



RETHINKING THE SOUTH KOREA-JAPAN VALUES GAP

INTRODUCTION

What equilibrium means to geopolitical balance of power maneuvering, equality means to national identity resentments over gaps perceived as unjust. When South Korea gained favor as the “linchpin” of U.S. alliances, Japan was not satisfied until it was designated the “cornerstone” of the alliance system. In the “history wars” of 2014-15, Japanese and South Koreans vied for U.S. government and public opinion favor to their interpretation of historical consciousness issues. Finally, in response to U.S. pressure to calm tensions between the two over history themes, first one and then the other made concessions, as triangular aspects of identity—associated with U.S. global leadership—took priority. Yet, a sharp values gap between Japan and South Korea remains and could be reactivated, as identity concerns related to China and North Korea hover in the background for them.

History was on everyone’s mind in 2015—the year of the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII and the climax of the “comfort women” imbroglio that kept riling relations between Seoul and Tokyo. Moscow on May 9 and Beijing on September 3 saw military parades flex today’s muscle and twist history to serve today’s foreign policy objectives. They invoked Japan’s “fascist war” with hints that more demonization could follow, as Beijing, in particular, capitalized on Seoul’s use of the “history card” in an attempt to isolate Tokyo. At yearend, however, President Park Geun-hye and Prime Minister Abe Shinzo reached an agreement to finally and irreversibly put this issue to rest. What impact will that have in light of the emotional attitudes and chasm of distrust that has marred relations between their countries? How does this deal play into the wider great power struggle over identity? Reflecting on developments in Japan-ROK relations over the past year, the five chapters in Part II examine aspects of national identity in order to understand the nature of this relationship between two close allies of the United States and to anticipate how it might be changing in light of shifting strategic circumstances and the way they reverberate in invoking traditional identity themes or even replacing them.

The Japan-South Korea Identity Clash: East Asian Security and the United States by Brad Glosserman and Scott Snyder, was published in the first half of 2015, analyzing how the identities of Japan and South Korea have seriously complicated this relationship while also advancing suggestions for how relations could soon be improved. Here these authors take stock of developments over the past year, each concentrating on the nation he has covered closely. We also add three more perspectives: my framework centered on national identity gaps; Audrye Wong’s focus on what might be called “strategic identity” centered on thinking about each country’s alliance with the United States; and Kimura Kan’s analysis of the quest to make the December 28 agreement stick. Separately, these chapters shed light on recent developments, including the aftermath of this “comfort women” agreement. Together, they go beyond the Glosserman and Snyder book to give further impetus to a national identity approach to the evolving Japan-ROK relationship.

RESPONDING TO SHIFTS IN SOUTH KOREAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

Scott Snyder remarks that confidence deriving from the success of modernization and democratization in South Korea has been accompanied by a sense of vulnerability that has grown under Park Geun-hye's leadership, citing both potential vulnerability to a renewed global economic crisis and North Korea's growing nuclear threat as challenges. Snyder finds that Park's efforts to address these issues have involved efforts to recalibrate the sources and manifestations of South Korea's national identity, arguing that she has identified longstanding sources of identity that would have to be transformed for "Asia's paradox" to be resolved: anti-communism with North Korea, anti-colonialism with Japan, and the "shrimp among whales" paradigm in which Seoul is presumed to lack freedom of action due to its weakness compared to the region's great powers. Park's prescriptions for multilateral cooperation—the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative and the Eurasian Initiative—derive in part from an ambitious effort to build a new foundation for Korea's national identity as a "network" node or middle power, but these initiatives also reveal the limits and vulnerabilities of its regional diplomacy, Snyder concludes.

Park's approach shifts the narrative in inter-Korean relations from one that has been defined primarily in terms of a final victory in the ideology-based inter-Korean competition for legitimacy into a narrative that argues for unification as a development that would end inter-Korean confrontation and bring tangible benefits to both, i.e., a fulfillment of Korea's national destiny. Snyder sees this as a step forward in reframing identity on the issue of national unification. He also finds that efforts to change the dynamic of the Japan-South Korea relationship ultimately involve redefining South Korea's identity in relationship to Japan and vice versa. Since the bulk of nation-building efforts since the establishment of the ROK have been defined by opposition to Japan's historical role as colonial aggressor, this would require Seoul to accept and forgive past injustices toward it. Snyder finds that the very decision by the government to bring the issue to resolution has required it to challenge the anti-Japanese sentiment that had come to be a major part of the expression of Korean identity.

