

# Failed Diplomacy: Japan's Foreign Aid to the People's Republic of China

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## 1. Introduction

A cooperative and positive relationship between China and Japan is a prerequisite for peace and stability not only in Asia, but also worldwide. Lately, the relations became strained in 2012 when Japan reasserted its claim of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, and China declared in 2013 an Air Defense Identification Zone over the East China Sea so that the potential for military conflicts increased drastically between two countries. While economic interdependence between China and Japan has enormously increased through trade, Japanese investments and foreign aid to China, diplomatic relations between these countries has not improved. Why did economic interdependence fail to promote amicable diplomatic relations? Foreign aid has been an essential foreign policy tool for Japan's diplomacy in Asia. Yet why did the economic cooperation, which assisted economic development in China, not reduce anti-Japanese sentiment? Why were bilateral relations described as at the "lowest point" in 2005 since 1972 when China and Japan normalized diplomatic relations after World War II? Examining and analyzing these questions are crucial since the two powers will determine the future of a regional stability in East Asia. First, this study examines the positive and negative outcomes of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) during the period from 1990 through 2006. Second, it analyzes Chinese and Japanese nationalisms as major diplomatic obstacles to improving Sino-Japanese relations. Finally, this article analyzes the potential dangers of nationalism and the future of Sino-Japanese relations.

## 2. Japan's Foreign Aid to China

In 1954, when it joined the Colombo Plan to assist South Asian economic development, Japan started to provide ODA. The Colombo Plan was organized to provide technical and financial assistance to Commonwealth countries. Subsequently, the level of Japan's ODA increased dramatically in the 1980s. In 1989, the absolute level of Japan's ODA became the largest in the world.<sup>1)</sup> For the past sixty years, Japanese ODA has played a prominent role in Japan's foreign policy.

Japan began providing ODA to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1979 after the two countries normalized relations in 1972. Although Japan had wished to resume diplomatic relations with the PRC earlier, the United States prevented it from doing so until President Nixon visited the PRC. Since then China had received approximately 3.13 trillion yen in loan aid, 145.7 billion yen in grant aid, and 144.5 billion yen in technical assistance from Japan until 2005.<sup>2)</sup> In the 1990s, China became the largest Japanese aid recipient, while Japan had been the largest foreign aid donor to China. In detail, due to requests from the Chinese government, a significant amount of Yen loans was dedicated to economic infrastructure development in China (Table 1). Grant aid has been used for social infrastructure development including the China-Japan Friendship Hospital that currently treats about three thousand patients a day in Beijing.<sup>3)</sup> For technical assistance, over thirty-seven thousand Chinese trainees were invited to Japan, and five thousand Japanese experts were dispatched to China between 1979 and 2003.<sup>4)</sup> As a result, Japan's ODA was utilized for significant economic development projects such as Shanghai Pudong International Airport Construction Project, Beijing-Qinhuangdao Railway Expansion Project, and Tianshengqiao Hydroelectric Power Project (See more details in Table 1).

**Table 1: Yen Loans for Large-scale Economic Infrastructure Projects in China**

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**Airports**

- Shanghai Pudong International Airport Construction Project (40 billion yen)
  - Beijing Capital Airport Terminal Area Expansion Project (30 billion yen)
  - Lanzhou Zhongchuan Airport Expansion Project (6.3 billion yen)
  - Wuhan Tianhe Aerodrome Construction Project (6.3 billion yen)
  - Xi'an Xianyang International Airport Terminal Expansion Project (3.09 billion yen)
- Cumulative total of aid in this area excluding the above-mentioned projects: 111.6 billion yen
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**Railway Lines**

- Beijing-Qinhuangdao Railway Expansion Project (67 billion yen)
  - Guiyang-Loudi Railway Construction Project (30 billion yen)
  - Chongqing Urban Railway Construction Project (27.1 billion yen)
  - Beijing Subway Construction Project (19.7 billion yen)
  - Datong-Qinhuangdao Railway Construction Project (18.4 billion yen)
- Cumulative total of aid in this area excluding the above-mentioned projects: 641.8 billion yen
- 

**Roads**

- Hangzhou-Quzhou Expressway Construction Project (30 billion yen)
  - Liangping-Changshou Highway Construction Project (24 billion yen)
  - Xinxiang-Zhengzhou Highway Construction Project (23.5 billion yen)
  - Guiyang-Xinzhai Highway Construction Project (15 billion yen)
  - Heilongjiang Heihe-Beian Road Construction Project (12.8 billion yen)
- Cumulative total of aid in this area excluding the above-mentioned projects 272.6 billion yen
- 

**Seaports**

- Qinhuangdao Port Expansion Project (67.4 billion yen)
  - Qingdao Port Expansion Project (59.7 billion yen)
  - Huanghua Port Construction Project (15.4 billion yen)
  - Shenzhen Dapeng Bay Yantian Port 1<sup>st</sup> Phase Construction Project (14.7 billion yen)
  - Dailin Port Dayao 1<sup>st</sup> Phase Construction Project (6.7 billion yen)
- Cumulative total of aid in this area excluding the above-mentioned projects: 272.6 billion yen
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**Power Stations**

- Tianshengqiao Hydroelectric Power Project (118 billion yen)
  - Jiangxi Jiujiang Thermal Power Plant Construction Project (29.6 billion yen)
  - Wuqiangxi Dam Construction Project (25.2 billion yen)
  - Shanhe Thermal Power Plant Construction Project (24.6 billion yen)
  - Beijing Shisanling Pumped Storage Power Station Construction Project (13 billion yen)
- Cumulative total of aid in this area excluding the above-mentioned projects: 488.2 billion yen

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**Fertilizer Plants**

- Weihe Chemical Fertilizer Plant Construction Project (26.9 billion yen)
  - Inner Mongolia Chemical Fertilizer Construction Project (21.4 billion yen)
  - Jiujiang Chemical Fertilizer Plant Construction Project (21.4 billion yen)
- Cumulative total of aid in this area excluding the above-mentioned projects: 106.3 billion yen

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**Steel Plants**

- Shanghai Baoshan Infrastructure Improvement Project (31 billion yen)

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ODA: Overview of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized the importance of providing aid to China, saying “Maintaining and advancing stable, amicable relations between Japan and China is conducive to the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, and concomitantly to the entire world.”<sup>5)</sup> Furthermore, the Public Broadcasting Infrastructure Improvement Project (20.2 billion yen loan), the Project for Development of the Beijing Center for Japanese Studies (851 million yen grand aid), and Japanese Language Instructor to Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers Program) were implemented for promotion of mutual understanding.<sup>6)</sup> Thus, Japan’s ODA to China was viewed within Japan as a diplomatic effort to establish close Sino-Japanese relations.

In response, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said at the Japan-China Foreign Minister’s Meeting in April 2005 “ODA to China has been playing a significant role in China’s development, and for that I would like to express my gratitude. When I exchange opinions with Chinese college students, I constantly remind them that when SARS hit, Japan provided the world’s highest amount of assistance to China.”<sup>7)</sup> However, despite the Chinese official’s comment, the Chinese government has not praised Japan-funded ODA projects to the Chinese public.<sup>8)</sup> Even more the Chinese people seem not to recognize the benefits of a significant amount of economic cooperation from Japan.

