

# Several Present Conditions Defining 100 Years of Japan's Annexation of Korea

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## Abstract

*There are two approaches to questioning the 100th anniversary since Japan's annexation of Korea. One is to seek ways of overcoming colonialism by duly understanding the process of colonial domination from its outset through the present. Another approach is to position Japan's annexation of Korea in current circumstances. This study has opted for the second approach. Over the past 100 years, conditions surrounding the matter of Japan's colonial domination have noticeably changed. Above all, changes in the circumstances defining the relationships between Korea and Japan made inevitable the mention of colonial domination amidst other issues. From the Korean perspective, the fact that what was a single entity 100 years ago has been divided into two is the most fundamental change that has occurred. With this as a starting point, the current paper proposes to address three factors present in the 100 years following Japan's annexation of Korea. First, the Japanese government's apologetic statement for colonial domination is combined with the conception of an East Asian community. Second, the framework of perceiving the Korea-Japan relationship and the East Asian community should have a common ground. Lastly, the author also viewed the emergence of China as an essential reason for changes in order of the region in East Asia and the principal condition in defining the present state of affairs.*

**Keywords:** 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea, East Asian community, confederation, modernity

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## 1

The year 2010 marks the 100th anniversary of Japan's annexation of Korea. No substantive difference is expected between its 99th, 100th, and 101st year. Notwithstanding, the 100th holds symbolic importance and suggests a sense of urgency for a matter that can no longer be put off to a later date. On the occasion, and in memory, of the 100th anniversary, *Shisou* 思想 (Thoughts), a renowned Japanese monthly magazine, released a special feature entitled "The 100 Years of Japan's annexation of Korea." Most of the historical societies in Korea jointly hosted an academic conference entitled "Colonialism and Colonial Responsibilities."

This was apparently because there was a sense of expectation as well as of urgency at work. The advent of the Democratic Party (Minshutou 民主堂) in Japan in 2009 served to arouse not a little anticipation in Korean society. Above all, anticipation ran high that Japan's wobbling between apology and reckless remarks regarding the bilateral agreement would become a thing of the past and that follow-up measures would soon be under way. Against this backdrop, over 200 intellectuals from both Korea and Japan released a joint statement on May 10, 2010, confirming, again, the injustice of Japan's annexation of Korea. Responsive to such a move, Japan's Prime Minister Kan Naoto's statement was made public on August 10, 2010. Intellectuals and communal and social bodies of Korea considered that the Japanese Prime Minister's statement marked a step forward, in principle, compared to the Japanese government's stance to date.<sup>1</sup>

It has generally been considered that there are two approaches to examining and framing the 100 years since Japan's annexation of Korea. One is to seek ways of overcoming colonialism by duly understanding the process of colonial domination from its outset through the present. However, such an approach always marks the present as

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1. Not a few critical views were also presented at the same time. Refer to the homepage of Asia Peace & History Education Network (<http://www.ilovehistory.or.kr/news/newsnotice.php>).

having remaining traces of colonialism. Even if 100 more years were to elapse, the outcome would not change. Another approach is to position Japan's annexation of Korea in current circumstances. The current paper has opted for the second approach because the conditions defining Korea-Japan relationship have changed and become complicated over the past 100 years. As part of this approach, one could start with the Japanese Prime Minister's statement made public in August 2010.

The most prominent changes in the conditions marking off the time 100 years ago from the present time is the fact that the single state of Korea at that time was divided into South and North Korea in 1950, in the post-World War II period. Add to this the fact that the southern peninsula is exposed to an urgent critical situation, which includes North Korea having become a nuclear power. This fact alone should justify the choice to adopt a different approach in questioning the origin of Japan's annexation of Korea. Furthermore, this approach is thought to be necessary if the academic community is to divert the issue of 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea to a topic addressed to the Korean society as a whole, too.

The current paper proposes to focus on three conditions defining the present of 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea in particular. First, the Korea-Japan relationships during 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea should possibly be investigated taking into account the formation of the East Asian community, a matter that will influence policy-making and strategic planning for the days to come. This is primarily due to the fact that the Japanese Prime Minister's statement was made against the backdrop of the conception of an East Asian community. Second, the Korea-Japan relationship and the issue of a divided Korea should possibly be addressed in connection with the collective identity of East Asian countries. This would be a way of seeking a common perspective shared by East Asian countries. Third, the sudden emergence of China has made the East Asia's regional order noticeably different. Such a set of conditions makes it necessary to ask what changes would result as to the awareness of Korea-Japan relationships viewed with an understanding of

the 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea. Considering these factors, this paper proposes to define the current significance of 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea and map out prospects for the days to come.

