreted as interesting as such. After this initial stage, key words that are seen as symptomatic of the narrative are identified. The ones accounted for here, are the “China” threat, “dependency” and “shame”. The paradigms are then related to fragments of the theories accompanying the concepts of identity, security, ontological security, routinisation and banal nationalism as outlined above. Since this takes place in a dialectical process (Bryman 2001:283), the categories (concepts) are the result of constant changes. In order to secure the transparency of the study, many citations will be provided (Bergström-Boreus 2000:262) to illustrate the argument and to motivate the choices made (Bryman 2001:283).

1.4 Purpose and research questions

For the limited scope of a thesis like this, such a complex question as Sino-Japanese relations is simply to large. A first delimitation is therefore to chose to only focus on the Japanese side; delimiting the study to only looking at the *Japanese* side or the *Japanese* way of looking at itself in relation to what is perceived as “foreign” embodied by *China*. By way of looking at the “foreignness” inherent to the “Japaneseness” I intend to unpack the *Japanese* sense of a “we” in order to see what lurks behind it. Since there is no *Japanese* way of looking at *China*, I have chosen to analyse what could be perceived as the “official” way of doing so. Selecting debates from the Japanese Diet based on the keywords “Yasukuni” and *China* and then sifting out those hits merely relating to

one of the two, the *Japanese* narrative on *China* within the context of the Yasukuni controversy is then identified and analysed. My empirical aim of this thesis is to reconstruct the *Japanese* narrative on *China* as articulated in these debates on this particular controversy. This is interesting and relevant since this material, stemming from what I know, not have been utilised to date. The unpacked narrative is then reconstructed in order to assign it with different meanings. The reconstructed narrative is then theoretised and referred back to the context of Sino-Japanese relation where we first started.

The questions guiding me are:

How is “China” negotiated in Japanese Diet debates over the Yasukuni controversy between 2001 and 2006?

How can the study of this narrative benefit from a fusion of grounded theory and narrative analysis?

Which are the theoretical elements needed for a theoretisation of the narrative?

1.5 Thesis outline

Having defined the problem of inquiry, stated the purpose as well as narrowed it down to three specific research questions, the next step is to structure the outline of the study in order to explain how it has been structured as well as what parts are related in which ways; what is derived from what. After this first introductory chapter introducing the study, declaring its purpose and research questions as well as to providing an outline of it, the next chapter, historicising the regionalism of Northeast Asia, discussing its implications for Sino-Japanese relations as well as to briefly outlining our case at hand; the Yasukuni controversy, is aimed at situating the study in its proper context. Chapter three then provides us with the methodological framework, consisting of a fusion of the grounded theory approach and narrative analysis. This provides us with an outline of the methodological procedures of the study. Chapter four is an outline of the Yasukuni controversy, complemented with a discussion of the identities attached to it. This chapter also provides us with an account of the political significance of the controversy. Thereafter, in chapter five, follows the reconstruction of three selected aspects of the narrative that I have chosen to reconstruct in order to illuminate both the research process and the narrative as such. These aspects are the “China threat”, “dependency” (as referred to Japan’s perceived dependency of China) and “shame” (defined as the negotiation process of whether Japan should take upon itself feelings of guilt after its deeds in the Second World War). Chapter six then proceeds with the theoretical analysis of the reconstruction. In chapter

seven, the study is summed up and the conclusions are presented. Chapter eight provides an outline of the primary sources used in this study together with some comments of these. Chapter nine, lastly, lists the secondary sources.

2 Setting the stage: thesis background

Beginning the study by locating it in its proper context of Northeast Asia, it is in place to account for the current state of affairs of this politically intriguing region. Thereafter, delimiting the scope of the study, follows an outline of some of the current issues facing Sino-Japanese relations. Accounting for the challenges to Northeast Asia, embodied in the complexities of its emergent events, I will, before we proceed to the matters of this thesis as such, introduce two such aspects that I wish to study.

2.1 Northeast Asia: current complexities

Northeast Asia is a region clouded by multiple contradicting images of security excesses as well as persistent misperceptions of intentions and capabilities. This makes it a site where security tensions and national identity clashes are intense (Rozman 2007:200). Disregarding the alarming matters between the two Koreas as well as domestic outbursts of violence in China, there are still plenty of contested wounds yet to be healed in this region. One such issue is the history writings of school textbooks, in which a settlement on common ground in terms of how history should be written yet is to come. Another one is Japan's denial of the involvement in war-time prostitution, an issue often referred to as the "Comfort women" case that is provoking much criticism among Japan's neighbours. Moreover, Japan is also denying to compensate for forced labour, another of its remnants from the Pacific War (the part of the Second World War that was staged in Asia). Together with repeated attempts to justify this war as well as its colonial period (in which Japan colonised Korea) all put serious strains on Japan's relations with its most important neighbours: the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea. In the relations between Japan and China, issues regarding the Sino-Japanese War/ the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance are especially sensitive. In Japan-Korea relations the Japanese colonial period is the most contested. (Schneider 2008:107-115).

2.2 Sino-Japanese relations

With Japan's "normalisation process" towards establishing regular military forces of its own and the simultaneous rise of China, the bilateral relations of these two countries are becoming increasingly strained.

