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Contemporary Chinese Studies

Newsletter

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## A Trap in Sino-Japanese Relations Fall 2010 – What was the Point in Chinese Fisherman Ship Crash near Senkaku?

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Satoshi AMAKO



On September 8, I heard from the news that a Chinese fisherman ship crashed into a Japan Coast Guard patrol ship near Senkaku islands, and crew members of the Chinese side were detained. Since there have been accidents between Japanese patrol ships and Chinese or Taiwanese fish boats before, I didn't take the issue as a serious event when it initially occurred, though no detainment ever happened before. However, the information of fish boat captain's arrest and a possible indictment arrived in no time, and the (then) Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Maehara stated that Japan would calmly deal with this issue according to Japanese laws. These new developments started to make me feel that this was going to be a tough issue.

Immediately after the event unfolded, I was visiting China for a joint symposium between Shanghai Fudan University and Waseda University on the 10th. It was then that a reporter from a Shanghai news agency asked me for a detailed interview. Since I had not fully grasped the situation, fearing that my statement could be abused for political reasons, I turned down the proposal. After I returned to Japan, many Japanese newspapers and TV stations asked me for interviews, most of which I rejected, for I still lacked a full comprehension of the issue. Before long, the 10 thousand member Japan tour project was canceled, rare earth export to Japan was put on halt, and Ambassador Tanba was summoned at midnight. As such, Beijing showed a series of tough policies one after another. In addition, 4 members from Fujita Engineering Company were detained, when they were conducting research on deserted chemical weapons. Against this background, anti-Chinese atmosphere dominated Japanese media, and Sino-Japanese relationship reached the deadlock all of a sudden.

I arrived at Beijing on the 26th to participate in the "East Asia Forum" jointly held by Japan, China and South Korea. In my keynote speech, I strongly argued that it was precisely in this kind of difficult situation that Sino-Japanese dialogue becomes all the more necessary, and nothing would come out of shutting off that opportunity. Most of the some 150 participants agreed with my opinion. I also felt relieved when I saw so many Chinese were seriously concerned of the worsening relationship and strongly hoped for improvements. Thus, coming back to Japan, I collected information in order to further analyze the issue.

I was first curious why the accident occurred on September 7. I will focus on this point below to get to the bottom of the problem. Was the issue accidental or intentional? According to the video tape which is gradually being made public, the Chinese fish boat seemed to have purposely thrown itself against the Japanese side. Though the Chinese claim that the incident occurred because the fish boat was trying to get away when it was surrounded by patrol ship, the argument lacks persuasiveness. I have long considered this issue as a well planned move by the Chinese side. The main reasons are: first, many Chinese fish boats gathered nearby. Second, China's territorial claim in the South China Sea area have become more louder, and Beijing has been more active in its pursuit for maritime interests nearby. Third, the Chinese government took a series of tough measures that left no room for negotiation.

Why did China do so? Several explanations could be offered

here. First, power struggle over disputed territories in the East China Sea might be relevant. If China conceded to Japan's initial tough stance and consigned the issue to Japanese domestic law, it would mean its defeat to its counterpart. It could be that Beijing hardened its stance to prevent such a scenario. The second reason might have something to do with China's increasing national awareness as a great country. After surpassing Japan's GDP, the Chinese economy still keeps a rapid rate of growth. Its military power already overshadowed Japan, and it is said that the country is now accelerating its construction of aircraft carriers. China's toughness could be motivated by an urge to exhibit its power. The third possible explanation is China's domestic power struggle between two interest groups. Whereas the group that has vested interest in unilateral development of ocean resources is gaining foothold, the group that supports joint development with Japan is also getting more powerful. The fourth factor could be traced to inner party power struggle. The Chinese Communist Party's 5th Central Committee is scheduled this month. Fierce competition and struggle is unavoidable, as a large scale personnel shift at the top including the paramount leader is expected in the 2012 CCP national committee. I have to mention here that I do not agree with the oversimplified view that the Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao leadership belongs to the pro-Japan group, while the Jiang-Zemin, Xi Jinping group is anti-Japanese.

I suspect that all these four factors are present in this case. But as for the particular timing, the third explanation seems more reasonable. Many Chinese point out that groups with vested interest in resource and energy development such as oil and natural gas have increased their influence in policy making. Indeed, a workshop on joint development of the East China Sea gas field was scheduled on September 9 between the two governments, and a joint declaration about joint development was to be signed two days later. The fact that the accident broke out right before the agreement may reveals an undeniable possibility that the anti joint development groups mobilized to jettison the negotiation. If that was the case, then they were successful in preventing the joint effort. Then they started to worry that if they continue their high-handed attitude, Japan may mobilize an anti-China campaign by siding with the international community. It was probably on the 25th that a decision was made among the Chinese leadership. From then on, the Chinese side reversed its policy and moved for normalization by reopening its rare earth export and releasing Fujita Engineering Company members.