## 2

In the post-Cold War era, since the 1990s, regionalism has fast become an important development along with the phenomena of globalization. The European Union was organized in 1992, with the Euro currency introduced as a common currency in 1999. To come to grips with such a move, North America introduced the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), thereby making regionalism a predominant trend worldwide. Though regionalism made its way to the agenda in the East Asian region, too, it was long before it was seriously addressed. There were reasons for this.

First, unlike in Europe or North America, the order of Cold War was explicitly present in the East Asian region. The reality is that the border line marking off the socialist camp from the capitalist one is here to stay (with the issue of North Korea's nuclear program being a typical instance of disagreement). The structure of Cold War is closely associated with U.S. policy making. Therefore, the situation has made it difficult to push forward the regionalism of East Asia, a move that is most likely inconsistent with the interest of the United States, which seeks to manage the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.

Second, the experience of having faced invasion and war perpetuated by Japan around this region in the first half of the twentieth century was still remembered. Japan colonized Korea, waged war against China and made inroads into other parts of the Southeast Asian region. In a region where China is rapidly emerging and Korea plays a role not to be belittled, such historical experience functions as an obstacle to the advancement of regionalism. It was in such a context that the Fukuda Doctrine in 1977 was presented, in recognition of the need to improve relationships with the countries in Southeast

Asia. It emphasized that Japan would never attempt to become a military power (Koo 2008, 358-363).

In spite of these difficulties, regionalism in East Asia continues to be a goal. A prime example is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand to promote political and economic cooperation and regional stability. At a time when the Cold War was rampant, ASEAN sought to enhance safety and suppress conflicts in the region by creating bonds and union (Shin 2009, 118-121). Subsequently, when ASEAN was launched, Japan introduced its own conception of a community for the Asian region, expressed as Asian-Pacific (or circum-Pacific), for which a U.S.-Japan axis was presupposed. Japan's conception of regionalism was basically linking Asia and Pacific, and within this framework, ASEAN found itself in a secondary position. Accordingly, the regionalism of East Asia within the context of the Cold War took on a form where the United States had its say through Japan as a medium (K. Kim 2007, 6-8). ASEAN could create the effects of regionalism in so far as it did not break out of such a framework.

It was after 1990, when the foreign currency crisis hit Southeast Asia, that regionalism in East Asia came to the fore in full scale. In reaction to half-hearted measures taken by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) that were headed by the United States, Japan began to push for the foundation of the Asian Monetary Fund (AMF). However, the plan was held up due to opposition from the United States and China, both countries worried that independent Japanese influence would be strengthened. In the meantime, with China taking an aggressive stance by proposing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to ASEAN, Japan also proposed an active economic cooperative measure in a drive to strengthen its hegemony in Southeast Asia.

The establishment of the ASEAN + 3 initiated by ASEAN and the Liberal Democratic Party (Jimintou 自民党) of Japan is in reflection of such circumstances. Within this framework, the three countries,

including Korea, China, and Japan, volunteered to set up a cooperative organization, only to fail to reach consensus. The fact that the three countries could convene only under the name of the ASEAN + 3 paradoxically suggests that though they must work together, it is difficult for the three countries to share common interests or values. The immediate reason ASEAN invited those three countries to join the organization was due to distrust in the United States and the IMF in connection with the financial crisis. Cooperation with Korea, China, and Japan was essential. However, productive cooperation was not probable because, like ASEAN, Korea was going through the foreign exchange crisis and Japan and China were competing for enhanced influence over ASEAN.

While Korea participated actively and took the initiative in the discussions of the East Asian community through East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) or East Asian Study Group (EASG) in early 2000s (Bae 2009, 46-61; J. Lee 2009, 109-126), the country has taken a relatively passive stance since the foreign exchange crisis eased. Above all, this was because the North-South division continued and North Korea's nuclear program emerged as an imminent issue. In light of the fact that Korea had been pursuing a foreign policy focusing on cooperation among countries in the East Asian community since 1990, it seemed as though the situation had returned to where it had been prior to the foreign exchange crisis. Granted, the Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative presented at the time when the former president Roh Moo-hyun took office did not simply touch on the matter of diplomacy and security, but on the building of economic and cultural regional community as well. Such developments reflecting the Roh Moo-hyun administration's emphasis on North-South Korean relations have lost momentum due to differences in perception between Korea and its neighboring countries, which did not regard Northeast Asia as an integrated region (Lee et al. 2009, 130-134).