In addition, Japan’s ODA to China was also quickly resumed after the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 though the G7 countries decided to impose economic sanctions and suspend high-level diplomatic meetings with China at the 1989 summit meeting. While Japan initially agreed to join the coalition, it lifted the sanctions sooner than other countries and resumed its diplomatic relations on the grounds that the isolation policy would not work in China. The Chinese government even appreciated it with the statement, “now we know who is a true friend.”<sup>9)</sup> Yet Japan’s independent diplomatic efforts after the Tiananmen Square incident were in vain since Sino-Japanese relations did not improve at all. In sum, it appeared that Japan’s ODA and overtures to the Chinese government were ineffective in improving Sino-Japanese relations.

### 3. Positive Outcomes: Increased Economic Interdependence

Economic interdependence increased between Japan and China enormously during 1991–2005. First, annual bilateral trade between the two countries was more than US\$ 180 billion in 2005, and China became Japan’s largest trade partner. In detail, China became the largest import partner from Japan

in 2002,<sup>10)</sup> and became the second largest export partner to Japan in 2001. As Table 2 shows, for most years, China had increased its exports by more than ten percent. On the other hand, although China had increased its imports from Japan, the United States was still the largest importer of Japanese goods (Table 3). Japan's trade deficit with China had increased while China received the benefits of economic interdependence by receiving access to the Japanese market (Table 2).

Table 2: Japan's Trade Volume with China

(Units: US million)

Year	Exports	Imports	Trade Balance	Year to Year
1991	8,593.1	14,215.8	-5,622.7	301.3
1992	11,949.1	16,952.8	-5,003.7	619.0
1993	17,273.1	20,564.8	-3,291.7	1712.0
1994	18,681.6	27,566.0	-8,884.4	-5592.7
1995	21,930.8	35,922.3	-13,991.5	-5107.1
1996	21,889.8	40,550.0	-18,660.2	-4668.7
1997	21,784.7	42,066.0	-20,281.3	-1621.1
1998	20,021.6	36,895.9	-16,874.3	3407.0
1999	23,335.6	42,880.2	-19,544.6	-2670.3
2000	30,427.5	55,303.4	-24,875.9	-5331.3
2001	31,090.7	58,104.7	-27,014.0	-2138.1
2002	39,865.6	61,691.6	-21,826.0	5188.0
2003	57,219.2	75,192.8	-17,973.6	3852.4
2004	73,818.0	94,277.0	-20,459.0	-2485.4
2005	80,340.1	109,104.8	-28,764.7	-8305.7

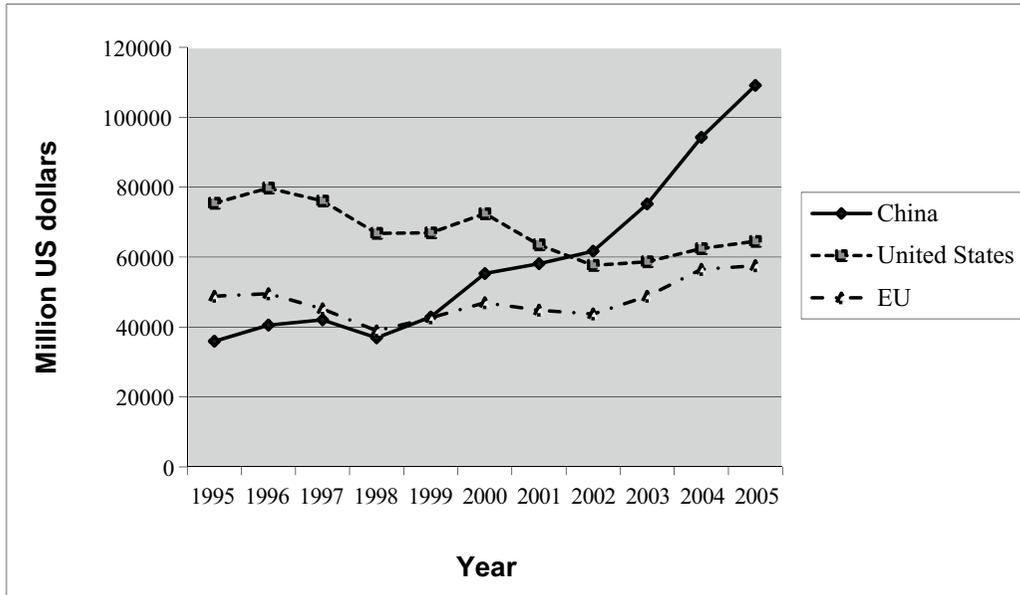
Source: Based on JETRO, Japanese Trade in 2005, 101.

Table 3: Japan's Major Export Partners

Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Country (%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Country(%)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Country(%)	4 <sup>th</sup> Country(%)	5 <sup>th</sup> Country(%)
1991	United States(29.1)	Germany (6.6)	S. Korea(6.4)	Taiwan(5.8)	Hong Kong(5.2)
1992	United States(28.2)	Taiwan (6.2)	Hong Kong(6.1)	Germany(6.0)	S. Korea(5.2)
1993	United States(29.2)	Hong Kong(6.3)	Taiwan(6.1)	S. Korea(5.3)	Germany(5.0)
1994	United States(29.7)	Hong Kong(6.5)	S. Korea(6.2)	Taiwan(6.0)	Singapore(5.0)
1995	United States(27.3)	S. Korea(7.1)	Taiwan(6.5)	Hong Kong(6.3)	Singapore(5.2)
1996	United States(27.2)	S. Korea(7.1)	Taiwan(6.3)	Hong Kong(6.2)	<b>China(5.3)</b>
1997	United States(27.8)	Taiwan(6.5)	Hong Kong(6.5)	S. Korea(6.2)	<b>China(5.2)</b>
1998	United States(30.5)	Taiwan(6.9)	Hong Kong(5.8)	<b>China(5.6)</b>	Germany(4.9)
1999	United States(30.7)	Taiwan(6.9)	<b>China(5.6)</b>	S. Korea(5.5)	Hong Kong(5.3)
2000	United States(29.7)	Taiwan(7.5)	S. Korea(6.4)	<b>China(6.3)</b>	Hong Kong(5.7)
2001	United States(30.0)	<b>China(7.7)</b>	S. Korea(6.3)	Taiwan(6.0)	Hong Kong(5.8)
2002	United States(28.5)	<b>China(9.6)</b>	S. Korea(6.9)	Taiwan(6.3)	Hong Kong(6.1)
2003	United States(24.6)	<b>China(12.2)</b>	S. Korea(7.4)	Taiwan(6.6)	Hong Kong(6.3)
2004	United States(22.5)	<b>China(13.1)</b>	S. Korea(7.8)	Taiwan(6.6)	Hong Kong(6.3)
2005	United States(22.6)	<b>China(3.4)</b>	S. Korea(7.8)	Taiwan(7.3)	Hong Kong(6.0)

Source: Based on JETRO, Japanese Trade in 2005, 101.