Managing ties to China and the United States is another identity challenge, he adds. Much increased tensions in Sino-U.S. relations puts pressure on Seoul to choose one over the other, limiting freedom of action as it navigates the space between the two and the prospects for Korean unification. It would rather be promoting the "thickness" of regional institutions as vehicles for deepening Sino-U.S. cooperation beyond the bilateral Sino-U.S. relationship. Efforts to promote regional and multilateral diplomatic initiatives are a welcome challenge to its identity as a "shrimp among whales," appropriating network concepts to augment its geographic position, adding the spatial and functional idea of Korea as a node in a network or as a connector. Rising rivalries in Northeast Asia have acted as an inhibitor to these efforts to promote regional multilateralism; so Snyder is not confident that Seoul's challenge to its identity as a weak power trapped at the vortex of major power rivalry will turn out to have a lasting national identity impact.

Snyder concludes that pursuing solutions that challenge long-held components of national identity is proving difficult: it may reduce the likelihood of any tangible success; it has reduced the capability of Park's supporters to claim an immediate set of impressive accomplishments; and it underscores the severity of the diplomatic challenges Seoul is likely to face as Park

attempts to refashion elements of Korean identity in order to generate a way forward for diplomacy. In comparison to the conclusions drawn in the following chapter regarding the national identity approach of Abe Shinzo, this is a more doubtful analysis of the success of what is taking place under Park, confirmed in recent rather negative responses to the “comfort women” agreement in Seoul, but not in Tokyo. The national identity challenge facing Seoul seems more difficult than that facing Tokyo.

RESPONDING TO SHIFTS IN JAPANESE NATIONAL IDENTITY

Brad Glosserman examines some of the Abe administration’s decisions related to foreign and security policy and explains the impact of national identity concerns on them, saying that these findings demonstrate the enduring importance of identity for core components of Japan’s foreign policy and how those conceptions have limited or shaped the resulting policies. In his view, advocates of change in Japan play down the novelty of their stances and ground them in traditional conceptions of national identity. They build on Japan’s record of peace and the language and intent of Article 9, adapting to new circumstances, especially transforming thinking about the role of the military and acknowledging its positive role in promoting peace. He sees new policy rooted firmly in pacifism, a core component of national identity. To blunt criticism, policy advocates counter that changes in defense policy are designed to serve the interests of longstanding objectives. Japan’s success requires it to contribute more to maintaining the stability and security of the existing international order. The image of Japan as a “success”—a wealthy, safe, modern economy and society—is another key element of contemporary identity and a way of using it to rationalize change. Similarly, the case for a higher, more active security profile is generated by references to Japan’s dependence on trade and the need for security of sea lanes. The result is pleas for change within the existing identity parameters, e.g., the discussion of security policy continues to focus on the constraints.

TPP and economic reform generally threaten Japanese identity, Glosserman argues. A slowing economy prompts many to challenge the consumer-orientation of their society from the perspective of existing identity. Complaints focus on the way that a capitalist economic model fragments communities, emphasizes acquisition that promotes inequality, and drives consumption that erodes the traditional Japanese relationship with nature. He sees two elements of this orientation. The first is the identification with nature, a belief that has roots in Shinto, although many adherents would deny that they have a religious orientation. A second element is the communitarian, egalitarian emphasis. Many conservatives also see new roles for women as a challenge to their notions of an idealized social order that stems from conceptions of Japanese national identity. Viewing Japan as more an object than a subject in international relations opens the door to another key element of Japan’s identity: that of “victim.” Thus, national identity appears to be more of a problem for the “third arrow” of “Abenomics” than for the security changes undertaken so far.