2.2.1 Current developments

US-China and US-Japan relations are sometimes referred to as the two most important bilateral relationships of the world today. In their shadows, Japan-China relations are only seldomly appraised significant. They are not even mentioned as important for either China or Japan. Presently, Chinese-Japanese relations can easily be said to be at their worst since the end of World War II and demonising campaigns are working their ways in both Japan and China. These campaigns frequently have the unintended consequence of strengthening nationalism. In Japan one of five leading newspapers as well as an array of magazines regularly fuel Chinese popular nationalist sentiment. In a similar manner, recent, quasi-official media campaigns in China with the purpose of demonising Japan, are working well to mobilize to anti-Japanese manifestations among the Chinese with resulting destruction of Japanese property and so forth. Additionally, it also serves the Japanese nationalist cause, feeding the propaganda machines with even more *reasons* for their cause (Cooney 2007:151, Rose 2005:40, 43). Not long after Koizumi's inauguration as prime minister, bilateral meetings between China and Japan were discontinued and so it remained for the remainder of his time in office (Rose 2005:45). Koizumi is sometimes accused of having provoked a "Cold War" between the two through his regular pilgrimages to the site (Hagström 2008/09:224).

2.2.2 Issues at stake

The major issues facing these two powers today, are the ones of divergent history writings, territorial disputes and the controversial Japanese prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni shrine (Rose 2005:45). Trapped in a mutual siege of excluding nationalisms for domestic consumption (Schneider 2008:107-115), nationalist agendas are fed from these intrigues. In order to take a deeper look at the dynamics underlying such vicious circles, we shall in this thesis further examine the Yasukuni controversy.

2.3 The Yasukuni controversy

The Yasukuni issue is one of those that has been especially prolonged and notorious, and that has contributed to both reinforcements and reconsiderations of the foreign affairs of the region. Constituting one of the most politically relevant history problems currently troubling Northeast Asia, its prime ministerial visits have generated much conflict. The Yasukuni controversy is essentially constituted of a clash between advocates of Japan's inability to assume responsibility for war-time atrocities (such as the ones outlined earlier), on the one hand, and proponents of the non-interference of other nations statement proclaiming Yasukuni to be a domestic matter on the other.

2.3.1 Yasukuni in Northeast Asian politics

The Yasukuni issue, further, represents a prism of the changes in Northeast Asia over the past two decades, attesting to altered distributions of power, changing state-society relations, heightened significance of the past for the present as well as prevailing national self-images. The variety of symbolisms of Yasukuni additionally serve as one of the most important arenas where the past, as well as contested images of the countries' selves and others are produced and reproduced. As the promotion of patriotism, defined as pride in one's country, remains a central goal in the national policies of all the four countries of this region, a resolution to these issues is likely to necessitate serious commitment from all the parties involved. This since these countries this far have shown proof to, rather than accounting for the actual complexities at hand, all prioritize the objectives of fostering national self-respect and unity.

2.3.2 Yasukuni in Sino-Japanese relations

The Yasukuni controversy, emerging domestically at the end of the American Occupation of Japan following upon the Second World War, has ever since been an ongoing dispute. Receiving status as a diplomatic issue between Japan and its neighbours, particularly China and South Korea, with former prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's visit in 1985, it is by its neighbours often viewed as centrally located at the very heart of the debate about Japan's war responsibility and its perceived inability to reconcile with *Asia* (Rose 2007:24-25, 45).

2.4 “Cold War” politics

Koizumi’s ascent to power in April 2001 reproduced what by some have been called a “Cold War” in Sino-Japanese relations with bilateral summits cancelled between October 2001 and September 2006, ending with Koizumi’s descending. With Japan’s economic decline, China’s economic rise, his annual pilgrimages to the Yasukuni shrine and Aso deciding to publicly depict China a threat to Japan’s security, the relation reached an all-time low in 2005. Opinion polls conducted by the Japanese Cabinet Office in that year show that some 63.4 per cent of the surveyed Japanese expressed that they had no feelings of affinity with China. Compared to a similar poll from 1980 this represents an increase of almost 50 per cent. At the same time, 71.2 per cent believed the bilateral relationship between the two countries to be “not good”. In a similar survey in december 2008, after two years of supposed reconciliation after Koizumi’s descent, the “no sense of affinity” had increased to 66.6 per cent and the “not good relationship” to 71.9 per cent (Hagström 2009:223, 234).

2.5 Official rhetorics of improvement

What is striking with these developments is not so much that the two are going in different directions, making the dynamics increasingly polarised. More so, is the fact that Sino-Japanese relations since September 2006 and up until today officially have improved drastically. The earlier rhetorics of tension have all of a suddenly been transformed into positive statements about cooperation and well-being and both governments are believed to be likely to do their outmost to maintain this illusion (ibid.:237). As an example, Aso, in addressing the economic crisis in a speech to a group of future Asian leaders in April 2009, prompted it to be “absolutely critical that Japan and China, the second- and third-largest economies in the world with major responsibilities regarding the world economy” “move in coordination with each other” (Aso 2009). Commenting on the economic growth of Asia he goes on to state that Japan and China “are in a position to lead the Asian economy” and that there further is “a major premise in working to achieve that” (ibid.).

2.6 Currents of nationalism

At the same time, Japanese Diet members openly depict China Japan’s biggest enemy and many policy makers view China as a threat. Public opinion against China has for a long time succeeded through nationalist politicians and journalists in large-circulation newspapers and journals as well as elsewhere. With as many as ten per cent of the Japanese ruling party considered part of a nationalist group in 2007 (Hagström 2009:237), these efforts have not been fruitless.

2.5 The “China threat”

At the above mentioned news conference in Tokyo in December 2005 the then foreign minister and current prime minister of Japan, Taro Aso, said: China, a “neighbor with one billion people equipped with nuclear bombs,” is beginning to pose a “considerable threat” (Takahara 2005). Meanwhile, Hu Jintao, currently the Paramount Leader of the People’s republic of China, in the same year denominated the Yasukuni issue to be the single problem preventing China and Japan to move ahead. On the part of Japan, China’s military expansion has been the focus of much criticism and anxiety (Aso 2009). In 2006 Li Changchun of the Politburo went as far as to state that these represented the most serious difficulties since the normalization of diplomatic ties between the countries (Rose 2007:23) in 1972.