Still, because of joint development related issues, the ARF Sino-Japanese summit at Hanoi was suddenly reduced to a 10-minute conversation. It seems that the talk was downgraded, because the day before the conversation Maehara Foreign Minister said: "the two countries have reached agreement to open talks on Sino-Japanese joint development". This later proved to be false information. But I wonder who got the false information out in the first place. Yang Jiehu showed no response to Maehara's call to reopen the joint development talk, either at the November APEC or the foreign minister talk with Maehara following the Kan-Hu summit.

I offered the same explanation in a November 22 magazine, which documented a talk on Sino-Japanese relations. Unexpectedly, the journalist that I talked to showed absolute agreement with my opinion. He told me that he had found an article on September 3 at a Diaoyu protection group's internet blog, which stated that only traitors want joint development with Japan in the East China Sea. This is basically my analysis of this case. Sino-Japanese joint development in the East China Sea is not only concerned with tangible benefits, but also has great implications for bilateral cooperation and peaceful coexistence between the two in the future. That makes this problem all the more significant.

# NIHU Program “Contemporary Chinese Studies” Project

## Activity report of 2010 and future plans from research networks

The Contemporary Chinese Studies Project of NIHU Program is in the middle of its fourth year. As research results are being reported from each network, further accomplishment can be expected. Professor Satoshi Amako (Professor at Waseda University) succeeded Professor Kazuko Mori as the project director. To improve utility tools, we have continued to upgrade the project homepage including building an English version website, so that we can post workshop information at each network. A digitalized journal called Japanese Studies of Contemporary China written in Chinese has been published online at the homepage as part of the project effort. Its first issue, made of a collection of papers, has already been posted online in both PDF and HTML format

so that it reaches more readers. The second issue – Japanese Studies of Contemporary China 2010 will be posted at the homepage soon, and we are currently selecting papers to be published in the 2011 issue. Also, as an effort to attract readers from both Japan and other countries and to know the access number to the website, a counter will be installed to the homepage in October. In addition, the former director Emeritus Professor Kazuko Mori won the 21st Asian Culture Prize Academic Prize, and in November the Chinese Studies Contribution Award. International symposium, as the biggest event of the project, will be held at Keio University on January 29 (Sat), we looking forward to seeing you there.



Waseda University, Organization for Asian Studies (OAS),  
Waseda Institute of Contemporary Chinese Studies (WICCS)  
<http://www.china-waseda.jp/wiccs/index.html>

Searching for a paradigm shift in contemporary Chinese studies

Waseda Institute of Contemporary Chinese Studies (WICCS) will focus on sending out information of research result this year under the leadership of the new director, Satoshi Amako. The program has accumulated its research fruit in the past three years since its establishment. It is our task to design a way to efficiently disseminate relevant information. One method is to publish digitalized information via the homepage. Another is through paper based media such as WICCS series. The homepage at Waseda Network was renewed in October. Our effort continues to make a better website that is both user-friendly and content-rich. We have also frequently received visitors, and exchanged opinions with them during the bumpy time of Sino-Japanese relations. We held workshops and exchanged opinions with guests from Ningxia Academy of Social Sciences, South Korean Embassy Counselor, CCCPC Party Literature Research Office, and EU Embassy Political Department Manager. Large scale events were jointly held, including “East Asia Regional Cooperation Forum” in September at Shanghai Fudan University, and the international symposium “Beyond the Historical Perception of Nation State”. We have also invited Professor Ralph Pettman from the University of Melbourne for a talk. We held the workshop on political change and party (petition), and several more held by the macro-economy team, and next-generation team. Local research

at Jiangxi Province has been continued since last year to persistently observe labor movement there. In addition to several published paper collections, we also plan to issue a few more WICCS series. Waseda Network plans to strengthen its tools to send out information in English. Broadly circulating our research findings all over the world, we would like to ceaselessly challenge for a new paradigm shift in the contemporary Chinese studies.



Overseas partner visited our institution



WICCS Homepage



Kyoto University, Institute for Research in Humanities,  
Research Center for Modern and Contemporary China  
<http://www.zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/~rcmcc/index.htm>

Courtesy values interaction – Academic interaction with overseas research institutions

Many people visit Kyoto when the leaves turn red, and researchers are no exceptions. Instead of during the hot summer or the cold winter, many overseas academicians came to our center this autumn. Starting from the visit by the CCCPC Party Literature Research Office at the end of September, there have been some 20 foreign visitors by November, and we have been busy with welcoming them. Our research activities also benefited greatly through workshops where we learnt more about China's current academic situation and contemporary information.