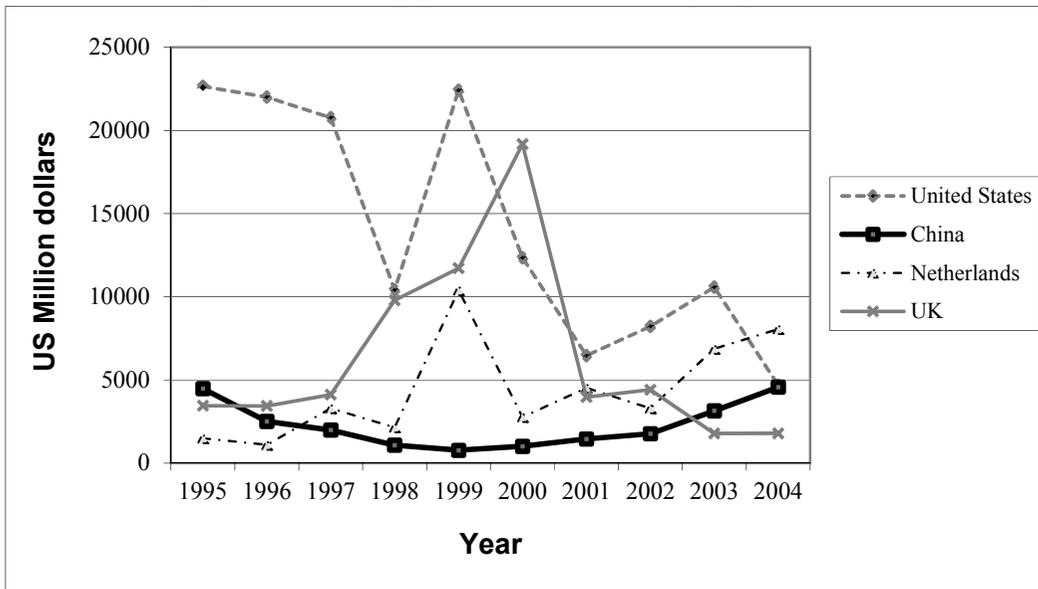
Figure 1: Trends of Japan's Imports by Region and Country



Source: Based on the data from JETRO <<https://www.jetro.go.jp>>

Secondly, the interdependence through Japanese direct investment had been promoted during 1991 and 2004. For example, the volume of Japanese investment to China was US\$ 4.5 billion in 2004, which represented an increase of 45.3 % over 2003.

Figure 2: Trends of Japan's Direct Investment by Major Countries



Source: Based on the data from JETRO <<https://www.jetro.go.jp>>

In sum, through foreign aid, trade and direct investment, Japan's government and companies contributed to economic development in China. Thus, Japan became an important economic partner for China, and both countries should recognize the mutual economic interests that should not be put at risk by political conflicts.

#### 4. Negative Factors: Deteriorated Sino-Japanese Relationship

Sino-Japanese relations did not improve because three major diplomatic history related obstacles were not removed, despite the enormous Japanese economic contribution to China. First, Japanese textbook issues became a major diplomatic issue in 1982 when Japanese high school history textbooks were revised to replace the word "shinryaku (invasion)" with "shinshutsu (incursion)" in the description of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria. The Chinese government, along with other Asian governments, felt that the textbook revision would provide a misleading account of the history of World War II. However, the Chinese government waited one month to lodge a complaint about the issue,<sup>11)</sup> since it was regarded as a Japanese domestic issue. Textbook disputes happened again in 1986 and 2001, and Japanese history textbooks had been under serious scrutiny by Chinese officials every year.

Second, Japanese prime ministers' visits to Yasukuni Shrine had been a major irritant to Sino-Japanese relations. Yasukuni Shrine enshrines not only 2.5 million dead soldiers but also fourteen "Class A" war criminals from World War II, including Hideki Tojo. Although all prime ministers have justified their visits as paying respects to their ancestors who died for their country, the Chinese government could not accept official ministerial visits to honor the war criminals. For example, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone made his official visit to the Yasukuni Shrine on August 15 1986. He was condemned for his act by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and cancelled his visit to the shrine in 1987. However, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi continued to visit the shrine annually while serving his five-year tenure despite strong protests from the Chinese government. In 2006 when he resigned, Koizumi was criticized for severely damaging Sino-Japanese relations since Chinese premiers refused to meet with him. Moreover, the Chinese government suspended all high-level official meetings with Japan due to his visits to the Yasukuni Shrine.

The third major diplomatic obstacle was the unresolved territorial disputes over the Diaoyu / Senkaku Islands. After the report from the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East in 1969 indicated potential for a significant amount of oil and natural gas deposits nearby the islands, China began to claim sovereignty over the islands although Japan officially declared its territorial claim in 1895 and has exercised physical control since then.<sup>12)</sup> This dispute got escalated in February 1992, when Chinese government passed the law on Territorial Waters with Chinese sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands. In August 1996, members of the Japanese right wing attempted to build a lighthouse on one of the islands. Although the two governments did not allow the issue to become a serious obstacle to Sino-Japanese relations at that point, both nations got negative impression of each other through this territorial issue.

Three more critical incidents occurred and caused problems during that time. First, the Chinese government indicated its preference that Japan would not obtain a permanent membership on United Nation Security Council. The Japanese government was upset by the Chinese position, since gaining the seat on the Security Council has been one of the major goals for Japan's foreign policy since World War II. In March 2005, the Chinese government sponsored a massive Internet signature campaign by the Chinese public against Japan's bid for the UN Security Council seat.<sup>13)</sup> On July 1 2005, an aide to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan received a petition with forty-six million e-signatures and names opposing a spot for Japan on the Security Council.<sup>14)</sup> China also attempted to intervene in the UN reform process so that the process could not make any progress in 2005.<sup>15)</sup> Moreover, according to *the*

*New York Times*, Chinese leaders stated “that Japan did not have the moral qualifications to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council” on April 13, 2005.<sup>16)</sup>

Second, the mass anti-Japanese demonstrations that occurred in April 2005 shocked the Japanese public. More than six thousand demonstrators appeared in Beijing to protest new Japanese textbooks.<sup>17)</sup> They demanded a boycott of products made in Japan. Anti-Japanese demonstrations in downtown Shanghai on April 16 featured more angry Chinese people. Rioters smashed the windows of Japanese stores and restaurants, damaged Japanese cars, and burned Japanese flags and photos. The Japanese consulate was also attacked with eggs and paint bombs.<sup>18)</sup> The Foreign Ministry spokesman, Qin Gang, made an official statement, “This protest was held spontaneously by some Beijing people upset about Japan’s wrong attitude and actions on the history of the invasion.”<sup>19)</sup> However, a critic of the government, Yu Jie argued the demonstrations were orchestrated and the Chinese government used them for its own purposes.<sup>20)</sup> It is generally believed that the Chinese police do not allow mass street demonstrations.