3 Methodology: grounded narratology

In order to unpack the *Japanese* narrative on *China*, a methodological framework consisting of a fusion of the two approaches of grounded theory and narrative analysis is here to be presented and discussed. I say approaches, since both of these are frequently referred to as such by their proponents. By approach, I mean that they are more than just any methodologies in the sense that they both to an extent turn the research process “up-side-down”. We shall soon see what I mean. Grounded theory, is an approach to the generation of theory. Inductively deriving keywords from empirical data that, in a second step, are coded, categorised and analysed, it serves to bridge the gap between pompous theory and ordinary-life data (Alvesson – Sköldberg 1994:69). This, I argue, is particularly useful and enabling for a study aiming at a cultural context far away from that in which most theory has traditionally been developed. Narrative theory, or narratology; the study of narratives, or stories, is an approach to the study of our every-day telling and retelling of the stories; the meaning making processes through which we make sense of ourselves and our lives (Bryman 2001:401, Robertson 2005:223, 227, Somers 1994:613-617). Based on the notion that we, human beings, are story-telling creatures, narration is appreciated to be the most fundamental in human communication (Dahlgren 2000:95, Robertson 2005:220-221). Common to both grounded theory and narrative analysis, is that the role of the researcher takes on the character of a narrator (Heide 2000:68).

3.1 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is stated by Bryman to be the by far most widely utilised framework for analysing qualitative data. Its core lays is the process of deriving theory from data. This data is then systematically gathered and analysed throughout the research process. In grounded theory, the collection of data, analysis and theories stand in close relationship to each other (2001:390). Since the theory is derived from the data and not the other way around, as may at other times be the case, the theoretical part of this thesis is, accordingly, found closer to the end than what may otherwise be expected. Data collection and analysis has throughout this whole study proceeded in tandem, that is, repeatedly referring back to each other (ibid.). The grounded theory approach provides different tools of analysis. In order to structure the outline of how this study has proceeded, I will describe these individually, theoretically as well as referring to the study.

3.1.1 Coding

Coding is the key process of grounded theory. It is here the data is broken down into components, given names and categorised (Bryman 2001:391). In this thesis, the primary material consists of 284 contributions to Japanese parliamentary debates derived through inserting the key words “Yasukuni”, “China” and “2001-2006” into the official Japanese Diet record search engine. Reading through these 284 hits, keywords were derived and grouped into categories reflecting different aspects of the narrative as a whole. In the empirical account three such categories are presented and analysed; namely: the perception of a *China threat*, Japan’s *dependence on China* and its feelings of *shame*. These categories emerged based on my interpretation of the data and makes me an inherent part of the research process.

3.1.2 Constant comparison

Constant comparison is the process of maintaining a close connection between the data and its conceptualisation. This is to guarantee that the correspondence between the data and the conceptualisation is not lost. It also entails the constant comparison of phenomena coded under a certain category to facilitate the emergence of the theoretical elaboration. Thirdly, the constant comparison also entails being sensitive to contrasts between the categories that are emerging in order to keep their relations to other categories clear (ibid.). this aspect of grounded theory has influenced the study in the sense that I have worked by stages. This means that I have been careful to oscillate between the categorising work and the compilation of theories for the analysis thereof.

3.1.3 Narrativity to our rescue

The biggest risk usually associated with grounded theory, is the possible problem of losing the context of what is said. Further, plucking chunks of data out of the context in which they originally appeared, may result in fragmenting the data, losing the narrative flow of the story told (ibid.: 400-402). This is precisely where the second part of this methodological framework; that of narrative analysis, comes in. Narrative analysis complements the grounded theory approach with the reconstruction of the narrative flow. Grounded theory in turn, provides narrative analysis with the significance that it gains through the theoretisation of the reconstructed narrative (ibid.:402). This widens the opportunities of narrative analysis to link its findings to wider social contexts than the purely local subject studied. Narrative analysis is frequently criticised for being “too subjective” and this is what we avoid by combining it with grounded theory.

3.2 Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis, as defined by Bryman, is an approach to the elicitation and analysis of data. This elicitation of data, essentially the reconstruction of the stories that people tell in order to make sense of themselves and their lives, is sensitive to temporality. By detecting and injecting temporal sequence to their understanding of life, people are able to produce accounts of what can be perceived as continuity, often understood as meaningfulness. Narrative analysis is thus about focusing on the answers that people provide to the for them crucial matters of their existence as stories. On the basis of these stories, the researcher then, depending on her or his focus, reconstructs what has been said into yet another story. Just like the original story relates episodes to each other and account for the interconnections between them, the story reconstructed by the researcher does as well. In focus of this reconstruction is the functions that the narrative serves for the teller (Bryman 2001:401).

