

# 日中関係見通し

## Outlook for Japan-China Relations

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# How to Understand China's Assertiveness since 2009

1) "Rising Trend" Hypothesis

2) "Cycle of Deterioration and Amelioration" Hypothesis

3) "Redefinition of Strategic Rivals" Hypothesis

- "It can even be assumed that each hypothesis is accurate, or that the three of them are correlated, if one believes in the spiral-like evolution of history. If so, one can make the following prediction: that China's hawkish assertiveness will escalate as its national power expands and that China will direct enmity to a specific country or group to isolate it or them. But once the strategic situation is seen as turning or in actuality turns against it, China will seek some solution by attempting to improve relations with the target nation at the most propitious moment. This brings all three hypotheses into play when explaining China's relations"
- Source: See reference.

# Where Are They Now?

- Public mood: worst since 1972, but people want amelioration
- Economic relations: as usual, but Japan's investment in China sharply dropped
- Political interactions: no summit meeting; sporadic ministerial meetings; nongovernmental and local exchanges; Chinese tourism to Japan increases
- Paramilitary pressure: Chinese Coast Guard sends ships to waters near Senkaku
- Military tension: China's "dangerous actions" in Sea and Air
- International surroundings: tension in South China Sea, U.S. rebalance policy (Obama' trip to Asia)
- Beijing's relations with HK, Tibet, Xinjiang and Taipei are not optimistic
- Xi Jinping's power base has consolidated through anti-corruption campaign (decline of Jiang Zemin, Xu Caihou and Zhou Yongkang)
- Attempts at amelioration: twice in March and August through October, 2013

# Causes of Deterioration of the Relations in J-C's Eyes

- China's view: “nationalization of *Diaoyudao*,” historical revisionism, Japanese “turning to right,” “dangerous move to militarism”, strategic distrust, public opinion
- Japan's view: Chinese violence and “outlaw behavior”, specifically “behavior to change the status quo by force ( also in South China Sea),” power struggle in the CPC, dangerous military actions done by PLA

# China's Preconditions of Summit Meeting

- Good political atmosphere: Japan has to stop criticizing China as a threat
- Islands: Japan has to admit the existence of a “territorial dispute”
- History: “Draw a line from militarism”: PM stop visiting Yasukuni Shrine
- Improving strategic trust: Abe has to say “Rise of China is Japan’s opportunity” and stop “encirclement of China”
- Redefinition of modality of the relations: “New type” of “strategic mutually beneficial relationship” for stabilization of the relations in the future?

# Japan's Preconditions of Summit Meeting

- No preconditions (!)
- China has to stop sending Coast Guard ships to Senkaku's territorial waters
- China should take conciliatory actions towards its neighbors (South China Sea)
- China has to elaborate on building crisis management mechanisms
- China has to agree to deepen strategic mutually beneficial relationship

# Driving Forces/Merits and Risks of Amelioration

- China: stabilization of surrounding environment, increase investment from Japan, escape from isolation (no more Shangri-la Dialogue!), reduce tension with the US
- Japan: Abe can become the greatest prime minister, increase possibility of amelioration of the relations with ROK, improvement of Japan-US alliance
- C-J: save resources for strategic competition, promote economic cooperation (including JCK),
- Risks for C-J: domestic criticism (“traitor!”)

# Prescription: Principle

- Based on four political documents (1972, 1978, 1998, 2008): history, “strategic mutually beneficial relationship,” but no mention of the islands
- Determination with pragmatism: from easy to difficult, diplomatic wisdom to postpone and minimize difficult issues
- Strategic Ambiguity: face-saving for both J-C; not to formulate agree-to-disagree type consensus, but to have mutual-non-recognition type tacit understanding



# Prescription : Concrete Measures

- From multi- to bi-lateral meetings
- “Word-play” regarding the islands
- PM Abe can choose not to go to the shrine without announcement
- Chinese Coast Guard ships can recede a couple of miles away from contiguous zone without announcement>>>Abe can say “rise of China is Japan’s opportunity”
- Decoupling between politics and islands: Joint research project by specialists
- Discuss future rather than past
- Talks on crisis management mechanisms
- Talks on economic issues
- Talks on public diplomacy

# Signs of Change?

- CPC can “switch on and off” the exchanges with Japan (more and more difficult though), it already began to switch on.
- Absence of negative policy schedule: ADIZ, Yasukuni, collective self-defense...are over
- China’s demarches against Japan on Yasukuni downgraded
- China welcomed Japanese delegations
- Consolidation of Xi’s leadership: “Tigers” are under arrest
- Tone of discourse on Japan changes: “Japanese public is peace-loving,” “draw line with militarism”
- Yasuo Fukuda’s meeting with Xi Jinping
- Abe-Li Keqiang’s handshake

# Four Scenarios of J-C Relations

Uncompromising China

No meeting/  
Status  
quo/Deteriorating  
relations

Formal meeting/Quick  
amelioration/Risk for  
Japan

Uncompromising Japan

Flexible Japan

Formal meeting/Quick  
amelioration/Risk for  
China

Formal meeting/Quick  
amelioration/Risks for  
both sides

Flexible China

# Concrete Scenarios

- A: Abe-Xi meeting in Beijing APEC, ameliorate and stabilize relations drastically
- B: No Abe-Xi meeting in Beijing APEC meeting
- C: Abe-Xi meeting in Beijing APEC meeting, but worsens relations/instability remains
- D: Abe-Xi meeting in Beijing APEC meeting, but only slow and incremental amelioration/taking long time for stability
- *Chinese Coast Guard ship behavior and Yasukuni visit are going to be the key factors for stability after the summit meeting.*

# References

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