In addition, Chinese vice Premier Wu Yi’s suddenly cancelled a meeting with Prime Minister Koizumi on short notice in May 2005. Her visit to Japan was expected to improve the bilateral relationship in the aftermath of anti-Japanese demonstrations of the previous month. Although her sudden cancellation was officially explained as due to pressing domestic matters, the Japanese public was offended by the rude behavior. In sum, Japanese ODA failed to change the negative views of Japan in the PRC, and it appeared to be an ineffective tool to improve Sino-Japanese relations.

## 5. Rise of Chinese and Japanese Nationalism

Why was Japan’s ODA not able to improve Sino-Japanese relations despite establishment of significant economic interdependence? Although various issues are involved, this study argues that nationalism in both countries hindered the possibility of reconstruction of the deteriorated relationship. Nationalism is defined as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity and identity of an existing or potential ‘nation.’”<sup>21)</sup> In the Chinese case, the government utilized nationalism for framing Chinese domestic and foreign policy. Since communist ideology was no longer as effective as previously in legitimizing the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) governance, the CCP official ideology shifted toward an increased focus on “patriotism” and “loyalty.” Strong citizen identification with the Chinese nation against outsiders was recognized as an effective tool to unify and control China.

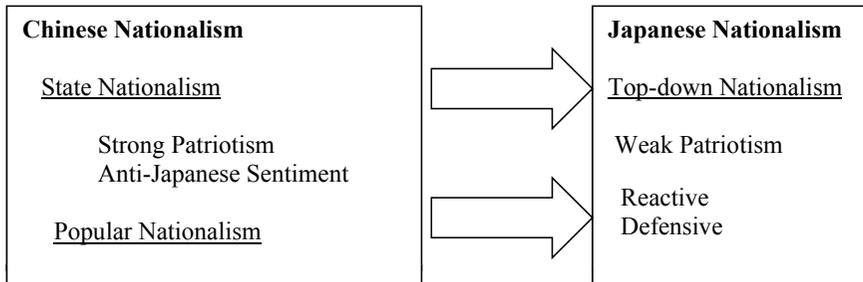
Patriotism became the emotional core of the Chinese nationalism. Professor at Denver University, Suisheng Zhao and a diplomatic historian, Michael Hunt argued that Chinese nationalist sentiment was always expressed as “patriotism or love and support for China.”<sup>22)</sup> Once the term “nationalism” was replaced with “patriotism” for the Chinese foreign policy agenda, Premier Zhou Enlai used to state “socialist patriotism is not a narrow nationalism, but patriotism aimed to strengthen national pride under the guidance of internationalism.”<sup>23)</sup>

On the other hand, Japanese nationalism seemed to top-down, defensive and reactive to foreign nations and pressure. Whenever Japan confronted a security emergency such as the nuclear arms test conducted by North Korea in 2006, the Japanese government could redefine national interests and foreign policy goals. Until then, the Japanese public was relatively indifferent to national security and their identification as Japanese people. Although anti-Chinese sentiment increased in Japan after anti-Japanese demonstrations in China, Japanese nationalism was not based on a hatred of specific countries, including the PRC.

For Japanese nationalism, patriotism seemed not to be a very strong component. According to a public opinion poll conducted by the Japanese Prime Minister’s Office in 2005, about fifty percent of

Japanese responded that they had stronger patriotic feelings than others, while ten percent said that they had weaker patriotic feelings. Approximately forty percent stated that they were not sure if they had patriotic feeling. However, the same poll showed that eighty percent agreed that Japanese people should become more patriotic.<sup>24)</sup>

Figure 3: Characteristics of Chinese Nationalism and Japanese Nationalism



Source: Author

### 5.1 Chinese Nationalism<sup>25)</sup>

Chinese nationalism seemed to be categorized to have two layers: state-centered nationalism and popular nationalism.<sup>26)</sup> State nationalism is a tool to restore legitimacy and build wide national support for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since the ideology based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory is no longer effective to unify the nations and to mobilize people to achieve its political goals (Seckington, 2005:25).<sup>27)</sup> State nationalism was urged to grow through extensive patriotic education. In the official discourse, nationalist and patriotic sentiment was emphasized as “the patriotism of the Chinese Communist Party is the highest example of the Chinese nation and Chinese patriotism.”<sup>28)</sup>

The Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 prompted China to reform the educational system. Deng Xiaoping realized the needs for more patriotic education because the demonstration at the Tiananmen Square clearly showed the lack of loyalty to the CCP (Shimizu, 2003). Suisheng Zhao explained “Beijing launched an extensive propaganda campaign to educate the people in patriotism. The campaign appeared to nationalism in the name of patriotism as a way to ensure the loyalty of a population stewing in domestic discontent. At the core was ‘education in national conditions’ (*guoqing jiaoyu*), which emphasized how China’s unique national conditions make it unprepared to adopt Western style liberal democracy.”<sup>29)</sup> As a result, many students became more nationalistic than democratic, because of the educational reform promoted by Jiang Zemin. Jiang also emphasized the significance of patriotic anti-Japanese education in 1994. The schools had ingrained more anti-Japanese sentiment into the younger generation than before.<sup>30)</sup>

Nationalism was stoked in China both by popular sentiment as well as by the CCP as a policy tool. A bestseller, *China Can Say No: Political and Emotional Choices in the Post-Cold War Era* was published by five previously unknown young writers right after the United States and China had a military confrontation in the Taiwan Strait in 1996. This book was realized as different from the official discourse on nationalism. Wang Xiaodong’s *China’s Path under the Shadow of Globalization* was also well known as a popular nationalistic book, which also criticized the Chinese government’s policy.<sup>31)</sup> The aforementioned e-signatures petition to oppose Japan’s bid for permanent membership of the UN Security Council and anti-Japanese mass demonstrations in 2005 occurred and supported by popular nationalism.

Therefore, Chinese nationalism has popular support as well as support from the Chinese government

for its own purposes. In general, nationalism tends to be more powerful when people perceive the common enemy as an evil threat. In the Chinese case, Japan became the evil common enemy that united the state and popular nationalism, and assisted in maintaining cohesion within the nation-state. The state nationalism emphasized patriotism and a strong Chinese position toward Japan using the history of World War II to satisfy popular nationalism. For example, the anti-Japanese mass demonstrations in major cities in 2005 were started by popular nationalism while state nationalism allowed them to be bigger and powerful. However, the Chinese government took actions later to prevent anti-Japanese demonstrations from turning into anti-government movements since popular nationalism is also critical of the CCP.

Anti-Japanese sentiment was an effective tool for Mao Zedong to raise nationalism in China in 1932. After the Japanese invasion, Mao managed to establish the anti-Japanese nationalist united front with Chiang Kai-shek. The CCP also succeeded in creating new mass-based peasant nationalism.<sup>32)</sup> For the first time, the Chinese peasantry experienced a threat from outside. Mao finally found the most efficient method to organize the CCP as a cohesive entity. Thus, anti-Japanese nationalism was already recognized as the most effective and powerful means for the CCP to achieve its political goals before World War II.