Based on the motto of “Courtesy values interaction”, our



Dialogue with Chinese Partner

center also actively interact with overseas institutions by participating in their academic and educational activities. For instance, Naoki Hazama and Tokihiko Mori held intensive lectures two years ago and last year respectively at Heidelberg University, where Professor Mueller-Saini came from last February. Yoshihiro Ishikawa also went there this fall, having a total of 24 hours lecture (16 classes in terms of Japanese system). Hazama also taught graduate students and young researchers the essence of Japan's Sinology from September to November at Sun



Visiting Scholar Ishikawa in Germany

Yat-sen University (Guang Zhou), with which we have academic agreements. Those classes were conducted in Chinese and English.

Unlike casual visits that usually come with sightseeing, intensive classes as such

are tense and demanding. But they are all the more fruitful. In addition to academic benefits from overseas institutions, valuable information and resources provided by courteous visitors also contribute to the improvement of our center.

Our service provided for overseas visitors, such as those from

China, has become significantly less splendid, thanks to the increasing number of people with “international standard”, who are capable of taking care of themselves without help from others. The content of “courtesy” is getting simpler in that sense, but the frequency of “interaction” is never to be decreased.



## Keio University, Institute of East Asian Studies (KIEAS), Center for Contemporary China Studies

<http://cccs.kieas.keio.ac.jp/>

Contemporary China Studies Series coming up soon

Publishing academic accomplishments and holding workshop discussion were the two fundamental components for Keio University Network during the first half of academic year 2010. Our research activities have born fruit as Keio University Institute of East Asian Studies – Contemporary China Studies Series. Its first issue came out as *Saving the Country, Mobilization and Order: China's Politics and Society under Transition* in September (Keio University Press). This book was based on research conducted by the second study group, focusing on the topic of “Historical continuity and discontinuity in sociopolitical structure”. This group has examined the reestablishment of governance during the era from the end of Qing Dynasty to the establishment of the PRC, from perspectives that had received little attention before.

Holding five general research assemblies where foreign researchers presented their findings, our center also exerted effort in academic exchanges with overseas institutions. At the first assembly, we invited Peter Van Ness from Australia National University to talk about East Asian international relations. R. Bin Wong from the University of California, Los Angeles made a comparative analysis of China and EU at the second one. At the third assembly, Professor Chung Jae-ho from Seoul National University gave a talk about China's political risk governance. Revealing the latest trend in Chiang Kai-shek studies, Lecturer Wu Shufeng presented at the fourth assembly as the Director of Compilation, Taipei Academica Historica. At the fifth gathering, Yin Hongbiao from the School of International Studies at Peking University talked about the political situation of Hong Kong after its return to the

PRC. As part of our academic exchange activities, we also exchanged views with Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' visiting group led by the Fang Ning, Director at the Institute of Politics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Furthermore, we also had four lunch seminars, where participants discussed contemporary issues liberally and freely. To share research findings among different groups, we also held a study camp in September, inviting members from all groups.

It is our turn to hold NIHU's 4th international symposium – “Coexistence with a ‘Rising’ China”, which is scheduled on January 29 (Sat), toward which we are currently making every preparation.



Workshop



publication



## The University of Tokyo, Institute of Social Science, Contemporary China Research Base

<http://web.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/kyoten/index.html>

Lively activities in Southeast Asia, Taiwan and China

From August 17th to 25th, the Trade Subgroup at the University of Tokyo Network visited Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand to conduct a field research on the South Economic Corridor, one of the joint development endeavors of the Great Mekong Sub-region (GMS). Members of the subgroup carried out this research by travelling 1,215km from Ho Chi Minh City to Bangkok. Findings from this research will be published in Research Series No.7 of Contemporary China Research Base, Institute of Social Science.

On August 22nd and 23rd, the Economy Subgroup and the History Department of National Chi Nan University (NCNU) jointly held a workshop named “International Academic Forum on Comparative Studies of Contemporary Political Economy across the Strait” at the campus of NCNU in central Taiwan. A total of 18 presenters spoke at the forum among which 10 presenters were from Mainland China and Japan. The participants at the forum made vigorous debates on the historical presence of state-owned enterprises (SOE) in both China and Taiwan. A collection of the papers presented will be published in Chinese as Research Series No.6 of Contemporary China Research Base

The Rural Issues Subgroup also conducted a field research in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Amoy city from September 15th to 21st. The members visited a bio-ethanol factory using cassava as raw materials and several vegetable exporting companies in order to examine the agricultural changes in south China coastal area under the China-ASEAN FTA framework.

All of the researches and workshops mentioned above were conducted mainly by young researchers such as graduate students and post doctoral researchers. They have made many achievements and

coped well with tight schedules.