3.2.1 Retelling the story

The retelling of the story, as staged by the researcher, has the purpose of retelling what is told, in a way that is different from what was originally the case. This in order to prove a different point. For example, in the original stories depicting *China* a threat, as we shall see in the outline of the narrative of the perception of a “*China threat*” later on, the original points are generally made either to approve or disapprove of the depiction of *China* as a *threat*. In this setting, the contributions as such are, and can only be interpreted as, merely individual contributions to the national debate. By extracting those fragments that discuss whether or not *China* should be depicted a threat, the possibility of systematising, or reconstructing, an alternative contextualisation that enables the study of underlying currents that are usually drowned in the surrounding information and thus remain invisible, I argue, is a prominent feature of narrative analysis. The validation criteria here lies in the fact that what is in essence studied, is the original point made in the original setting. In this case, what I am interested in, is, firstly, to inquire into the points made in the contributions. I want to know whether people argue pro or con the image of the *China threat* to Japan’s security. I also want to know how they motivate their standpoints. In the maintenance of the function of the teller throughout the reconstruction process lies the strength of this approach. This requires the researcher to be susceptible to her or his cultural context in order not to foresee matters that could further the analysis (Bryman 2001:401). This makes the role of the researcher utilising narrative analysis as much a part of the research process as the one preferring grounded theory. This element furthers the connection between the two and is one of the reasons that they so readily can be merged into one framework, one that I have called grounded narratology. Grounded here stands for its close connection to empirical data, and narratology for its foundation of the narrated.

3.3 The merger – problems and possibilities

Merging the two approaches together it is in place that I account for both their, and my own, metatheoretical assumptions. There is much variation in the fields of both grounded theory and narrative analysis. Grounded theory can, for example, be used for both qualitative and quantitative purposes. Even though I have thus far never encountered any accounts of such measures within the narrative tradition (and most likely will not find myself doing that either), there is still much variation within this field as well. My understandings and applications of grounded theory and narrative analysis have in common that they both belong to the interpretist school. As such, their emphasis are on the search for knowledge found in the contingent social processes in which the knowledge is produced (Marsh-Furlong 2002:18-21). The production of knowledge is thus defined as a social matter, and, as such, has to be studied through social interaction. With their relational, social constructionist ontology and hermeneutic epistemology (2002:136), these two approaches are meta-theoretically compatible. This means that they have the same common ground and can, from that point of view, be merged together.

4 The Yasukuni controversy

The Yasukuni shrine, founded by the Japanese government in the Meiji period for the worship of the divine spirits who sacrificed their lives for the country. Its religious purpose was to pacify the spirits of the war dead to prevent them from seeking retribution on the living. As the Meiji government turned Shinto into the official religion of the Japanese state, Yasukuni became the central site for commemoration and worship of divine spirits. The way of becoming a divine spirit is to fight in the name of the Japanese emperor and nation. Beginning in 1853 the spirits of approximately 2.5 million war dead have been enshrined at Yasukuni and the shrine receives approximately eight million visitors a year. It is considered a central site for national memory in Japan. As a symbol of pre-war state Shinto and Japanese militarism, it divides the Japanese nation, going to the core of contested interpretations of Japan's role in the Second World War and the recreation of a national identity in the post-war period. Crudely put, the Yasukuni controversy is staged between leftist progressives who view Japan's actions during the Second World War as aggressive and are in favour of a strict separation between the state and religion. On the other hand those on the right view Japan's role in the Second World War as part of the struggle against colonial domination of Asia and are in favour of state support for the Yasukuni shrine (Rose 2007:25-26). In China Yasukuni shrine symbolises Japan's neglect of war-time guilt and refusal to deal with the issue of divergent history writings facing Northeast Asia properly. There is much criticism against prime ministerial visits to the shrine mainly based on the enshrinement of 14 A-classed war criminals that were secretly enshrined at Yasukuni in 1978. Yasukuni provokes controversy because of its association with a particular interpretation of the past. National historical memory; the way in which a nation remembers its past, is central to the formulation and reformulation of national identity. As we have seen, there is an ongoing struggle domestically in Japan between the left and the right over the mastery of the national identity narrative. The symbolism of the Yasukuni shrine, in addition to the version of history presented in its history museum, embodies the affirmative view of Japan's role in the Second World War, that of Japan as a liberator, rather than an aggressor. Yasukuni shrine and the Yushukan, its history museum, have come to play a central role in the political, religious and cultural affirmation and reaffirmation for the nation. Given the enshrinement of the war criminals, many people have come to wonder what it really is that the prime ministers are there to honour (ibid.:27-29).

4.1 Identifications attached

Chinese people officially identify with their history as victims of Japan's imperialist drives and the Yasukuni shrine thus evokes a very negative memory in contemporary China. Recalling Japanese aggression and imperial conquest as well as past suffering caused by Japanese invasions and occupation, the controversy has strengthened popular resistance to the shrine. It has also been suggested by some scholars that China's nationalist identity was formed in part by its struggle against Japanese invaders. China's firm opposition to Japanese prime ministerial visits to the shrine usually provokes expressions and concerns and displeasure as well as serious political protests and sometimes street demonstrations as well (Shibuichi 2005:204-5).

4.1.1 Rightist identifications

Domestically in Japan, Japanese rightists, identifying with the pre-war Japanese state, in general tend to glorify Japan's past imperialist expansion. Perceiving Yasukuni shrine as a heartwarming symbol of self-sacrifice and patriotism and maintaining that ordinary Japanese should never forget the sacrifice of the fallen heroes equated with the history of modern Japan and the hardships it endured; Yasukuni functions as a reassurance of the continuity of Japanese tradition, religion and culture. Considering Japan's historical identity as a modern nation state to be at stake, any concessions to their opponents are likely to be seen as tantamount to admitting that Japanese history of the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries to be a mistake (ibid.:199) and thus that it compromises Japan of today. Some also fear that an admission of guilt for past transgressions would turn their erstwhile fathers and brothers into war criminals (Tamamoto 2001:35).