## **5.2 Nationalism under Jiang Zemin**

Chinese nationalism was strongly pursued under Jiang Zemin's presidency. Wang Huning, a presidential advisor for Jiang Zemin, believed that nationalism was a useful tool in state-building.<sup>33)</sup> Jiang recognized that he needed to demonstrate a powerful political leadership. He was different from Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping since Mao and Deng were charismatic revolutionary Chairmen, while Jiang was a technocrat who was appointed to be a successor by Deng Xiaoping. Nationalism with anti-Japanese sentiment playing the history cards was an effective vehicle for his stable presidency. In addition, it is widely believed that Jiang Zemin dislikes Japan because he had unpleasant personal experiences with Japanese occupation troops during World War II.<sup>34)</sup>

Unlike Jiang, Mao and Deng dealt with historical issues differently on the diplomatic front. For example, although Mao Zedong used anti-Japanese sentiment to raise nationalism among peasants and establish a cohesive nationalist united front, Mao did not use the anti-Japanese nationalistic ideas for his power and politics after World War II. It was documented that Mao showed his appreciation to Japanese Socialist Party members saying "Thanks to your military invasion, the CCP could take political power from the Nationalist Party (KMT). The Imperial Army indeed gave us excellent lessons."<sup>35)</sup> Deng Xiaoping also indicated once that history should not be an obstacle to future Sino-Japanese relations. When Deng visited Japan to ratify the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda made his formal apology for the past. In response, Deng stated "We have a two thousand-year diplomatic history, while unfortunate periods existed in the Sino-Japanese relations. However, we settled the history issues when China and Japan normalized the relationship."<sup>36)</sup>

On his visit to Japan in November 1998, Jiang Zemin attempted to demonstrate his strong nationalist position on history problems. Jiang insisted on including a Japanese official apology for the invasion of China during World War II in the China-Japan joint declaration. It was a new request which was prompted by the fact that South Korean president, Kim Daejung reached an agreement for a written apology in the Korea-Japan joint declaration in the previous month. Yet, it was criticized: "Jiang's relative lack of authority in China drove him to take a hard line on Japan as a means of drumming up support from the military or conservative factions in Beijing."<sup>37)</sup> Jiang's request was denied since the formal apology had been set forth in the 1972 Joint Statement, as well as in the Emperor's speech in 1992.<sup>38)</sup>

Although Jiang's visit to Japan was assessed as unsuccessful diplomacy later in the PRC, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs praised his efforts for settlements of historical issues on its website:

During his state visit to Japan in 1998, President Jiang gave a comprehensive, through and systematic elaboration of China's principles. The Japanese side recognized its aggression against China for the first time and expressed its profound introspection and apology to the Chinese people. The Two sides mutually confirmed that it was an important basis for developing Sino-Japanese relations to recognize history correctly.<sup>39)</sup>

Meanwhile, Japanese nationalism was also raised through the disagreement on the wording of the China–Japan declaration. First, the Japanese public expressed their anger towards the Chinese demands for apology. The Japanese major newspapers reflected public opinion on this point. Second, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi, for domestic political purposes, needed to show his firm attitude against foreign pressure. Since he was regarded to be a weak leader in domestic political arena, Obuchi utilized the opportunity to alter his image through foreign policy.<sup>40)</sup>

Jiang Zemin officially gave his power up when he resigned as the CPC Chairman of the Central Military Commission in 2004. Yet Jiang continued to have political influence on members of the Politburo Standing Committee after Hu Jintao succeeded to the Chinese presidency. Although Hu's position on the history problems had not changed from Jiang's, Hu did not articulate his own vision on Sino-Japanese relations at that time.

### **5.3 Mass Media and Public Opinion in China**

Due to the introduction of a quasi-market economy, Chinese society obtained more variety and a greater range of mass media. Yet the Chinese governments attempted to exercise more control and increase censorship. The CCP required the mass media to follow its orders with respect to patriotic education.<sup>41)</sup> According to a research conducted by Harvard University, more than fifty thousand websites were blocked to access in China due to possibilities for negative effects on the CCP governance.<sup>42)</sup>

According to Ming Wan's research, the Chinese media focused on select negative images of Japan, and was highly critical of Japan at that time. "Intensive Chinese media coverage of a series of scandals involving Japanese tourists, companies, and exchange students in recent years has contributed to the growing negative perception of Japan among Chinese."<sup>43)</sup>

Furthermore, a survey conducted by *Asahi Shimbun* and the Chinese Institution of Social Science in 2002, showed that fifty-three percent of Chinese respondents disliked Japan, while ten percent said that they liked Japan. In compared to the same survey in 1997, twenty percent more people responded that they disliked Japan though the percentage of the people who said that they liked Japan did not change.<sup>44)</sup> On the other hand, nineteen percent of Japanese respondents said that they liked that they liked China in 2002, while seventeen percent said that they disliked China. Sixty-two percent responded that their feeling is neutral [*Dochirademo nai*]. In the 1997 survey, twenty-nine percent responded that they liked China, while nineteen percent said that they dislike China. There was little change in the percentage of the Japanese people that said that they disliked China between 1997 and 2002.

Anti-Japanese sentiment among the young generation is stronger than among older people who actually experienced World War II. According to a survey done by the *Financial Times* in March 2004, eighty percent of Internet users in China indicated that they dislike Japan.<sup>45)</sup> This social phenomenon might be explained by the patriotic education started in the 1990s.

### **5.4 Nationalism in Japan**

Japanese nationalism seemed to be characterized by a top-down system. For example, the Japanese government passed a bill to amend the Fundamental Law of Education, allowing a revision to the basic educational law to require teaching patriotism. One of the major daily newspapers, *Asahi Shimbun*

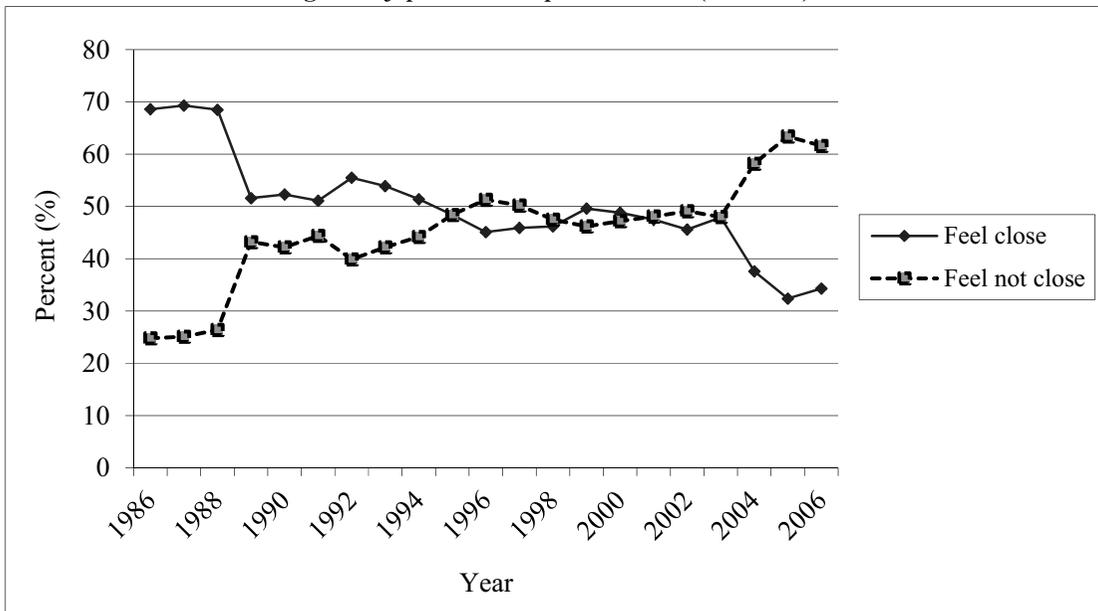
stated:

Both the draft amendment and the current law, which was put into force in 1947, say that the aim of education is “full development of personality” and to foster “builders of a peaceful state and society.” But where the draft differs from the current law is that it has added an article titled “Objectives of Education,” under which come more than 20 moral provisions that include such issues as patriotism and “respect for tradition and culture.” Loving one’s nation is a natural reaction, and the draft also says children should learn to respect other nations. But we have repeatedly warned that spelling out such things in a law could be tantamount to setting a rigid teaching standard for how people should love their country.<sup>46)</sup>

Although the proposal to require teaching patriotism was supported by ten percent of Japanese people at the beginning,<sup>47)</sup> the government party, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), pursued the amendment as an indispensable reform to improve the Japanese educational system. Finally according to the *Asahi Shimbun* poll of May 24 2006, fifty-six percent responded that they agreed the amendment, while twenty-nine percent said that they disagreed. Thus, more than one-year debate on the patriotism among politicians persuaded the Japanese public to support a significant change of the Japanese educational system.

Japanese nationalism could be also described as reactive and defensive. The Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 provided a negative impression of China to Japanese public, with a sharp increase in percentage of respondents feeling “not close to China” in the Prime Minister’s Office poll. Although approximately seventy percent responded that they “felt close to” China in 1988, only fifty-one percent said the same thing in October 1989 (Figure 4), equating to nearly a twenty percent drop in the rating. Japanese negative feeling toward China increased again in 2005 due to the anti-Japanese demonstration in May 2005.

Figure 4: Japanese Perception of China (1986-2006)



Source: Based on Japanese Prime Minister’s Office’ poll results

The military threats from China and North Korea raised a defensive nationalism in Japan. According to the public opinion poll conducted by *Gallup* and *Yomiuri Shimbun* in December 2006, eighty percent of Japanese respondents said that North Korea was a military threat to Japan, and fifty-five percent responded that China was a military threat.<sup>48)</sup> Especially since North Korea succeeded in a nuclear arms test in October 2006, Japanese public opinion had supported more emphasis on national security. The Self-Defense agency was raised to the level of the Ministry of Self-Defense in January 2007, and preparation for revising the Japanese constitution was considered. In addition, forty-six percent of Japanese respondents said that the Japanese nation should consider obtaining nuclear weapons, while fifty-one percent responded that Japan should not consider doing so.<sup>49)</sup> This was a significant change in Japanese public opinion because revising the Three Non-Nuclear Principles used to be taboo.

*Kokka no Hinkaku* (The Dignity of the State) by Masahiko Fujiwara, a mathematics professor, was one of the 2006 bestsellers in Japan. Fujiwara argued that Japan needs spiritual more than logical development, better Japanese language education than speaking English, and following *Bushido* more than democracy. In particular, he advocated that Japan needs to regain the dignity of national dignity. As *The Japan That Can Say No* was a controversial nationalist book, which sold over a million copies in 1989, *Kokka no Hinkaku* is a 2007 version of *The Japan That Can Say No*. Fujiwara emphasized that Japan should not concur with American democracy, imperialism, or globalization. Japan could be a unique nation to be proud, and patriotism is important for Japanese people. This defensive argument toward globalization and Americanism offered a justification to strengthen Japanese nationalism. He also asserted that patriotism is human nature and its highest aspiration, though it was misused before and during World War II. Fujiwara denied that he is nationalist. However, his book inspired the top-down and defensive Japanese nationalism like Akio Morita and Shintaro Ishihara's book; *The Japan That Can Say No*.

### 5.5 Nationalism under Junichiro Koizumi

Junichiro Koizumi became prime minister despite not being a leader of the largest faction in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in 2001. It was the first time that factional politics did not determine the LDP presidency. He was also called "Mr. Clean," since he broke ties with the Mori faction to which he used to belong, and he was not involved in political corruption and scandals. Koizumi implemented many political reforms including the privatization of the postal office, which was the largest financial institution in the world at that time. He was a popular prime minister who served five years in office, and his victories in the 2003 and 2005 elections encouraged Koizumi to be an engaged powerful political reformer.

At first, Koizumi attempted to maintain good relations with China by offering his "heartfelt apology" for Japan's aggression against China before and during World War II when Koizumi visited China in 2001. However, Due to Koizumi's visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, Sino-Japanese relations again deteriorated. Prime Minister Koizumi strengthened his domestic political position by continuing to visit the Yasukuni Shrine and he claimed how the Japanese people honor the victims was an internal issue. Though Sino-Japanese relations deteriorated, Koizumi remained very popular in Japan while he was prime minister. Thus, Yasukuni visits provoked Chinese nationalism, but strengthened him domestically by playing on Japanese nationalism.

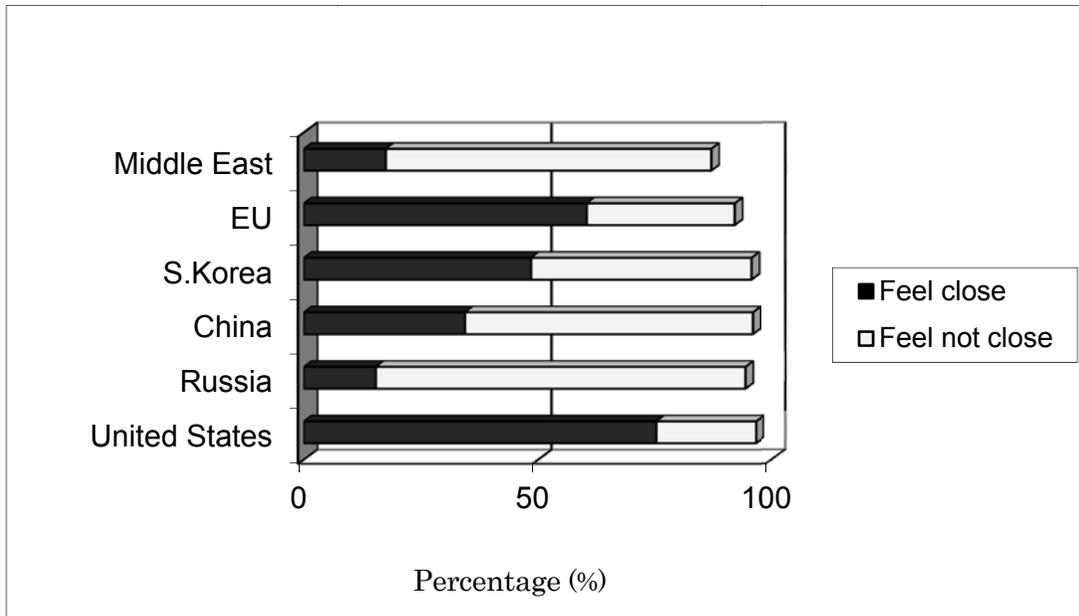
Although Junichiro Koizumi ended his thirty-year affiliation with the Mori faction when he became prime minister, his political socialization and agenda were influenced by the Mori group. In history, Kishi's faction succeeded to the Fukuda, Abe, Mitsuzuka, and Mori faction in 2001. The LDP factions inherit political, social and economic networks in domestic and international settings. For instance, taking Southeast Asia as an important region for Japan's Asian diplomacy had been a characteristic of the Fukuda, Abe, Mitsuzuka and Mori factions' approaches.<sup>50)</sup> Koizumi formerly worked as a secretary