Against such an historical backdrop, a new conception of an East Asian community (2009) was brought forward by the Democratic Party of Japan. The conception aimed to establish economic cooperation and a security system within the East Asian region, based on the

identity of Japan as an Asian country while converting the existing U.S.-Japan relationship to a more equitable relationship. Aimed primarily at magnifying the difference from the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, such a policy has left much room for vagueness with regard to consensus on specific action plans with long-term prospects remaining undecided (K. Kim 2010, 9-15). However, it seems evident that the current Japanese government will work out relationships with neighboring countries within the framework of the East Asian community.

Japan has continued to improve bilateral relationships with many countries in East Asia since the mid-1950s, when it began to reconstruct its economy. Over several decades, Japan established a network of producers centered around developing Japanese corporations; however, it accepted a regional Asia-Pacific structure rather than an East Asian structure in efforts to maintain a close relationship with the United States (Koo 2008, 364-365). China, however, has rapidly been emerging ever since the collapse of the Cold War order. Efforts toward regionalism in East Asia have been in progress since the financial crisis in Asia and, with the financial crisis surfacing even in the United States, the conception of East Asian community has become an urgent issue to address.

Under such circumstances, Japan's Prime Minister Kan Naoto released a statement confirming that Japan's annexation of Korea was made under compulsion in the face of opposition from Koreans and that the subsequent domination of Korea has left deep scars in the minds of Koreans. His statement was definitely made in order to improve Korea (North and South)-Japan relationships. So-called "historical disputes" have been an ongoing obstacle to the improvement of Japan's relationships with Korea and China. Considering the Japanese government's conception of an East Asian community, Prime Minister Kan's statement can be interpreted as the Japanese government's will to solve the biggest obstacle to the building of that East Asian community. If such a move is to properly bear fruit, Korea needs to put in an effort on its own part that will correspond to such a development now in the making. In view of the complicated struc-

ture of conflicts in the Japanese political arena, positive cooperative efforts are needed. Such efforts are required from the standpoint of making the year 2011 memorable as the original year of new exploration rather than simply the 101st anniversary of Japan's annexation of Korea.

Rather than coping with the situation solely by confrontation with Japan, the possibility of mutual cooperation should be sought, taking into consideration the whole picture of Japan's current vision of an East Asian community. Korea's perception and strategy of East Asia up until now were limited to the country's focus on the issues surrounding the South-North separation. Though inevitable due to its situation, Korea's regional conception had many aspects that neighboring countries could readily share. For Korea and Japan to move forward in the direction of improving relationships, Korea itself needs to have a broader understanding of high standing in the international community. Korea's concept of the Northeast Asian region was predominantly centered on the United States, Japan, China, and Russia. As Korea focused on relations with countries such as the United States and Russia, which the concept of an East Asian community could hardly embrace, Korea found it difficult to define its status within the framework of an East Asian community. This makes Japan's position, which has been one of maintaining deep relationships with the South-East Asian region for a long time, vulnerable. Accordingly, Korea should come up with a way of establishing relationships with Japan, based on a concept of region that could agreeably correspond with the Japan's conception of East Asia.

The key issue for Koreans is none other than North Korea. The so-called North Korea issue serves as a crucial obstacle to Korean understanding of the overall picture of the conception of the North East Asian community. Strictly speaking, Japan also has a problem with North Korea under realistic constraints, the existing conception of the East Asian community tended not to take into account the existence of North Korea. Though called the East Asian community, it ended up being not more than a system of countries besieging North Korea (Sakamoto 2009, 9-15). Accordingly, no sign is yet in sight that

the North Korean nuclear issue is being resolved, and Korea's acceptance of an East Asian community is constrained by this fact. Japan's Prime Minister Kan's statement made public last August will only have significant meaning when the North Korea-Japan relationship as well as the Korea-Japan relationship has been improved.

