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**Asia-Pacific Stability:  
China – Japan relations**

China and Japan are the most important powers in Asia-Pacific region now. China, Japan and other Asia-Pacific countries are facing with strategically important cases, such as to keep region in the world and to maintain its economic vitality in globalized system conditions. The stability in East Asia depends on a strong and predictable relations between China and Japan. And one of the main aspects is to look through the history of the relations. Article considered such themes as Status of Taiwan, Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty, Yasukuni Shrine issue, significance of East China sea agreement, political, economic and military and relations.

**Key words:** Asia-Pacific, China-Japan, Taiwan, Yasukuni Shrine, East China sea, balance of power.

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**Азия-Тынық мұхит  
тұрақтылығы: Қытай-Жапон  
қарым-қатынастары**

Қазіргі кезде Қытай және Жапония Азия-Тынық мұхит аймағындағы маңызды державалардың бірі болып табылады. Қытай, Жапония және басқа да Азия-Тынықмұхит аймағындағы мемлекеттер әлемде аймақты сақтау және жаһандану жүйесі жағдайында өзінің экономикалық өмірге қабілеттілігін жалғастыру сияқты стратегиялық маңызды мәселелерге тап болады. Шығыс Азиядағы тұрақтылық Қытай мен Жапонияның берік және болжамалы қарым-қатынасына тәуелді. Және негізгі аспектілердің бірі қарым-қатынас тарихын зерттеу болып табылады. Мақала Тайвань мәртебесі, қытай-жапон бейбітшілік және достық келісімі, Ясукуни мәселесі, Шығыс-Қытай теңіз келісімінің мәні, саяси, экономикалық және әскери қарым-қатынастар сияқты тақырыптарды қарастырады.

**Түйін сөздер:** Азия-Тынықмұхит аймағы, Қытай-Жапония, Тайвань, Ясукуни ғибадатханасы, Шығыс-Қытай теңізі, күштер балансы.

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**Азиатско-Тихоокеанская  
стабильность:  
китайско-японские отношения**

В настоящее время Китай и Япония являются самыми важными державами в Азиатско-Тихоокеанском регионе. Китай, Япония и другие страны Азиатско-Тихоокеанского региона сталкиваются со стратегически важными проблемами, как сохранение региона в мире и поддержание своей экономической жизнеспособности в условиях системы глобализации. Стабильность в Восточной Азии зависит от сильных и предсказуемых отношений между Китаем и Японией. И одним из главных аспектов является изучение истории отношений. Статья рассматривает такие темы, как статус Тайваня, китайско-японский Договор мира и дружбы, вопрос Ясукуни, значение Восточно-Китайского морского соглашения, политические, экономические и военные отношения.

**Ключевые слова:** Азиатско-Тихоокеанский регион, Китай-Япония, Тайвань, Храм Ясукуни, Восточно-Китайское море, баланс сил.

**ASIA-PACIFIC STABILITY:  
CHINA – JAPAN  
RELATIONS**

The fundamental structural change between China and Japan concerns the changing balance of power between the two Asian giants. China and Japan have been major powers and great civilizations in Asia for thousands years. For roughly two to three thousand years up to the late 19th century, China had been stronger than Japan, and the latter was in no position to challenge or «invade» China. This relationship of Chinese dominance changed in the late 19th century, when Japan's growing militarism and imperial ambition enabled it to gain a series of military victories and impose punitive economic arrangements over the weakened Qing Dynasty and the government that replaced it, that of the Republic of China (ROC). In addition to requiring China to pay huge indemnities, Japan's victories included the annexation of Taiwan (after the 1894-1895 Sino – Japanese War), acquisitions in China's Shandong Province, occupation of Manchuria, and full- scale invasion of the Chinese mainland [Confrontations involving Japan and China included the First Sino-Japanese War (between Japan and the Qing Dynasty, 1894-1895); the Boxer Rebellion (against which Japanese troops participated, resulting in the «Boxer Protocol» signed in 1901); and the Second Sino-Japanese War (between Japan and the Republic of China, 1937-1945, merging into the second World War in 1941)]. By the end of World War II, Japan's military campaigns and conquests in China had left a legacy of bitterness that continues to affect Sino-Japanese relations into the 21st century [1].