Glosserman turns to the “comfort women” deal with Seoul, concluding that there is much more to be done before this issue is finally and irreversibly settled, much less the larger set of history issues that bedevil relations between the two countries. Immediate challenges include implementation of this deal, honoring the promise to refrain from criticizing each other over the issue in the international community, and “dealing with” the statue. A major part of the

problem is that the deal challenges the victim narrative that is central to Japan's own national identity. The intensity of Japanese protests against the "comfort women" charges and the various solutions to this historical problem, including the December 2015 deal, reflect the unease created by the incompatibility of this allegation with notions of whom the Japanese think themselves to be. The durability and intensity of the belief that Japan will continue to be beaten with the "comfort women" issue is a reflection of the power of a conception of Japanese identity that stands upon the twin pillars of prewar powerlessness and postwar peacefulness, Glosserman explains.

A challenge Japan faces is to differentiate between the imperial government that committed the atrocities and the current one. This distinction would allow the Japanese identification of themselves as victims to go unchallenged, which should in turn diminish objections to the agreement. The fundamental question for them is whether they can accept this notion of contemporary Japanese national identity: that there has been a transformation in Japan, that the Japanese society and polity of the 21st century represent a break with that of imperial Japan. If they can, this deal may gain traction and endure, but Korean identity may prove unable to adjust. It may be predicated on the existence of an antagonistic Japan. The idea that a "hostile other" Japan may be intrinsic to Korean national identity would suggest that the recent agreement is doomed and long-term reconciliation with Japan is practically impossible. That would mean that a rigid national identity, unable to adapt to circumstances, is hurting Korea's ability to maximize its own interests and freedom of diplomatic maneuver. Glosserman adds that a danger for Japan—and all of Northeast Asia—is that a negative feedback loop will emerge, with Korean anger and insecurity confirming and reinforcing the Japanese sense of victimization and isolation within Asia. Japanese national identity can be used to build a more robust relationship with Asia, but it will require concerted effort by elites to advance and emphasize those strands of identity that do so; the more natural tendency is to stress exclusivity and separation. A conservative leadership that aims to rebuild Japan's "national pride and confidence" is less likely to prioritize the accommodative elements of identity that facilitate relationship building with Asia. Ironically, he adds, a Japanese leadership role in Asia, the real goal of conservative nationalists, is best accomplished through engagement on mutually satisfactory terms, i.e., shifting the identity framework more than has been done for security or the December deal.

NARROWING NATIONAL IDENTITY GAPS THROUGH THE U.S. FACTOR

The paradox of the two most trusted U.S. allies in Asia, each continuing to bolster its alliance with Washington, spurning each other, demands scrutiny at a time when it appears that a foundation is, at last, in place for alliance triangularity. At all stages of bilateral relations over the two years from Abe's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine to the "comfort women" deal, the focus on U.S. thinking was unmistakable, I argue. Was it putting more blame on Abe or Park? Which side was gaining an edge in the "history wars" being fought inside the United States? Whose summit with Obama was more successful? Were statements by U.S. officials a sign Washington was leaning one way or the other? Were independent policies in pursuit of another great power (China for Park, Russia for Abe) causing too much damage to U.S. relations? As the world returns to bipolarity and U.S. leadership is being more firmly asserted, coordination behind a shared identity puts pressure on moves by allies who assert alternate and clashing identities, as in Japan-ROK relations that interfere with this objective.

The Japan-ROK identity gap remained narrowly focused on a few symbols. That left it open to appeals to emphasize shared identities, for example, universal values, freedom of navigation, and antipathy to North Korea's human rights abominations. Potential for overcoming troubling symbols of division was much greater for this breakthrough than many anticipated, if leadership were shown. If Park had been blamed for preventing a deal with Abe, it would have severely damaged the case she could make for managing U.S. relations, but by striking a deal, she has gained less than Abe. Park appeared out of touch as the region was drawing closer together behind the U.S. "rebalance" to Asia. The pressure on her was enormous to reassure Obama, clarify Seoul's place in the emerging coalition, and strive for a resolution on the "comfort women." The triangle symbolized the "rebalance" in Northeast Asia.