From the Korean perspective, the urgency of the security issue makes it critical to their interests to perceive the region as centering around Korea. However, Korea could possibly seek a strategy linking the Southeast Asian region to the North East Asian region with North Korea as an intermediary. In such a context feasibility of ASEAN + 3 + 1 (North Korea) or ASEAN + 3 + 2 (North Korea and Mongolia)<sup>2</sup> needs to be examined (N. Baek 2010, 240). Though the East Asia Summit (EAS) of ASEAN + 3 + 3 (Australia, New Zealand, and India) has already been launched, it would not be impossible to create another channel of ASEAN + 3 from an economic perspective, distinguished from the six-party talks on the issue of North Korean nuclear weapons.

Application of the ASEAN framework makes it possible to expect a positive outcome from adjusting existing regional perceptions that are biased against the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asia, while respecting the total framework of the East Asian community concept, led by the Japanese government. It will be remembered that Japan's focus on East Asia as a distinctly regional entity brought about the launching of the AMF (with the exclusion of the United States, due to dissatisfaction with APEC), in an effort to manage the financial crisis of East Asia. While the way the United States and China view the matter would be a key component in any future successful alliance, the idea of the East Asian community embracing South-East Asia and Northeast Asia could be a possibility.

In the case of Korea, this could contribute to the readjustment of its perspective on East Asia that has grown vague since the conception of the Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative by the Roh Moo-

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2. Taiwan could be included depending on Chinese acceptance.

hyun government. The current government's new Asia diplomacy, evidently launched in reaction to the government of the former president Roh Moo-hyun, remains vague about the East Asian regionalism (K. Kim 2010, 17-20). If the North Korea issue can be drawn into the framework of ASEAN + 3, the conception of an East Asian community could be shared while Korea would be able to maintain its position of having to focus on Northeast Asia. In this way, the significance of the countries included in the ever-vague notion of Northeast Asia is still acknowledged. At the same time, by making use of East Asian cooperative institutions already existing in various forms, it is a lot easier to steer clear of unnecessary diplomatic conflicts.

### 3

The search for ways of participating in the conception of the East Asian community using North Korea as the central issue involves fundamental problems. This is not only because the concept of the East Asian community hardly seems to be based on the historical and cultural homogeneity of East Asia but also because the North Korea issue could be perceived only as security related and peace threatening. This could most likely lead to a functionalistic judgment in favor of international balance of power or national interests while weakening the possibility of sharing common perceptions or norms. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the North Korea issue as a product of the same historical conditions defining East Asia while admitting that the concept of an East Asian community is a future plan. Otherwise, when conflicts of interest take place, it will be difficult to induce common perceptions whereby to conciliate them. This is also connected with the task of constituting the regional identity of East Asia.

The concept of integrative regionalism has its origins in Europe, just as the system of a modern national (sovereign) state has. As evidenced by European history, the system of modern national states, by nature, is a system that tends to cause endless wars. With no higher norms to restrict a national state, it is through balance of

power that wars are prevented and order is maintained. It is in Europe, as well, that the international politics of power balance has led to multilateral regionalism. It is highly likely that the conception of the East Asian community itself would not have evolved without the advent and example of the European Union. Because of Western imperialism, East Asia adopted a system of modern nation states, which included a legacy of violence. Paradoxically, because of Europe's devastating experience of wars fought between nation states, it is now building a regional identity as a way to avoid armed conflict and, thus, modeling an alternative form that aims for collective rather than competitive decision-making between nations.

Between nation states where such norms as equality of sovereignty or non-intervention had not been established as a prerequisite, countries were incorporated into the framework of imperialism-colonialism. After the post-imperialist era that ended with World War II, it was a matter of course that the establishment of nation states was raised as a goal to pursue in East Asia. However, while the matter was coupled with the structure of the Cold War, East Asian countries could not solve the issues carried over from the preceding era. Typically, Korea found itself divided and China also found itself separated into mainland China and Taiwan. Though Japan seemed to have made a successful transition, it also felt constrained in the building of a "normal state." Such a process is still in progress (Lee et al. 2009, 23-28).

