

3. Prospect

Political and security conflicts between the two countries are expected to last for long

- As the chance is very slight that Japan designates the islands as a disputed area like China claims, political and historical approach would not help resolve the issue
- Japan is very unlikely to approach the historic matter in the way to admit the sense of moral debt it owed upon the wartime invasion
- » Chinese rise inflicted damage on Japanese sense of superiority to China that is represented as the hierarchical view during the modernization period
- » Extreme nationalism deepened in both countries

Tension between China and Japan continued along with the geopolitical conflict of the US and China

- As the strengthened US-Japan alliance in April 2015 suggested, the US emphasized Japan's security role for its policy of 'rebalancing to Asia' in the region more than before
- China will further toughen the keynote of 'protecting core interest' on its territory to fight the Japanese right of self defense and attempt to have military, making mutual respect and compromise even more difficult
- The political and security conflict between the two countries is linked structurally with the geopolitical conflict between the US and China in the world and the region. Therefore, it will be hard to resolve the issue with political leadership in a short period of time

Efforts to get the relations back by restoring Cold Politics-Hot Economics

- As cooperation of China and Japan is increasingly needed for security threat from North Korea, international terrorism and global environmental issues, awareness on restoration of their relations will also be raised
- » Currently, 64.4% of Japan and 63.4% of China agreed to the need to improve their relations notwithstanding the political and security conflict. (China-Japan joint survey in 2014)
- » Escalating concerns over the unstable regional security resulting from the prolonged conflict highlighted the reason to make the relations better. The US also emphasized crisis management not to get involved in an armed conflict between the two countries
- South Korea cannot rule out the possibility that the Cold Politics-Cold Economics that formed after 2010 could transform into Cold Politics-Hot Economics
- » The economic circle in Japan, which has its eye on the Chinese market that is gradually expanding like the Silkroad Initiative, increasingly calls on the government to improve the relations to boost economic cooperation with China

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발행처 아주대 중국정책연구소

발행인 김홍규

주소 경기도 수원시 영통구 월드컵로 206 아주대학교
출판권 527-2호
아주대 중국정책연구소

전화 031-219-3861

홈페이지 <http://cpi.ajou.ac.kr>

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CHINA WATCHING



Sino-Japanese relations and Korea's diplomacy of prudence

Hyun Jeong Yoo, Research Fellow, The Sejong Institute

아주대 중국정책연구소
Ajou China Policy Institute
亞洲大中國政策研究所

2015. 6. 29 (No. 5)

Suggestions

We suggest that Korea determine the security cooperation level with Japan and China in consideration of the geopolitical conflict between the US and China

- Deteriorating relations between Korea and Japan weakens the US alliance system and has a negative impact on the ROK-US alliance in the end
- » Korea should push ahead a low level of military security (and) cooperation with Japan such as signing the General Security Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)
- However, excessively strengthened relations between ROK and Japan may evoke Chinese opposition, providing a pretext for North Korea, China and Russia to enhance their security cooperation. Hence, China should be taken into account to control the pace of restoring ROK-Japan relations
- » South Korea should dispel Chinese concern that it is cooperating with the US containment policy against China by inviting the country as an observer to the military exercise with the US as the Philippines, Thailand and Australia, another US allies, did

Indirect restoration of the ROK-Japan relations via mini/multilateral cooperation in case of the possibility that the Sino-Japanese relations could shift from 'Cold Politics-Cold Economics' to 'Cold Politics-Hot Economics'

- Economic restoration between China and Japan only could count against South Korea at a time its relations with Japan are strained
- If the domestic politics makes it difficult for South Korea to proactively fix the relations, it can make an indirect attempt to achieve the goal through close cooperation with Japan in the mini/multilateral security and economic cooperation process
- As South Korean President Park Geunhye proposed resuming the summit meeting of the three countries in Northeast Asia in November 2014, Korea should act as a bridge in arranging the venue for the mini/ multilateral talks that discuss regional security and economic issues with Japan

Persuading and inducing the US and Japan to prevent Japan's attempt to become a normal country from running counter to South Korea's security interests

- In the perspective of the Sino-US geopolitical conflict in the Asia Pacific region, the US supports Japan to be a normal country and South Korea is struggling to stop this from happening
- South Korea has to confirm yet again the US and Japanese pledge that Japan Self-Defense Forces will not intervene in sudden change in the Korean peninsula without its consent and make this official at a joint communiqué through ROK-Japan summit or press conference in the future

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1. Overview on the Sino-Japanese relations

Diplomatic ties in the mid-1990s: normal relations and security issues

- China and Japan signed the Joint Communiqué in September 1972 and normalized their diplomatic relations
- » The US, China and Japan sought cooperation to check Soviet Union against the backdrop of the conflict between China and Soviet and in the US-China détente mood
- » Japan provided finance for the Chinese reform and opening-up policy
- Before and after the collapse of communism in the 1990s, Japan began to recognize China steadily as a country that hampered security
- » The Lost Decade of Japan came after its bubble economy busted
- » Chinese economy, on the other hand, grew by 10% per annum thanks to its reform and opening-up policy, grabbing attention from the countries in the Pacific

Mid-1990s – mid-2000s: ‘Cold Politics-Hot Economics’

- The China Threat Theory emerged in Japan as Chinese economy and military leaped forward
- Despite heated debates over ‘China Opportunity’ and ‘China Threat’, Cold Politics-Hot Economics was maintained where political conflict did not spread to strained economic
- » Economic confidence with and mutual dependence on each other that the two nations had built since the ties served as a firewall against the diplomatic and security conflict

Mid to late 2000s: amicable relations

- The China Threat Theory weakened after growing Japanese export to China led to its economic recovery in the early 2000s
- As the appeasement policy by Japanese Democratic Party on China brought peak of their friendly relationship, they established “mutually beneficial strategic” ties

After 2010 to now: ‘Cold Politics-Cold Economics’

- A territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands or Diaoyu Islands in 2010 intensified their political and security conflicts
- ‘Cold Politics-Cold Economics’ surfaced that reflected the political and security conflicts into the economy
- » In spite of the high level of economic dependence, their economic cooperation withered
- » Japan specified its position to hold Chinese rise in check by becoming a normal country and strengthening alliance with the US

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2. Issues of Sino-Japanese relations

Territorial dispute over Senkaku Islands or Diaoyu Islands

- The collision of a Chinese fishing boat with Japanese patrol ships in September 2010 re-sparked the territorial dispute over the islands, only to eclipse all issues including their economic cooperation

Different perspectives on the historic past and nationalism

- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he would retain only part of the Murayama statement that apologized the colonial rule and aggression
- » He denied the crimes against humanity Japan committed during the war
- Xi Jinping government heavily criticized the attitude of Japanese leadership that denied the past as never before
- As the gap of the view on the historic past widened, extreme nationalistic sentiment emerged in both countries against each other
- » Leadership of both countries turned a blind eye to the negative sentiment to solidify their ground in the local politics

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Being a normal country and building up the US-Japan alliance

- The US and Japan are toughening their alliance in the way that bolster Japan’s security role in and outside the region
- » Japan is seeking to become a normal country by re-interpreting its pacifist constitution with support from the US
- Enhanced US-Japan alliance could worsen the Chinese security environment, provide the US with justification to intervene in the regional issues and eventually act as the culprit for the Sino-Japanese conflict

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Aggravating ‘Cold Politics-Cold Economics’

- Despite the high economic dependence on each other, Cold Politics-Cold Economics that became remarkable after 2010 continued
- » Rapid growth of Chinese economy and military, overtaking of Japanese GDP and restriction on export of its rare earth metal exacerbated the conflict