to the late Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda. Kishi and Fukuda built strong political and personal connection in Southeast Asia through their diplomacy. On the other hand, the Hashimoto faction maintained strong personal connections with the Chinese government and business because Kakuei Tanaka was the founder of the faction, and he normalized the relationship with China in 1972. Thus, Koizumi failed to improve Sino-Japanese relations due to the lack of his motivation and leverage to influence counterparts in China.

### 5.6 Mass Media and Public Opinion in Japan

Japanese mass media had assisted in conveying negative images of China through their coverage of China. Especially, the image of “an undeveloped civil society,” “military threats,” and “a crumbling social-market economy” are typical phrases that promote negative public opinion on China in Japan.<sup>51)</sup> China’s rising economic power in Asia was also perceived as a threat to Japan. Raising fears was that China would take over leadership in Asia.<sup>52)</sup> According to the study of three major newspapers coverage on China in 2004 and 2005 conducted by Rikkyo University, there were some different trends in *Asahi*, *Yomiuri* and *Nikkei* Newspapers. All newspapers increased the news coverage of China in 2005<sup>53)</sup> due to the anti-Japanese demonstrations in March 2005 and the cancellation of Chinese vice Premier Wu Yi’s meeting with Prime Minister Koizumi. Yet *Asahi Shimbun* kept a fair stance to cover news objectively, and was critical of both governments, while *Yomiuri Shimbun* was more critical of China than other newspapers. *Nikkei Shimbun* increased its news coverage most among the three. However, *Nikkei* tented not to be opinionated on Sino-Japanese relations. Over all, Japanese newspapers did not particularly encourage anti-Chinese sentiment even when Chinese nationalism became aggressive toward Japan.

Figure 5: Japanese Perception of Other Countries and Regions (2006)



Source: Based on Japanese Prime Minister’s Office, “Public Opinion Polls on Social Affairs.”

As Figure 4 showed, though Japanese view of China had shifted between 1986 and 2006, the views of China overall were not strongly negative. More than fifty percent of Japanese respondents stated that they felt close to China in the 1980s, while more than sixty percent said that they did not feel close to China in 2006. Yet if negative incidents did not occur going forward, the two perceptions might go back to approximately fifty: fifty over time.

China was not the only country that the Japanese public did not feel close to as Figure 5 shows. The Japanese public had an even more negative image of Russia and Middle East. The same survey revealed that the percentage of Japanese respondents professing to feel close to Russia or Middle East had never exceeded twenty percent in the past.<sup>54)</sup> On the hand, the United States and European Union established relatively stable and favorable relationships with Japan.

## 6. Conclusion and Implication of Deteriorated Sino-Japanese Relations

Sino-Japanese relations failed to improve, despite the fact that Japan's ODA and direct investment increased economic interdependence between two countries. There were two levels of analysis that explains the deteriorated relations: international and domestic levels. General changes in the international structure, such as the end of the Cold War, were also significant to consider the reasons why China and Japan cannot cooperate. After the Cold War was over, Russia and the United States placed less emphasis on strategic interests in East Asia, while the post-Cold war system created opportunities for other states to compete for regional leadership. The shift in the balance of power in East Asia could explain Jiang's diplomatic stance toward Japan. In addition to international factors, this study focused on domestic factors in both China and Japan to analyze the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations because it hypothesized positive economic effects on the relationship were hindered by Chinese and Japanese nationalistic sentiment. Chinese nationalism was embedded in assertive, positive and aggressive patriotic ideas. On the other hand, Japanese nationalism was defensive and reactive, and rose as a response to the Chinese patriotic nationalism. Foreign aid could not be an effective diplomatic tool when the two nations did not recognize the positive consequences of increased economic interdependence.

In 2012, Xi Jinping became the new Chinese president and Shinzo Abe came back as a Japanese prime minister for his second term. President Xi is reported to be under Jiang Zemin's political influence, and Xi can use anti-Japanese sentiment to reinforce his own position as leader. Nationalism has been a very powerful political tool for the Chinese Communist Party to unify the country and legitimate their power. Prime Minister Abe also seems to have different political priority from his first term because Abe visited the Yasukuni shrine although he knew doing so would cause Sino-Japanese relationships to deteriorate. While saying "The door for dialogue is always open," and calling for face-to-face talks with Xi, Abe is nonetheless taking actions he must be aware are harmful to the relationship, calling into question his sincerity. President Xi and Prime Minister Abe have finally met on November 10, 2014 since they came to power, but it is possible that both may utilize nationalism for their own domestic political advantage. To avoid and manage further conflicts and dispute in order to ensure peace and stability in East Asia, it will be increasingly important for the government of both China and Japan to attempt to downplay nationalism or at least channel it in a positive direction rather than using it to demonize the other.

### Notes

- 1) Since 2001, the United States has become the largest foreign aid donor in the world again due to the Iraq War.
- 2) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Overview of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China*, June 2005.
- 3) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *ODA White Paper, 2005*.