While the process of transition to the modern age were under way, typical traits experienced by European nation states have also been present. Balance of power and conflicts of nation interests as represented by security issues and trade conflicts are typical cases between nations. However, problems such as disputes over sovereignty and other historic rivalries inevitably surface during the process of modernization and these problems remain unsolved, causing conflicts within the region (Lee and Bae 2009, 388-426). Shared perceptions among East Asian countries, which will be a basis of the East Asian community, should begin from how to understand the international order in the region that has been in the making since

the end of the nineteenth century. This also implies the task of turning the various historical experiences shared by East Asia into a common perception.

The historical experience of modern East Asia cannot be grasped through studying the system of nation states alone. As well, there are no common norms shared by countries in the process of modernization in East Asia. Since the end of the nineteenth century, confederation of Asia and departure from Asia were concurrently raised as directions that would facilitate the building of a modern civilization. The opening of ports in East Asia created a gateway to the West and within East Asia as well, thus, confederation and invasion worked simultaneously. The same was true of the process by which the ideas of civilization and enlightenment were taking hold in East Asia; Cold War order accompanied this process (Yonetani 2010, 49-103). The combination of new ideas and the Cold War order resulted in the resurfacing of memories of colonialism and reactivated old grudges with the turn of the post-Cold War era.

Granted, it is not appropriate to approach the dual nature of confederation and invasion from the perspective of a critical view of modernization (nationalism) or nation states alone (Na et al. 2009, 334-360). This is because the regional order in East Asia is coupled with East Asian traits formed in the transition to the modern age, along with the system of nation states as discussed earlier. It is important to recognize that even with similar historical conditions in East Asia, individual countries have had their unique experiences and this informs their approach with respect to the formation of the East Asian community. In such a context, it is worth noting the proposal to build a confederation of the two Koreas from the perspective of the dual task of adaptation to, and overcoming of, the modern age (N. Lee 2009, 17-22, 35-46).

Baek Nak-Chung and his associates proposed a confederation of states between South and North Korea that could be formed gradually with implementations of an intermediary stage, giving attention to Paragraph 2 of the North-South joint statement made public on June 15, 2000. This proposal is a far cry from the proposition that separa-

tion is to be overcome and an unfinished modern state completed. Though being not a stance deviating from unification of the two Koreas, it is a stance open to the future (Ryu 2009, 61-66). While the proposal of union of South and North Korea is a discussion on the form of the state, it is closely related with the basic viewpoint of the dual task of adaptation to, and overcoming of the modern age. Such a conception of the modern age is noteworthy in that it could be a framework for building and embracing regional order in East Asia.

If the separation of North and South Korea is a way to define the Korean peninsula, the separation of continental China and Taiwan could be understood in a similar way. Furthermore, China's experiences going through the Xinhai Revolution and the Socialist Revolution could also be perceived as the process through which modernization has been achieved in the East Asian region. The post-war Japanese state system symbolized that, under the emperor, a peaceful constitution could also be perceived as a viable route to modernization. The nation state system in East Asia cannot be understood from the perspective of the European nation state system. Accordingly, the East Asian way of regional cooperation should go through an East Asian way of experimentation. This is why the confederation of South and North Korea is not completion of the planned nation state but conveys an undertone of overcoming the modern age.

The fact that the chance of the tripartite cooperation among Korea (North and South), China and Japan looks rather slim, with respect to the conception of East Asian community, is apparently attributable primarily to the struggle for power over the region. On the other hand, because of the distinctive traits of other countries making up international politics in East Asia, responsibility must be shared for the success or failure of cooperation in the region. Although South Korea-North Korea and China-Taiwan are both divided countries, they have drastically differing characteristics as well. Japan, with its peaceful constitution, is always plagued by security issues and China is concerned with internal issues of Tibet and Xinxiang seeking independence. Under such circumstances, the East Asian community or regionalism would most likely cause extreme conflicts

and confusion within individual countries. Accordingly, the confederation of South and North Korea could admittedly be a model whereby to test its practical possibility while recognizing that with the peculiarity and uniqueness of other countries in East Asia, there is little chance of their embracing a modern nation state system.

Positive acceptance of the dual task of adaptation and overcoming in the East Asian context would make it possible to accept the peculiarity of the Japan's post-war state system as well as the position of China under the banner of socialism of Chinese style. At minimum, accepting as a common denominator the principle that there are different ways to reach similar goals will facilitate the carrying out of joint tasks and would take the region beyond the history of imperialistic invasion and the structure of the oppressive cold war that prevailed in East Asia in the twentieth century. This would enhance the possibility of understanding and implementing a framework for the confederation of the South and North Korea as well as for addressing the domestic issues of other countries in East Asia (N. Baek 2010, 241-242).