4.1.2 Leftist identifications

Many leftists, believing to represent the progressive force in the dispute, maintain the shrine to be a symbol of cruel militarism. Stating that the continuing existence of Yasukuni shrine proves that militarism and feudalism survive in contemporary Japanese society and that prime ministerial visits breach the separation of state and religion clause of the so called peace constitution, stating that the Japanese state and nation should be predicated on the 1945 war defeat and its aftermath. Believing that Japan was reborn when human rights, democracy and pacifism were introduced by the occupation forces makes Yasukuni a symbol of the Japan that died in August 1945. Rejecting any relationship to Japan's identity, leftist generally sympathise with civilian casualties and are likely to form alliances with their Chinese counterparts in order to prove their point (Schibuichi 2005:203f).

4.1.3 Domestically in China

Domestically in China, just like in Japan, the new post-war generation of leaders sometimes find it politically expedient to recall the country's past traumas. Chinese leaders are thereby also translating communicative memory into permanent cultural memory. This has had the implications of official depictions of Sino-Japanese relations being changed to fit whichever agenda suitable and have thus diverged considerably over the past half century (Rose 2007:43-44). Just like in Japan's case, as we shall later see, this makes China attached to the dynamics of conflict embodied in the Yasukuni narrative.

4.2 Political significance

With each party holding an image of the shrine according with their own historical and personal identity, the symbolism of the shrine works as a catalyst for a clash of identities. Generating conflicting political and diplomatic pressure on Japanese prime ministers, this has stirred domestic anger and triggered numerous diplomatic disputes over the years, to visit or not to visit the shrine. Yasukuni is controversial because of these visits. Some see them as representative of the rise of Japanese jingoistic nationalism and militarism, pointing to the enshrinement of the war criminals. Others point to sentimentality and historical amnesia and yet others claim that Japan, on the basis of its post-war peace constitution would be incapable of belligerent nationalism. Much of the controversy has been over the right – or lack thereof – for the Japanese to assert their historical identity. Importance has to be paid to the role of the rightists, on this matter more specifically to their most influential lobbying group, pushing leading politicians to visit the shrine. The visits by Nakasone and Koizumi are widely considered to be the most significant political and diplomatic collisions in the history of the Yasukuni shrine dispute. Nakasone because he was the first to announce his visit beforehand and Koizumi since he persisted with regular visits throughout his time in office (Shibuichi 2005:197f). Whereas Nakasone listened to his critics and only caused turbulence on this matter once, Koizumi persisted all throughout.

5 Reconstituting the narrative

Having outlined the Yasukuni controversy as well as the identifications that are attached to it, our next step is to reconstruct a few aspects that have been singled out from the narrative. These are, in order: the “China threat”, “dependence” and “shame”. The so called “China threat” aspect is my reconstruction of the contributions to the debate apart from the keywords of “Yasukuni” and “China” also contain the word “threat”. Redoing the search, this time inserting “Yasukuni”, “China”, “threat” and “2001-2006” into the Japanese government search engine generates 42 hits. Out of these 23 are rendered irrelevant and one incomprehensible (I simply failed to interpret the intended point). This leaves us with 18 remaining hits. Reading through them once more and putting them together in chronological order after when they appeared, relating them in a way that a new, reconstructed, narrative was created. These contributions to the debate thus make up the basis upon which a reconstruction of one aspect of the wider Yasukuni narrative is set apart and shed light on. Someone by now may be wondering how on earth I could possibly take all these statements out of their proper contexts and then in whichever way convenes me put them back together again. I would say that there is slightly more to the analysis than that. I argue, that by the eminent feature of enabling the elucidating of certain features, grounded narratology, or narrative analysis, where it originally belongs, entails features that enable analyses that other approaches do not have. Taking into consideration that the researcher is an inherent part of the analysis, not agreeing with such an approach may just leave the critic better off searching for something suitable elsewhere. My purpose, anyhow, is to make this process as illicit as possible and my hopes are that this chapter will serve as an illustration of narratological methodology (the features of grounded theory are left for next chapter). No discrimination based on political affiliation or the like has been made except in one case: that of Koizumi, in which I have clearly stated the origin of the contribution.

5.1 The “China threat”

Referring to Taro Aso’s depiction of *China a threat*, this aspect of the narrative is certainly both interesting and relevant. The text is fairly long and the categorisations that I have divided it up into, are merely to easy up the read.

5.1.1 Comparison

On May 28, 2001 it was stated in a contribution to the Diet debate that “China’s military strength, including nuclear weapons, is already far greater a threat to the peace and stability of Asia and the world than that of Japan” (130508). Even though this per se is a depiction of a threatening China, it is not related to Japan in any other sense than that of a comparison. On March 19, 2002, in a different debate, China’s military and economic threat was assessed to be “not quite a threat” since its weapons were estimated to be of poor quality and the country economically merely developing as the world’s factory floor. As such, it was stated, it was not to take as too serious of a threat (140319). Adding the economy as a dimension to the framework of threat, as well as diminishing China’s capacities, both militarily and economically, the superiority of *Japan* over *China* is here legibly assumed. On April 24 of the same year, the threat dimension derived from the Yasukuni controversy itself was depicted a threat to Asian diplomacy (140424). There are many different options to what the intentions of the speaker could be. What can be interpreted from the contribution, however, is that the controversy is taken as a serious matter influencing Sino-Japanese relations. This view contrasts that of those claiming Yasukuni to be a domestic issue for other states not to interfere in.