Current controversy over the status of Taiwan is in part a legacy issue of Japan's 19th and 20th century militarization. After the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War, Japan acquired the island of Taiwan «in perpetuity» from the Republic of China, turning it into a Japanese colony, called Formosa, and investing heavily in the island's development. Although not a part of Japan's World War II conquests, the Japanese colony of Formosa nevertheless came under Allied Power occupation after Japan's defeat and unconditional surrender. This decision was set forth in the «Cairo Declaration» of December 1, 1943, issued after a meeting by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, ROC President Chiang Kai-shek, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

In keeping with the Cairo Declaration, after Japan's defeat in 1945, Taiwan and the Pescadores were assigned to the Republic of

China for purposes of post-war occupation. Taiwan was still under this occupation four years later, when the ROC government fled to Taiwan after the communist victory in the civil war on mainland China. The formal state of war between Japan and the Allied Powers was ended by the 1951 Treaty of Peace with Japan (also known as the San Francisco Peace Treaty.) Article 2(b) of that treaty stated that «Japan renounces all right, title, and claim to Formosa and the Pescadores,» but the treaty mentioned nothing about Taiwan's new sovereign status. The failure to specify Taiwan's sovereignty in this treaty, the specific reference to Formosa's return to the ROC in the Cairo Declaration, and the ROC's physical occupation of the island after 1949 all contributed to future controversy over Taiwan's political status [Neither the ROC government on Taiwan nor the PRC government on the mainland were signatories to the 1951 treaty; however, the ROC government on Taiwan concluded a separate treaty with Japan in 1952 that was based on the San Francisco Peace Treaty.].

Some of the U.S.-Japan initiatives that concerned Beijing included the 1996 U.S.-Japan Joint Declaration on Security, in which both parties reaffirmed their alliance; the 1997 Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation, which avowed mutual cooperation not just in Japan's defense but «in areas surrounding Japan,» although without mentioning Taiwan; and the 2005 Joint Statement of the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee, which for the first time mentioned both countries' concerns that the Taiwan issue be resolved peacefully through dialogue. These and other tensions continued to plague Sino-Japanese relations until the new period of détente began in 2006.

Sino-Japanese relations appear to have a dual structure which is built into the long history of exchanges and interaction between the two countries. Some phrases such as *ichii taisui* («neighbors across the trip of water») and *dobun doshu* («same Chinese characters, same race») have long been regarded as a symbol of the friendly relationship between the two countries.

If one looks at the process of negotiation aimed at the conclusion of the 1978 Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty, one could argue that the negotiation process added further momentum to the «structuralization» of attitudes. That is to say, it still seems doubtful whether the treaty was necessary to Japan, to be achieved at all costs, since Sino-Japanese relations could have been maintained well enough without the conclusion of treaty which included the controversial «anti-hegemony» clause.

Moreover, having witnessed the following events – the signing of the Sino-Vietnamese treaty in November 1978, the Sino-American normalization in December 1978, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in January 1979, the Sino-Vietnamese war in February 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in January 1980 – one could even argue that the Sino-Japanese treaty might be considered the starting point of new tensions, rather than of peaceful stability in Asia.

For a few years after the textbook uproar, on the superficial level, Sino-Japanese relations enjoyed a mood of «friendship and cooperation» and Japan entered a third phase of «China Fever» (The first one followed the Sino-Japanese normalization and the second the Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship treaty). However, «friendly relations» turned out to be superficial once again, as was revealed when the so-called Yasukuni Shrine problem created another uproar. The action took the form a series of angry students demonstrations and government statements in China denouncing an official visit that Prime Minister Nakasone made on 15 August to Yasukuni Shinto Shrine in Tokyo, that enshrines Japan's 2.5 million war dead, including class-A war criminal Hideki Tojo, Japan's wartime prime minister [2].

Perhaps nothing is more emblematic of Japan and China's shifting relations than the trajectory of top-level leaders' visits. In a 1998 visit to Tokyo that was considered a public relations disaster, Chinese President Jiang Zemin openly scolded Japanese officials for failing to appropriately acknowledge imperial Japan's war-time aggression. With the exception of a Koizumi visit to Beijing early in his tenure, Chinese and Japanese leaders did not have an official summit during Koizumi's five years in office. (Koizumi did hold several sideline meetings with China's leaders at various international fora.) Chinese leaders explicitly stated that they would resume bilateral summits if Koizumi ceased visiting the Yasukuni Shrine [3].

Shortly after assuming office, Abe visited Beijing in October 2006 to indicate his determination to improve ties. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao reciprocated with an April 2007 visit to Japan, including a historic address to the Japanese Diet (parliament). Fukuda, seen as more friendly to Beijing than Abe, was then warmly welcomed in Beijing in December 2007, building on his predecessor's success. The détente climaxed with Chinese President Hu Jintao's carefully orchestrated visit in May 2008, the first by a Chinese leader to Japan in a decade. The heads of state summit was heavy on symbolism, if thin on concrete substance. Notably absent from the

Chinese leader's statements was a call for Japan to apologize for historical grievances, and both sides emphasized a «forward-looking» friendship. The two leaders agreed to hold annual summits, cooperate on environmental technology, and enhance cultural exchanges.

Despite the rollercoaster of political and diplomatic ties, other aspects of the relationship have remained relatively consistent. China-Japan economic interdependence has grown as trade and investment flows have surged over the past decade. China-Japan economic ties serve as an anchor for the overall bilateral relationship, and the two nations and have become the key players in a robust East Asian trade and investment network.