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The proposal of confederation of South and North Korea presupposes the possibility of confederating South and North Korea on a relatively equal basis, in size, at least. This formula could not possibly be applied to mainland China, Taiwan, Tibet, and Hong Kong. The most difficult challenge to the conception of the East Asian community is China as it now exists. China gives rise to a tremendous asymmetry within the East Asian region. This is the case in both Southeast Asia and North East Asia, thus making the proposed union of East Asian countries unlikely. The reality of China's current position and power makes it difficult to answer the question of how the union of states should be established within East Asia where orders of differing scales and hierarchies overlap.

Paradoxically, while the fact of rapidly emerging China makes

the conception of the East Asian community practically possible, the seemingly slim likelihood of the conception of the East Asian community being realized is also attributable to China. It would not go too far even if the scope of East Asia was to be defined as China and its neighboring countries. The overall shift in the global perception of East Asia in the turn of 1990s is attributable, strictly speaking, to the existence of China. Interest in China also underlies the study of Chinese history led by the so-called California School of the United States, which led to the study of European and world history as well (J. Kang 2008). In addition to this, if we take into account scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank, who believed in a Chinese-centered world system, and Giovanni Arrighi, who seeks to find in contemporary China a method that will replace Western capitalism (S. Baek 2006, 405-463; S. Kang 2008; Arrighi 2009), the prediction that the twenty-first century will be the century of China gathers momentum.

It remains uncertain what relationships China will forge in the days to come with neighboring countries in East Asia. China is a country where its internal structure still remains vague and fluid. With an array of countries in East Asia lay spread around China, a huge country, the regional order in East Asia will depend largely on the way the Chinese state structure takes shape. China is seeking to strengthen its relationships with neighboring countries, thereby attempting to build cooperative economic zones at 11 locations along the frontiers in conjunction with 9 countries (*Donga Ilbo*, October 5, 2010). The type of regional cooperation in East Asia would be noticeably different depending on whether China would choose to strengthen internal integration or choose to adopt an approach to power distribution where local autonomy is guaranteed. However, it seems evident that China would emphasize the adoption of its own model whatever choice was made (M. Lee 2008).

Beijing consensus as a Chinese model of development as compared with Washington consensus has captured the spotlight for some time (Ramo 2004). Controversy over the Beijing consensus mounted to such an extent that current political, economic, and social issues were explained from a Sinocentric perspective and time-

line (Fan 2009, 3-85). However, the uniqueness of the Chinese experience over the past 30 years is widely recognized, although the real aspects of the experience require further deliberations and whether such approach for development as China has taken so far will stay valid in the days to come remains controversial (Chun 2005; Cho 2009). In view of the impending change of executive officers, scheduled for 2012, and demand for political reforms such as democratization currently mounting, discussion on the future of China is expected to gain momentum.

The political and economic weight that China carries is immense. However, China is not stabilized yet because, above all, internal regional and economic gaps are worsening and a host of interest groups have appeared on the scene as a result of the country's economic development. The tendency of the government to function like a business corporation and turn public institutions into interest groups, with the central government, local government and national corporations deeply involved in economic and political issues, poses a serious social problem (Yao 2010). Hence, the creation of a model that will contribute to the narrowing of gaps between regions and economic brackets is a task of vital importance.

From such a perspective, the Chongqing model led by Bo Xilai 薄熙來, centering around the Chongqing area is noteworthy in many respects. It is because the policy implemented with Bo Xilai taking office in 2007 represents an endeavor to experiment on a new direction in development from a number of perspectives. The Chongqing model is being implemented with a view to solving existing problems as set forth in the following: 1) gaps between urban and farming areas; 2) differences between coastal and inland areas; 3) imbalance between economic and social development; 4) environmental issues; and 5) conflicts between domestic development and opening toward the external world (Su 2010). In summary, the Chongqing model is an experimental policy connecting the upper stream of the Changjiang river to coastal areas and contributes to the settlement of interregional imbalance by being developed as a western base of development and to the development of both urban and rural areas