The Seoul-Tokyo breakthrough was influenced by far-reaching security logic. In 2014-15 the Obama administration saw the troubled state of ROK-Japan relations damaging to deterrence against North Korea and "rebalancing" to hedge against China's increasingly aggressive behavior—two threats more serious than any faced in East Asia since the Korean War. Thus, U.S. determination to boost triangularity and a region-wide alliance/partnership network was a driving force for change. The contradiction between Japan's obsession with the increasing danger from China and its stunning neglect of strategic priority for South Korea finally was resolved, as Abe defied his revisionist base to weigh security (including the pressure coming from Obama) heavily. A similar contradiction existed for South Korea, not only because of the deepening security threat from North Korea, but also because of the oft-unstated awareness of a threat from China, including from its ambivalent stance on the North. The security imperative was rising just as the distrust between Park and Abe was deepening. U.S. diplomacy with both had unparalleled urgency. U.S. partners were pressed to assert an identity reinforcing U.S.-led values. Each side tightened the bilateral alliance over 2013-15, but pressure mounted to embrace shared values, which could not be achieved unless the two mitigated their conflict over values.

A challenge came from Japan's right wing, whose utter disregard for South Korea, buttressed by public sentiment that Park Geun-hye has widened the identity gap to the degree that normal relations became impossible, is rooted in revisionist thinking that the "comfort women" issue and other invocations of historical memory damage Japan's pride. Revisionists after swallowing challenges to their agenda from Abe may now insensitively provoke South Koreans. It is far too early to conclude that compromise—more at U.S. insistence than a sign of strong domestic pressure—is transforming recent identity narratives. The lack of international identity in Abe's circle makes it difficult to rally behind U.S. efforts to solidify shared identity as a foundation for trilateralism, nor would progressives provide much help, given their low interest in Japan's role in international security. As after the 1998 Obuchi-Kim Dae-jung "historic" agreement, the elite in Japan is unlikely to abide by its spirit.

Opponents of Park are rallying behind the "comfort women" statue in front of the Japanese embassy, as if its removal, as Park promised to strive to do, is tantamount to abandoning the essence of Korean national identity. The deeper backlash in South Korea has many causes. First, the split between the conservatives and progressives is wider; the latter are inclined to see the former as the progeny of collaborators and to consider the "comfort women" a symbol of victimization. There is little room for compromise with Japan. Second, the decision to side closely with the United States (and Japan), as polarization intensifies, leaves them without hope on North Korea or on Sino-U.S. balancing, challenging the goals for national identity

they have relished. The price for Korean progressives is too high in contrast to the price for Japanese of all persuasions of this deal. Park faces an uphill battle changing this thinking and getting her nation to accept that a “final and irreversible” resolution has occurred.

As countries are marginalized by globalization and polarization dominated by the United States and China, they turn to their past for validation of their worth. For Koreans, history to the end of the nineteenth century despite veneration during the 1960s-70s has the dual drawbacks of *sadae* (extreme deference to China) and failure to prepare the way to meet or even resist the new challenges of the modern world. Given ambivalence about the Cold War era, when dictatorship drove modernization, the unifying historical narrative is antipathy to Japan’s annexation and its genocidal cultural policies. There is no symbol of relief, such as Japanese acknowledgment of forced annexation or success by Koreans in restoring their own sovereignty; other symbols have been chosen to test whether Korea’s sense of dignity about the past is to be restored by Japan. Each clings to symbols of the past on which it anchors its sense of national identity. The priority of reunification is an enabling factor in South Korea. A search for pride in the prewar and wartime past is a driving force in Japan. Park and Abe boosted themes that work against refocusing on the future. Whether they can switch to new appeals for shared international identity remains to be seen.

Yet, I conclude, North Korea has changed the subject, relieving Japan of being the whipping boy and finally turning public disapproval increasingly toward China.

CONVERTING STRONGER ALLIANCE IDENTITIES INTO CLOSER BILATERAL RELATIONS

Audrye Wong recognizes that the two alliances are serving different objectives. For Tokyo, the U.S. alliance is increasingly about countering China (and responding to the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands dispute), but for Seoul, its alliance remains targeted at North Korea. The DPRK threat acts as an important mediating variable for South Korea but not Japan, she argues. Both South Korea and Japan frame their alliances first in response to local, imminent threats, be it North Korea or specific territorial disputes with Beijing, rather than China’s systemic rise. This may be overlooked by U.S. policymakers with grand global strategies. South Korean threat perceptions are framed within the search for a path to reunification. Similarly, Japan’s leaders have been searching for a path to “normal Japan” through acceptance in Asia, and they view China not only as a military threat, but as a force for demonizing Japan. The U.S.-Japan alliance is regional in scope, while the U.S.-ROK alliance remains targeted at contingencies on the Korean Peninsula.