On October 23rd after the winter semester started, the Industrial Agglomeration Subgroup invited two Chinese researchers to participate in “the Workshop on Industrial Agglomerations along China's Coastal Areas”. This workshop was held at Komaba Campus of the University of Tokyo as a work session of the National Convention of Japan Association for Asian Studies. Later on November 6th, we jointly held the Chinese Automobile Symposium titled “Seeking for the Volume Zone of Chinese Automobile Market” at the Clock Tower Centennial Hall of Kyoto University with the cooperation of three other research centers (the Center for East Asian Economic Studies of Kyoto University, the Research Center for Modern and Contemporary China, Institute for Research in Humanities of Kyoto University, and the Manufacturing Management Research Center of the University of Tokyo). This symposium had about 400 participants, and discussions were very enthusiastic.



Workshop in Taiwan



Field research in South-East Asia

As for the education side, after the course of “Multiple Dimensions of Sino-Japanese Relations” was successfully held at Hongo Campus during the summer semester, our members gave lectures on another

6-month-course titled “Revised Chinese Modern History (3)” as a part of the University-wide Graduate Graduate and Under-graduate School Program at Komaba Campus.



Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN),  
RIHN Initiative for Chinese Environmental Issues

<http://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn-china/>

Searching for a new direction in environmental issue studies

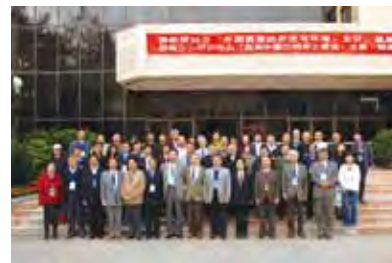
Mining and industrial development related air and water pollution has long been serious problems, which cast significant influence on human environment and health. Meanwhile, chemical exposures due to agricultural chemical and fertilizer usage have also seriously influenced human lifestyle, health and ecosystem. No doubt that environmental problem is getting more diverse and complex. RIHN proclaims “ecohealth”, which is a new idea that seeks to solve the problem related to environment and human health through the understanding of local nature, history and culture. Southwest China, which is adjacent to the Indochina Peninsular, symbolizes China’s stronger influence both politically and economically. In the academic year of 2010, we have engaged in a series of activities with the two keywords of “ecohealth” and “Southwest China” in mind. We promoted exchange of views at workshops such as “Network of Human and Goods between Southwest China and Continental Southeast Asia” and “Hydropolitics of the Mekong River”. In November, we also held the 5th international symposium – “Development of Southwest China and Environment, Lifestyle and Health”.

In addition to strengthening collaboration with Chinese research institutions, such as reaching a joint research agreement with Fudan University last year, we established a research collaboration agreement with the Research Institute for East Asia Environments at Kyushu University, as a way to broaden our domestic network.

As a way to announce our research achievements, we also published news letters (“Ten-Chi-Jin”) from the 10th to the 13th issue. Starting from this year, we also increased research materials such as

book reviews, newly published books and academic papers. At the same time, we also established the Chinese Environmental Issues Portal online in order to disseminate information on the newest trend of research in China’s environmental issues. We have posted information on Chinese environmental problems related workshops, and resources written in Chinese, English and Japanese. The same will also be made available at NIHU’s nihuONE data base (<http://nihuone.nihu.jp>).

In the academic year 2011, we plan to further expand our network with both international and domestic research institutions, and consolidate the platform of China’s environment studies in Japan.



Symposium in Yunnan Univ.



RIHN Newsletter



The Toyo Bunko,  
Documentation Center for China Studies (DCCS)

<http://www.tbcas.jp>

DCCS as a platform for international exchanges and training of young researchers for historical document studies

DCCS is in its fourth year of the research project. While preparing for the digital library opening, we are also getting ready for the publication of paper collection, which largely consists of our previous research findings in oral history, digital historical resource, and local documents. Titled as *Chinese Contemporary History from the Perspective of New Historical Materials: Oral, Digital and Local*, this paper collection published by Toho Shoten, Japan.

Also on last October, the historical resource research workshop – “Field work and Historical Materials Research Report by Young Researchers” was held, where information on the newest historical materials was exchanged. The comprehensive report included not only experiences of local studies and archives, but also inscription, values of private documents and recent trend in China’s history studies. Presenters were from our center, as well as young graduate level researchers at the University of Tokyo and Tsukuba University. This shows that our research activity has helped to foster interaction and education among different universities of Chinese contemporary history studies.

In tandem with these



Young researchers from Taiwan Taiwan

research activities, we have also received delegation members from the CCCPC Party Literature Research Office in last September, graduate student research group from Political Science Department at National Taiwan University in last November. As such, our center is being recognized internationally.

The Toyo Bunko New Main Building was completed in January this year. To transfer its books, the library will be closed from the end of last year to the beginning of this year (Dec 23, 2010 ~ May 1, 2011). It will be newly opened thereafter.



New Building will open soon



Discussion seminar