at the same time.<sup>3</sup>

While experiments based on using the Chongqing model are interesting on their own, rectifying imbalance between coastal and inland areas in the western part of China would be the ultimate objective. It is noteworthy that China embarked on the development of Changchun-Jilin-Tumen (or Duman in Korean) in the north-east by designating the area as a pilot development zone in 2009. The north-eastern part of China had been an area falling far behind for a long time, similar to the situation in the western part of the country. The area, which was in the limelight when Kim Jung-Il of North Korea visited it in 2010, is linked to Najin and Cheongjin ports in North Korea, enhancing economic cooperation between China and North Korea. The key to the project is building transportation networks linking railways, roads and ports under the joint sponsorship of five neighboring countries including China, Russia, Japan, Korea, and Mongolia. Construction of highways has already been completed and, reportedly, ground will be broken shortly for the building of express railways, as well. North Korea has already elevated the status of Naseon (Najin and Seonbong) to the level of a special city, so that bilateral cooperation with China can be facilitated.<sup>4</sup>

While the development of north-eastern areas around Changchun-Jilin-Tumen along with that of the western part were aimed at easing imbalance within China, the two programs are noticeably different. It is because the western part is inland while the development of the north-eastern area is aimed at enhancing multilateral cooperation. For an access to the East Sea, China needs not only the seaport facilities of North Korea but also needs to construct a free economic zone which has been under review with the participation of neighboring countries since 1990s. The Tumen River Area Development Programme was already mapped out in 1991, led by the United Nations

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3. On the significance of Chongqing Model from the policy perspective, see Cui (2010).

4. *Chosun Ilbo*, "Transnational Economic Zone in the Duman River Valley in the Making," September 16, 2010.

Development Programme (UNDP), in which South Korea, North Korea, China, Russia (Soviet Union), Japan, and Mongolia are supposed to join the program (Yi 2010, 3-12).

While North Korea was going through twists and turns, dropping out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its relationship with South Korea worsening, China had been exerting itself to develop the north-eastern area. North Korea has been pursuing an isolated course for the past ten years, whereas China has been exerting itself to build infrastructure for the north-eastern area, thereby entering a phase where the program connecting the country with Najin port has started to reap benefits. This has seemingly prodded North Korea to seek to establish an economic tie with China. When the development of this area has been expanded to include Korea and Japan, the north-eastern area of China will certainly be enhanced to a substantial degree by a complex network of international cooperation. This could serve as a fine example in which China as a giant nation and its neighboring countries in East Asia could experiment with the forms of relationships they should forge on a long-term basis.

No other country in East Asia parallels China in terms of scale. It is Japan alone that almost matches China economically. This leaves two ways for the neighboring countries to maintain relatively stable relationships with China. One is by entering into relationships with China by building alliances with each other as countries lying on the periphery of China or by entering into relationships with certain parts of China. The conclusion of a free trade agreement between ASEAN and China falls into the former case, while the development of the Duman river falls into the latter. For Korea, North Korea is an urgent issue on the agenda, and Korea has no other choice but to focus on the South-North relationship. Therefore, it would be much better if Korea could approach its relationship with China with a focus on the north-eastern area.

This, otherwise, means that the status of each cooperation partner in this region can be different (Jeon 2006, 189-198). Though multilateral cooperative organizations would be formed, they could take a form where local governments and central governments coexist

rather than the central government of one country versus the central government of another. Although we cannot tell what extent local governments could be delegated for certain rights by the central governments, it could help to examine how to establish stabilized relationships while admitting asymmetry between nations, if such opportunities are left open. If the process of jointly developing the northeastern area of China by linking it to the Duman river area goes smoothly, it will ultimately contribute to the dispersion of economic and political centers in China. This is particularly relevant based on the assumption that the Chongqing model is well established in western China. Should China not rapidly get into confusion but manage internal problems successfully, the way China's peripheral countries manage to reduce risk factors while getting deeply involved in China would help define the scale and area appropriate to the position of each country concerned, thus they could build relations with China appropriately.

The importance of the measure of state confederation, strategically established as an intermediary stage en route to the integration of South and North Korea, could not be more stressed. That is the way to minimize risk factors in the Korean peninsula, and would be a device that enables North Korea to maintain a balance as well. Since neither South nor North Korea denies unification in principle, each party can retain its central government and unique local governments as well, leaving open the possibility of eventual integration. By maintaining a center of gravity in which neither party gains the upper hand, security risks would be warded off or seriously reduced.