5.1.2 The bigger picture

On June 5, 2003 it was stated that the peace and stability of Northeast Asia depend on the status of amity – or the lack thereof – between Japan and China. Appealing to the Diet to take on the perspective of the bigger picture of Northeast Asian peace and stability as a whole rather than just merely focusing on China’s perceived threat against Japan (150605), there is an emphasis on the importance that these two neighbours play for peace and stability in Northeast Asia as well as a sound plea to take a step back from what is perceived as imminent in order to gain a wider perspective that can inform this narrower scope and place in its regional context.

5.1.3 Koizumi

Koizumi, on the Yasukuni controversy in its entirety, is consistent in his statements. On November 25, 2003 he states the developments in China, rather than being threatening, are to be regarded as opportune for Japan (151125). The following five pertaining statements, one of them by Koizumi, agree with this statement (160323, 161018, 161020, 161202, 170214).

5.1.4 Difference

On February 16, 2005 difference, again, is emphasised towards China. This time its internal problems are the focus of the analysis (170216). February 23 the same year is seeing what I perceive as increased intensity in the debate. Arguing that China is growing increasingly powerful, conquers more and more ground and has a navy that poses a considerable threat. Further arguing that the rise of China has a considerable impact on Japan, the debater conveys that China, Japan and South Korea are in a position in which they need to define a balance in between them. Stating that this is serious and has to be analysed (170223), the debater seems worried about these developments. On October 20, 2005 someone wonders how far gone China's weapons of nuclear destruction are (171020). On October 26 the same year our by now well-known statement that China's growing economy gives rise to not a threat, but to opportunities appears again (171026).

5.1.5 The masses feeling threatened

A statement dated January 23 the following year goes from talking merely about Japan to also include its citizens that here are described as feeling threatened to a large extent (180123). On February 8 there was a speech about "the threat from China" (180208), on the 15 it was stated that the China threat was increasing (180215), on November 15th there was a suggestion that support against the China threat should be found amongst the neighbouring countries (181115). In this last statement the threat from China is even depicted as a disability facing Japan. Here, the threat that China is perceived to pose is already so inherent in the structure of the debates that the question no longer is whether or not there is a threat. Instead, there is the question of what to do about it. The "China threat" is here already treated as self-evident and thus is not questioned anymore. The understanding of *China* as such inherent to *Japan* as to constituting a disability is an excellent way of demonstrating how much *China* is a part of *Japan* and thus to prove one of our points of this thesis.

5.2 Dependence

When it comes to Japan's place in the world, there seems to be much concern about the country's possibility to occupy a seat in the United Nations Security Council. No less than six debaters have different suggestions on how to deal with this issue (161109, 170603, 170613, 170929, 171017, 180525) and what they all have in common, is the depiction of Japan *depending* on *China* in its aspiration to occupying a seat of its own. Other than that of the United Nations, the worsening of the relations to China is argued to affect Japan's relations to Asia as a whole (160317) and thus to make Japan even more dependent on its western neighbour. Someone suggests that it is illogical to dispute with China given its influence on

North Korean matters (160323). North Korea is frequently depicted as the outmost foreign threat to Japan's security and perceiving to be dependent on *China* on this issue I assume to be, to say the least, undesired. It is further suggested that Japan would end up alone in the region without China (161109). Again, this perception of dependency is shining through. Issues perceived as foreign to both Japan and China, such as the abduction issue (Japanese nationals abducted to North Korea is an issue yet to be resolved between the two countries), are suggested to be most favourably solved in concert (171017) with China. In this dimension of the narrative, there are more of the core identity features and less of the security practices at work than was the case in the *threat* case. Both the nationalist sentiments, identified as expressions of banal nationalism, and the routinisation processes are at work here as well and it is clear that Japan to a large extent build its location in relation to its perceived *other*.

5.3 Shame

Moving on to the third dimension of the *Japanese* narrative on *China*, the *shame* aspect, references to Hitler and Mussolini occur a couple of times (170203, 170419). States, according to Huysmans (1998), are able to feel shame. No matter the definition of a collective feeling, I argue that it in the narrative are expressions of shame. Or, rather, there is a negotiation of whether *Japan* should feel ashamed. The guilt, that supposedly is causing this debate to occur, is presumably the question of war guilt that has been an ongoing controversy in Northeast Asia ever since the end of the Pacific War (the East Asian part of the Second World War). Less extreme statements suggest the government to be separated from the extreme right since the reason why this is not solved is that these two are equated with each other (171007). This statement is an illustration of the close connection between domestic and foreign policy that makes this dispute such difficult to solve.

6 Theoretical analysis

Reconstructing a narrative provides insight into various phenomena. Taking the analysis yet a step further, by attaching theories to the reconstructed narrative, we are able to derive a theoretical framework for further analysis, applicable beyond this specific case. What this is about, is to putting together a theoretical framework aimed at explaining the three specific aspects of the *Japanese* narrative on *China* within the context of the Yasukuni controversy. Adding fragments of existing theories of identity, security, ontological security, routinisation and banal nationalism to these three cases, guarantees the empirical foundation of the framework in which the theories are put together; i.e. that the theory is indeed grounded in the empirical data. The composition of the compilation of theoretical fragments that is derived, is, by this, specific to the three aspects of the narrative from which it is derived. The essence of grounded theory, in accordance with my interpretation of it, is that the network derived then is to be applied onto different aspects or empirical settings in order to develop and eventually be turned into a theory. This process of applying it to different social phenomena takes place through reciprocal testing and revision in relation to the new empirical data analysed. This, though, is the subject of a different study. Here follows the compilation of the theoretical network.

6.1 Compiling the network

The concepts included in this compilation are: identity, security, ontological security, routinisation and banal nationalism. Adding the fragments one at a time, relating them to the data as well as to the ones previously added, different aspects of the data will be ascribed with different theoretical interpretations of meaning. First out is the concept of identity.