Wong adds, beyond the Abe factor, Tokyo has become a more proactive partner due in large part to its growing sense of direct security threat from China, for which it seeks continued military and political support from the United States. Without dismissing domestic divisions, there is a growing sense of urgency among the elite in consolidating defense capabilities alongside closer cooperation with the United States. In contrast, enhancing political and economic relations with Beijing is part of Seoul’s strategy to reduce mistrust between the two countries, with an eye to improving policy coordination and increasing pressure on Pyongyang. The perceived need for Chinese cooperation on North Korea has made Seoul

wary of adopting alliance actions that provoke Beijing's displeasure, although recent pressure from Beijing may have the reverse effect, triggering sensitivities against being dominated by a larger neighbor (a painful legacy).

Chinese support for North Korea has destroyed the South's optimism that Beijing might be a proactive and cooperative partner in restraining DPRK provocations and finding a solution to the Korean Peninsula standoff. In the wake of the January 2016 DPRK nuclear test, a review of the feasibility of deploying THAAD in South Korea is under way. China's ambassador warned that bilateral ties could be "destroyed in an instant," prompting retorts from ROK officials that this constituted "blackmail" and that Beijing should recognize South Korean deployment of THAAD as "a matter we will decide upon according to our own security and national interests."

The different inclinations of Japan and South Korea, with respect to their positioning between China and the United States, can also be seen in their regional economic policies, Wong notes. Japan is part of the U.S.-led TPP, while South Korea has joined the Chinese-initiated AIIB. South Korea's interests in deepening economic relations with Beijing are not just for commercial reasons, but also as a form of strategic competition against Sino-DPRK economic ties. South Korea does not see relations with the United States and China as being zero-sum, with favorability ratings for both on an upward positive trend after Park Geun-hye's meetings with both Obama and Xi in late 2015.

The December 2015 bilateral agreement revealed the underlying strategic awareness on both sides of improved cooperation, as well as U.S. pressure behind the scenes for both sides to improve relations. If implemented fully, it could have a major impact by helping to smooth over political tensions, facilitating more systematic cooperation within a trilateral alliance. This could increase coordination over regional security issues and enable Japan and South Korea to take on a greater responsibility or leadership role in regional security. Of course, given their differing threat perceptions and political priorities, with each country having its own inclination on policy toward China, the challenge will lie in agreeing on strategic goals and areas of cooperation.

Driven by external security events, the national identity gap between Japan and South Korea is narrowing, as both governments grapple with repositioning their countries and leaders adjust their political rhetoric to allow for more amenable bilateral and trilateral cooperation. The North Korean issue presents an excellent opportunity for trilateral cooperation, although ROK identity might be sensitive to any apparent constraints by Washington and Tokyo that limit the pursuit of its own policy preferences toward the North. Managing identity issues alongside security threats will remain a delicate balance.

The alliance remains an ambivalent/contentious symbol in Japan's domestic context. The political left sees it as entangling Japan in unwanted international security burdens, while the right either resent it as a reminder of Japanese post-war subordination or push further for the "normalization" of Japanese foreign security and defense policy. Most of the public still think that Japan should pay less for the alliance, that local interests should come first, and that Washington has a tendency to overlook Japanese interests. Both ends of the political spectrum pose headaches for the alliance from the U.S. perspective. Ironically, a rightist prime minister eager to increase Japanese security contributions (which Washington has been pushing for many years) is also inclined to make cooperation with China and South Korea more difficult.

Japan-China issues (Abe compromised in December with the ROK) and North Korea issues (Park compromised with Abe through the second half of 2015) give the United States an opening. Tokyo sees China as a rival for strategic leadership in Asia, and the bilateral identity gap is worsened by continued Chinese demonization of Japan. To counter poor relations with its neighbors (China, South Korea, North Korea), Tokyo seizes opportunities to highlight shared identities as a U.S. ally. The U.S.-Japan Joint Vision Statement of April 2015 highlighted seven “shared principles” for “global cooperation” between the United States and Japan: support for the rule of law, peaceful resolution of disputes, international norms of behavior, free trade, multilateral institutions, and multilateral cooperation. These principles echo the six U.S. priorities of Hillary Clinton’s “Asia rebalance” policies published in a 2011 article.