On this assumption, there would be a new opportunity for the formation of a Korean peninsula economic zone and for development of economic cooperation in East Asia, because China would like Korea, the United States, and Russia to join the Tumen River Area Development Programme. Japan, China, and Russia have been involved in recent disputes over sovereignty. Since they are supposed to assume key roles in the development of cooperation, it stands to reason that they would benefit by working out mutually agreeable solutions to their disputes. Besides, as the existing six-party confer-

ence which has been addressing the North Korea's nuclear issue begins to touch on the issue of economic cooperation, the conference could continue its role as a multilateral cooperation organization. This would not be contrary to the interest of the United States, either. If such a plan of cooperation is to be realized, it seems appropriate for Korea to choose a strategy that links the cooperation of the East Sea coastal area with the Tumen River Area Development Programme (N. Lee 2010).

It is at this point that Japan's role should be considered critical. The north-eastern area of China, Yunhaju in Russia, and the Duman river area are all closely related with Japan historically. At one time, Japan invaded those areas, made them bridgeheads for entry into the continent, and built the state of Manchuria. Due to these facts, Japan's role in this region was inevitably limited. However, Japan began to take an active stance in the formation of UNDP twenty years ago. Japan's domestic circumstances also came into play. A regional cooperation program of building a Circum-East Sea zone, centering on the East Sea (Sea of Japan) instead of Circum-Pacific zone, was under way, led by local autonomous bodies, including Niigata City (Wada 2004, 71-75). Civilian organizations in which business corporations participated joined the Tumen River Area Development Programme.

The foremost reason that the Japanese government finds it difficult to come forward is that Japan has not established a diplomatic relationship with North Korea. Under the current circumstances, it would be timely for Japan to resume its effort to normalize diplomatic relations with North Korea, with the Tumen River Area Development Programme about to move into high gear after 20 years of stagnation. The issue of reparations could then be solved as a package in a similar way to how it was addressed twenty years ago. When the South-North relationships have improved to such an extent that sightseeing tours to Mt. Geumgang are possible or there is free access to the Najin port facilities, Japan's Circum-East Sea conception could also gather momentum. If 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea is to end successfully after 100 actual years, the issues of the elimina-

tion of colonial domination on the part of Japan and improvement of bilateral relationships between Japan and North Korea remain to be solved.

## 5

Thus, we have come back to where we started. As long as the North Korea issue remains to be solved, the 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea has yet to be officially cleared. Even after 100 years, more time is needed to resolve this issue. However, during those 100 years the conditions and impact of Japan's colonial domination also changed. The task of addressing the issue of Japan's annexation of Korea has become more difficult and more complicated. With the situation defining the relationship between Korea (North and South) and Japan changing, the issue of colonial domination must be addressed along with other matters. Above all, from the Korean perspective, the fact that the one single entity that existed 100 years ago was divided into two remains most fundamental issue that has yet to be resolved. The article noted three conditions centering on the resolution of 100 years of Japan's annexation of Korea, with this as a point of departure.

First, the Japanese government's statement of apology is linked to the conception of the East Asian community. North Korea is left out in the conception of an East Asian community with ASEAN at its center. China and Japan are in a competitive relationship in order to strengthen their respective roles in ASEAN. The North Korea issue could be approached in ways where South Korea forms indirect relations with North Korea by bringing North Korea into the framework of ASEAN + 3. Second, the framework for establishing Korea-Japan relationships that are oriented toward the East Asian community should have common ground to share. This means that the perspective of historical experience should be considered in the composition of the East Asian community. The author takes the viewpoint that the measure of the confederation of state between South and North Koreas, and the dual project of adaptation to, and overcoming of, moder-

nity make the perception of the past history in East Asia and the future perspective parts of a continuum. Lastly, the author also viewed the emergence of China as an essential reason for changes in order of the region in East Asia and as the principal condition in defining the present state of affairs in the 100 years since Japan's annexation of Korea. The issues of North Korea going nuclear, the Relationship between South and North Koreans, and the hierarchical structure among nations are inseparable from the matter of establishing relations with China.

The task of forging optimum South-North relationships under such conditions should naturally be Korea's key task. Granted, this study confirms that if such efforts are to gather practical results, improvement in North Korea-Japan relationships should be presupposed. Therefore, the symbolic importance of the 100 years remains valid.

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