On the other hand, military strategists in each country remain wary of the other's motives. Beijing is suspicious of any moves that hint at Japan developing a more assertive and active security posture, and Japanese defense planners note with alarm China's burgeoning military modernization. Japanese defense documents have publicly declared their concern with Beijing's lack of transparency and apparently aggressive military spending over the past several years. In addition, occasional incursions by Chinese vessels into Japan's territorial waters have kept tension high at times despite the overall improving relations.

Since 2006, political leaders on both sides—even those whose rhetoric was the most vehement—appear to have concluded that political accommodation is the best course, at least temporarily. The fact that this trend has survived several political transitions in Tokyo is particularly promising. Many analysts contend that the short- to medium-term outlook is remarkably stable, but acknowledge that fundamental distrust and disagreements over history could threaten ties in the longer term. In short, it appears that these disputes have created a firm ceiling for Chinese- Japanese relations; the question is if this recent *détente* points to the establishment of a new, higher floor.

Since 2007, military affairs between the two countries have improved alongside the warming up of Sino-Japanese relations. In November 2007, a Chinese missile destroyer visited the port of Tokyo, becoming the first Chinese warship to make a port call to Japan. In return, a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) destroyer paid a call to the Chinese southern port of Zhanjiang in June 2008 [4]. In September 2008, Chinese air force general Xu Qiliang became the first commander of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force to visit Japan since 2001. He met with Japanese Defense

Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and agreed that there was a need to enhance bilateral defense exchanges.

Despite these improvements, there is a limit to how far military exchanges can go, particularly when exposed to the public spotlight. The tentative steps toward cooperation between the two militaries has taken place against a backdrop of occasional intrusions by Chinese vessels into Japan's territory, although the reported incidence of naval incursions appear to have declined in the past few years.

Turning to the regional security, it is at risk as a result of conflict between China and Japan over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. It also underscores the two sides' competing economic interests over the East China Sea and illustrates the complexity of their domestic politics as reflected in their foreign policy. Beyond the security, economic, and political challenges, however, the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute is an identity-based conflict in which the two nations' divergent perceptions, attitudes and intentions interact intensely with one another.

Following PRC President Hu Jintao's visit to Japan in May 2008, China and Japan announced a «consensus» on joint exploration for oil in the resource-rich East China Sea, as well as an «understanding» on Japanese participation, under PRC jurisdiction, in development of one of the area's proven gas reserves, the Chunxiao gas field [5]. Some hailed the agreement as a «remarkable improvement» that would «remove a major obstacle» in Sino-Japanese relations. According to another view, the agreement allows Japan a face-saving way to participate in energy development in a disputed area while not requiring the PRC to accept Japan's claims that a «median line» divides the East China Sea into Japanese- and Chinese-owned areas.

On the surface, the East China Sea agreement appears to lay the groundwork for addressing an area that has been the focus of years of competing Sino-Japanese territorial claims and tense stand-offs. Still, a number of potential obstacles could hamper future progress. Each country has put its own spin on the agreement, for instance, with China quickly clarifying that it is not a «joint development» project (as Japan claims) but a «co-operative development» venture, which Beijing describes as «a very different thing» [6].

Future Sino-Japanese cooperation under the East China Sea agreement will have to navigate multiple minefields of nationalistic sentiments—sentiments which at times appear outside the control of the involved governments. Such sentiments erupted after June 10, 2008, when a Japanese patrol boat in the East China Sea collided with and sank a

fishing vessel from Taiwan, whose government also maintains sovereignty claims in the disputed area. Taiwan responded by recalling its representative to Japan, and the following week a boat of Taiwan activists, accompanied by Taiwan patrol boats, entered Japanese waters in the disputed area in apparent protest of the collision. PRC nationalist sentiments also surged after the agreement was announced, with a small protest outside the Japanese Embassy in Beijing and online commentary criticizing PRC officials for allegedly «selling out» China's interests to Japan [7].

The September 2010 confrontation between Japan and China over a Chinese fishing trawler's provocations in the waters of the Senkaku Islands demonstrated how easily seemingly small incidents can spiral into major diplomatic confrontations. Japanese nationals in China were arrested for illicit behavior near Chinese military bases, and a reported embargo of Chinese shipments of rare earth metals

destined for Japanese ports, only exacerbated the tensions [8]. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced that the Senkaku Islands fell under the protection of the U.S.-Japan security treaty. The crisis blossomed into a major security challenge not only for Tokyo but for Washington as well.

Today, the historical balance of power structure between China and Japan is evolving again. Possible challenges: China and Japan may engage in strategic competition and confrontation in Asia and in the world; There is a danger of serious military conflict between China and Japan over disputed islands and resources, or incidents from the engagement of military activities in the East China Sea and the Western Pacific; The harsh strategic competition between China and Japan may block the development of Asian economic and security cooperation. China and Japan must remember the past, but not live forever in its shadow.

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