6.1.1 Identity

We shall under the heading of identity take the analysis a step further by referring to Arnett's definition of identity as located in the relation between subjectivity and social knowledge (Arnett 2002:777). Locating the unconscious mechanisms and depths of our every-day practices in the intersection between what we know about ourselves and the world around us, leads us to the unconscious processes in which we relate ourselves to our social world. The way in which this happens, according to Abdelal et al, is through the social interaction between these processes and the

meaning that we attach to them; the meaning through which our identities are negotiated in the unconscious processes between our subjectivities and our social knowledge. Meaning, defined as common ontological and epistemological ground as well as group norms (Abdelal et al 2006:695), is found in the settlement of what is *Japanese* and *Chinese* respectively. In this way, what is perceived as *Japanese* and *Chinese* vary between each individual that, in their capacity of being individuals, apply their own unconscious depths and mechanisms as well as their own subjectivity and social knowledge in their own individual processes. The *Japanese* and *Chinese* therefore are not fixed categories (and hence the italics throughout the thesis). They are dynamic processes that change over time, space and social context.

6.1.2 Security

Security, the third theoretical concept of this analysis, is here understood as the processes of making something seem dangerous; of producing a threat. Reading through the outline of the threat production in our case at hand, the motivation for including the dimension of security in the analysis is evident. The processes through which issues become security issues, according to Michael Williams, is essentially about how different referent objects become depicted as threats; or subjects of securitising practices. To unpack the security dimension of the *Japanese* narrative on *China*, the focus has to be on the change from depicting something as the “usual” to changing the depiction into becoming a “threat”. This requires an understanding of what is being secured and what it is threatened by. In this case this comes down to how the *Japanese* is being secured from what is perceived as a *threat* from *China*. What is perceived as being threatened, is the process of each individual relating to the shared identity that constitutes a common social “Japanese we”. Anything that is perceived as putting this “we” identity into jeopardy is likely to be turned into a *threat* (Williams 1998:435).

6.1.3 Ontological security

Adding identity and security onto each other, we arrive at the concept of ontological security, or security of the self. Ontological security is the aspiration to make the world ontologically secure, that is, to secure our sense of self in relation to the world. In order to do this, the perceptions, through our processes of negotiating ourselves in relation to our social world, are organised and categorised (Kinnvall 2004:746). It is through the processes of ontological security that *Japan* and *China* become what we in our daily usages of the terms perceive as fixed categories. Securing an ordered self and an ordered world involves defining elements to relate to as not belonging to the self (Campbell 1992:50). This is how *Japan* becomes what it is in relation to *China*. The security relation, making *Japan* ontologically secure, lays in the knowing (McSweeney 1999:13-15, 17f) of how to define, in this case, *China*, and this is how *China*, that ever since Kojiki,

the first printed matter in Japanese history, has been imagined as a significant other to *Japan*, becomes such an inherent part of a study on *Japanese* identity.

6.1.4 The routinisation of security relations

This routinisation of security relations may or may not be conflictual. Since also dangerous routines provide ontological security, *Japan*, that would be far better off without all these routinisations in its relationship to China, is attached also to the conflictual components of the antagonism. The aspect of ontological security-seeking is, because of this, able to shed light on seemingly irrational elements of conflict (Mitzen 2006:364f); like those between Japan and China. This is precisely why this element of routinisation is so crucial for this study. In essence, *China* can not be separated from the *Japanese* and *Japan*; for its ontological security base, is thus attached to *China* being an inherent part of it.

6.1.5 Banal nationalism

Banal nationalism, states Billig, is so much a part of our daily practices that it is often unnoticed. Although not hidden, it is so deeply ingrained in the contemporary consciousness of our daily habits and routines that it is made obtrusive because of its very familiarity. The study of nationalism thus becomes the unpacking of this unconsciousness in the performance of our daily tasks. By noticing the subtle every-day signs of nationalism, we notice something about ourselves. Unpacking the mechanisms and depths of our daily doings equals discovering our own identity as it is embedded in our lives (Billig 1995:174-175). The above outline of the process in which the meaning-making practice takes place is an example of banal nationalism in many different respects. Firstly, it embodies the foundational characteristics of nationalism given that it contains depictions of the *Japanese* as well as the *Chinese* that are related to each other. Defining nationalism as the promotion of a certain national identity in relation to those of other nations, nationalist expressions are too easily found all throughout the text. Speaking about nationalism, one additional dynamic that I argue intensifies the polarisation, is the mobilisation based on popular sentiment taking place in both Japan and China. Adding this element of nationalism, that makes it different from identity, security, ontological security and routinisation, is this element of making a mass of people accelerate the processes at hand.

7 Summary and conclusions

This is what a study with its methodological framework derived from grounded theory and narrative analysis on the *Japanese* narrative on *China* within the context of the Yasukuni controversy between 2001 to 2006 can look like. This is my version. Someone else would have done it differently. I have here given my account of how the Japanese can be seen as negotiated in relation to China within the context of the Yasukuni controversy between 2001 and 2006.

7.1 Summary

Historising the regionalism of Northeast Asia and discussing its implications for Sino-Japanese relations, the stage was set and the context defined. I further argued for the fusion of grounded theory and narrative analysis into a framework that I have called grounded narratology. Outlining their pros and cons as well as their compatibility, this methodological project became a part of the study. Empirically accounting for the Yasukuni controversy, chapter four then outlined this complicated matter, so crucial to Sino-Japanese relations. Discussing the identifications attached as well as the political significance of this controversy, the framework of the empirical analysis was outlined. Digging into the primary material, chapter five then reconstructed the three illuminating aspects of the “China threat”, “dependence” and “shame”. In chapter six followed the theoretical analysis of the reconstruction. Chapter six then proceeds with the theoretical analysis of the reconstruction. In chapter seven, the study is summed up and the conclusions are presented in chapter eight. Chapter nine provides an outline of the primary sources used in this study together with some comments of these. Chapter ten, finally, lists the secondary sources.