- 4) The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) had accepted 15,000 trainees from China for the purpose of raising administrative personnel, and the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (TOTS) had accepted more than 22,000 trainees for industrial development.
- 5) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "ODA Country Policy toward Major Recipients," 1998.
- 6) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Overview of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China*, June 2005.
- 7) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Overview of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China*, June 2005.
- 8) Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), p115; Yoshihisa Komori, *ODA Saiko* (ODA Reconsideration) (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyujo, 2002), 15-21.
- 9) Yoshikazu Shimizu, *Chugoku wa naze Han-nichi ni nattaka?* [Why did China become anti-Japan?], (Tokyo: Bungei Shinsho, 2003), 138-9.
- 10) JETRO, "Imports of Manufactured Products by Regions and Country"
- 11) Yoshikazu Shimizu, *Chugoku wa naze Han-nichi ni nattaka?* [Why did China become anti-Japan?], (Tokyo: Bungei Shinsho, 2003), 113.
- 12) Mataka Kamiya, "Japanese Foreign Policy toward Northeast Asia," Takashi Inoguchi and Purnendra Jain eds., *Japanese Foreign Policy Today: A Reader*. (New York: PALGRAVE, 2000), 236.
- 13) Ming Wan, *Sino- Japanese Relations*, 126.
- 14) Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism: Challenging the State?" *Current History* (vol. 104, no. 683, September 2005) 252.
- 15) *Ibid.*, 126.
- 16) Joseph Kahn, "China Pushing and Scripting Japan Protests." (the New York Times. April 15, 2005: A 9). The official was Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. He publicly announced that China would oppose Japan's bid to obtain a permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism: Challenging the State?" *Current History* (vol. 104, no. 683, September 2005) 255.
- 17) *Ibid.*
- 18) Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism: Challenging the State?" *Current History* (vol. 104, no. 683, September 2005) 254.
- 19) *Ibid.*
- 20) *Ibid.*
- 21) Anthony D. Smith, "The Origins of Nation." Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor D. Suny eds., *Becoming National*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 108.
- 22) Suisheng Zhao, "China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?" *The Washington Quarterly* (Volume 29 number 1) Winter 2005-06, 135.
- 23) Zhou Enlai, "Our Diplomatic Guidelines and Tasks, 1952." Quoted in Chen Zhimin, "Nationalism, Internationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.14 no.42 February 2005), 41.
- 24) Japan's Prime Minister's Office, Public Opinion Polls <<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey>>
- 25) There are many labels for recent Chinese movements. For example, Suisheng Zhao called it as "pragmatic nationalism." Suisheng Zhao. " China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?" *The Washington Quarterly* (vol. 29 no.1 Winter 2005-06) 131-167. Chen Zhimin named it "positive nationalism." Chen Zhimin, "Nationalism, Internationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy." *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.14 no.42 February 2005), 35-53.
- 26) For example, Ian Seckington, Nationalism, Ideology and China's 'Fourth Generation' Leadership," *Journal of Contemporary China* (vo.42 no.42, February 2005), 23-33; Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism: Challenging the State?," *Current History* (vol. 104, no. 683, September 2005) 251-256; Baogang He and Yingjie Guo, Nationalism, *National Identity and Democratization in China*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000).
- 27) Ian Seckington, Nationalism, Ideology and China's 'Fourth Generation' Leadership." *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.42 no.42, February 2005), 25.
- 28) Jiang Zemin's speech at the closing ceremony of the sixth plenum of the 14th Central Committee. Quoted in

- Ian Seckington, Nationalism, Ideology and China's 'Fourth Generation' Leadership." *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.42 no.42, February 2005), 26.
- 29) Suisheng Zhao, "China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?" *The Washington Quarterly* (vol. 29 no. 1) Winter 2005-06, 135.
  - 30) Yukio Okamoto and Akihiko Tanaka, The Dangerous Surge of Chinese "Patriotism," *Japan Eco* (vol.32 no.2, August 2005), 11-2.
  - 31) Zhimin Chen, "Nationalism, Internationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.14 no.42 February 2005), 51; Ian Seckington, "Nationalism, Ideology and China's 'Fourth Generation' Leadership," *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.42 no.42, February 2005), 26; Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism: Challenging the State?," *Current History* (vol.104, no.683, September 2005) 251; William A. Callahan, "Introduction: China, Ltd." *Journal of Contemporary China* (vol.12 no.42, February 2005), 1.
  - 32) Chen Zhimin, "Nationalism, Internationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* (14 no.42 February 2005), 40.
  - 33) Baogang He and Yingjie Guo, *Nationalism, National Identity and Democratization in China*, Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000).
  - 34) Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, 144.
  - 35) Katsuyo Ota trans., *Mao Zedong: My Foreign Policy* (Tokyo: Gendai hyoronsha, 1975)
  - 36) The Foreign Ministry documents on conference. Quoted in Yoshikazu, Shimizu, *Chugoku wa naze Han-nichi ni nattaka?* [Why did China become anti-Japan?], (Tokyo: Bungei Shinsho, 2003), 106-7.
  - 37) Caroline Rose, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the past, looking to the future?* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 106.
  - 38) Please refer Caroline Rose's list of all Japan's apologies and statements of regret to Asian countries 1952-2001. Caroline Rose, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the past, looking to the future?* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 101-2.
  - 39) Cited in Caroline Rose, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the past, looking to the future?* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 107.
  - 40) Caroline Rose, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Facing the past, looking to the future?* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 104.
  - 41) Yoshikazu Shimizu, *Chugoku wa naze Han-nichi ni nattaka?* [Why did China become anti-Japan?], (Tokyo: Bungei Shinsho, 2003), 175.
  - 42) Cited in Yoshikazu Shimizu, *Chugoku wa naze Han-nichi ni nattaka?* [Why did China become anti-Japan?], (Tokyo: Bungei Shinsho, 2003), 176.
  - 43) Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, 78. Also he gathered various public opinion polls about Sino-Japanese relations in China and Japan. Refer to Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations*, 67-79.
  - 44) In 1997, thirty four percent of Chinese people said that they dislike Japan, while ten percent responded that they liked Japan. Cited in Kuzoko Mori and Zhang Yun-ling eds., *Nichu Knkei wo do kochikusuruka* [How do we construct the Sino-Japanese Relations?] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2004), 227.
  - 45) Yukio Okamoto and Akihiko Tanaka, The Dangerous Surge of Chinese "Patriotism," *Japan Eco* (32 no.2, August 2005), 12.
  - 46) The *Asahi Shimbun*, Dec. 13 (IHT/Asahi: December 14, 2006)
  - 47) Masaru Tamamoto, "How Japan Imagines China and See Itself," *World Policy Journal* (Winter 2005/06), 57.
  - 48) Yomiuri Shimbun, December 15 2006.
  - 49) Yomiuri Shimbun, November 20 2006.
  - 50) This point was confirmed by interview with a LDP politician (September 22, 1999).
  - 51) Kiyoshi Takai, "Higashi Ajia no Seiji masatsu to Media no Kouzou," [Political Conflicts in East Asia and Media Structures] Sino-Japanese Communication Committee ed., *Nichu Sogo rikai to Media no yakuwari* [Sino-Japanese Mutual Understanding and the role of Media] . (Tokyo: Nihon Kyohousya, 2004).

- 52) Nansei Taku, *Nihon no ajia hodo to Ajia ron* [Japanese News of Asia and Debates on Asia] , (Hyoronsha, 2003), 23-5.
- 53) The Study was done in the periods of January – June in 2004 and 2005. Asahi increased the news coverage on China from 324 to 836. Yomiuri increased it from 354 to 508. Nikkei increased it from 566 to 1,057. Rikkyo University Department of Social Studies, Monna Seminar *Nihon no Shimbun ni miru Chogoku ime-ji* [Chinese Image on Japanese Newspapers] , (Tokyo: Rikkyo University, 2005).
- 54) Japan's Prime Minister's Office.

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