7.2 Conclusions

Points that have been made throughout the course of this study are that the *Japanese* narrative on *China* on the empirical level is becoming increasingly polarised and routinised. Despite recent rhetorics of mutual cooperation, the foundations underlying this relationship are, as they already are provoking mass mobilisation and public unrest, to be seen in a different light. Providing insight into an empirical material that has to this date – to the best of my knowledge – not been studied, and, moreover, due to language barriers, probably will not be such

frequently studied, this per se provides a contribution to the field of Japanese Studies. Further, stating that security can fruitfully be analysed through public narratives; that the road towards Aso's declaring China a threat can be followed through this narrative. Falling outside the scope of this study, or, rather, in order to provide some suggestions for further research, I argue that it would be interesting and potentially useful to, through the analysis of narratives, develop models for how to predict political changes in the world. Interpreting the political world as a myriad of related processes, outbursts of violence, depictions of foreign threat and the like are rather than being random, symptomatic of the every-day practices that we are all a part of. Developing the conceptual network of the theoretical fragments derived from the reconstruction of the narrative could, even if tiny, provide a new angle to the study of the constitution of national identities. Discovering how inherent the construction of *China* is to the construction of *Japan*, it is not far off to wonder what is the case of other national identities and, keeping the legible development of the narrative of the "China threat" in mind, I argue that this is an area worth digging into for the benefit of all of IR.

8 Primary sources

This study is based on the primary sources of 284 contributions to Japanese Diet debates over the Yasukuni controversy between 2001 and 2006. These are readily available on the Japanese government's homepage at: <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/> by inserting “Yasukuni”, “China” and “2001 to 2006” into its search engine. Listed here are the ones that I explicitly refer to in the text.

Having to decide how to account for the primary sources of this study, caused me a great deal of thought. My first impulse was to translate them all into English. On a second thought, though, I decided to keep them in the original language. The reason for this, is that the records are in Japanese and that, since many of the names of the individual meetings simply do not translate very well. Therefore, I thought that translating them into an English that would not quite make sense, and then for the reader to have to spend quite an effort trying to find the proper record would not be very helpful. In order to maintain the transparency for non-Japanese speaking readers of this thesis, I have provided a translation besides keeping the original names.

国際問題に関する調査会	Investigative meeting into international affairs
本会議	Regular plenary session
外務委員会	Foreign affairs committee
外交防衛委員会	Diplomacy and self-defence committee
予算委員会	Budget committee
決算委員会	Accounting committee
予算委員会公聴会	Budget committee (public hearing)
沖縄及び北方問題に関する特別委員会	Special committee for Okinawa and the northern districts
国際テロリズムの防止及び我が国の協力支援活動並びにイラク人道復興支援活動等に関する特別委員会	Special committee for Japan's collaboration and support of Iraq as well as the prevention of international terrorism
行政改革に関する特別委員会	Special committee for administrative reform
憲法調査会	Commission on the constitution
郵政民営化に関する特別委員会	Special committee for the privatisation of the Japan Post

参議院	国際問題に関する調査会	3号	平成18年11月15日
参議院	行政改革に関する特別委員会	13号	平成18年05月25日
参議院	国際問題に関する調査会	2号	平成18年02月15日
参議院	国際問題に関する調査会	1号	平成18年02月08日
衆議院	本会議	2号	平成18年01月23日
衆議院	外務委員会	4号	平成17年10月26日
参議院	外交防衛委員会	3号	平成17年10月20日
衆議院	国際テロリズムの防止及び我が国の協力支援活動並びにイラク人道復興支援活動等に関する特別委員会	3号	平成17年10月17日
衆議院	郵政民営化に関する特別委員会	3号	平成17年10月07日
参議院	本会議	3号	平成17年09月29日
参議院	沖縄及び北方問題に関する特別委員会	7号	平成17年06月13日
衆議院	外務委員会	9号	平成17年06月03日
衆議院	国土交通委員会	11号	平成17年04月19日
参議院	外交防衛委員会	6号	平成17年04月12日
参議院	国際問題に関する調査会	7号	平成17年04月06日
衆議院	外務委員会	1号	平成17年02月23日
参議院	国際問題に関する調査会	2号	平成17年02月16日

参議院	予算委員会	1 1 号	平成17年02月14日
参議院	決算委員会	2 号	平成16年12月02日
参議院	外交防衛委員会	5 号	平成16年11月09日
参議院	予算委員会	2 号	平成16年10月20日
衆議院	予算委員会	2 号	平成16年10月18日
参議院	予算委員会	1 5 号	平成16年03月23日
参議院	憲法調査会	4 号	平成16年03月17日
衆議院	予算委員会	1 号	平成15年11月25日
衆議院	本会議	3 8 号	平成15年06月05日
衆議院	外務委員会	1 2 号	平成14年04月24日
参議院	予算委員会公聴 会	1 号	平成14年03月19日
衆議院	予算委員会	1 8 号	平成13年05月28日

The far left column indicates Upper House (参議院) or Lower House (衆議院), the middle left column the name of the conference, the middle right column the number of the contribution and the far right column the date (stated in the fashion of year-month-day). Year 13 is in this case equivalent to 2001 and year 18 to 2006.

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