Seoul does not have the same sense of rivalry with Beijing but is wary of Chinese actions suggesting hegemonic intentions, such as the dispute over the identity of the ancient Koguryo kingdom. South Korea’s pursuit of warmer ties with China, along with shared assertions of Confucian identity and shared antipathy to Japanese colonialism, also come into tension with South Korea’s identity as a U.S. ally sharing the same liberal and democratic values, including a rule-based international order. Beijing’s preference for Seoul to play a subordinate role rather than an active middle power (at least in the region), and its rejection of criticisms of human rights issues in North Korea, have highlighted the differing viewpoints and disconnect between the two countries. Moreover, recent events have highlighted how national identity forces are changing in South Korea. A crucial part of Korean identity relates to reunification of the peninsula. To the extent that Beijing is increasingly seen as the barrier to reunification, rather than as a partner in this pursuit, South Koreans will be less inclined to view China favorably. As with the factor of threat perceptions, national identity in South Korea is framed if not driven by the North Korean issue and the question of reunification.

MAKING THE DECEMBER 28 AGREEMENT STICK

Kimura Kan offers an explanation for why historical consciousness questions have flared between Japan and South Korea and discusses how they might become less of an issue.

He finds that they arose only from the 1980s, related to the diminished importance of each for the other against the background of a transformation in the security environment after the end of the Cold War. In addition, in this period, with economic development and globalization widening Seoul’s options, there was less need for cooperation between the two. Attention regarding historical consciousness in both countries became a matter of a new generation uncovering the facts that they did not know. This was exhibited through impeaching the views of the “old generation,” whose compromise management of control over the colony was linked to criticism of the existing political forces in each country.

Historical consciousness questions should be understood, Kimura says, as increasing the distance between Japan and South Korea in the midst of the greater international structural confrontation in East Asia, which further exacerbated Japan-ROK distrust. In this context, their difference over history was no longer only a matter of consciousness about the past; it transformed into a question of interpretation of the 1965 treaty, which served as the foundation of the bilateral relationship. There was a dramatic downturn with 2012 the turning point in

the level of trust toward South Korea. Kimura suggests that prior to 2012, especially on the Japanese side, there remained a high level of trust toward the other side such that deterioration of diplomatic relations did not lead to worsening in public attitudes. If relations were troubled, this was a problem for politicians and diplomats, not a reason for mutual antipathy. After, the other side's untrustworthy behavior became more startling, not just at the elite level; hope was lost that the two could resolve historical memory problems.

For an explanation, Kimura points to the linkage to Sino-Japanese relations. Starting in 2012, increasingly, Japanese perceived that China and South Korea were forming one camp, using the issue of historical consciousness in concert to attack Japan. After Sino-Japanese relations after 2010 rapidly deteriorated as a result of the Senkaku (Diaoyu) question, issues that had long been seen as specific to Japan-ROK relations were now reconceptualized amid the shifting power balance in Northeast Asia. Issues of historical consciousness in Japan-ROK relations were not seen in the vein of opposition between these two but interpreted as part of the vein of opposition between Japan and China plus South Korea. The "theory of South Korea leaning to China" had replaced the image of a friendly state, which is an ally through the intermediary role of the United States. South Korea was rather reconceived as a latent enemy, which could not be trusted and supports China, which is antagonistic to Japan and to the United States, which is the ally of Japan. Then, the Japanese government and media—and even more so public opinion, which interpreted Japan-ROK relations in this way—finally aroused a strong reaction from South Korea.

Since the divergence in their interpretations of the 1965 treaty had sprung from their divide on the "comfort women" issue, if the South Korean government takes a similar stance on the other historical consciousness questions facing the two governments as it took in the December agreement, it will be very easy to resolve them, Kimura argues.

Earlier, the people of Japan and South Korea had across the board lost trust in each other, transcending their support for political parties and their ideology. However much distrust persists, the situation following the "comfort women" agreement is different in some respects, he finds. As opposed to the case of Japan, where the agreement did not result in a big change in existing public understanding of historical consciousness issues and South Korea, in South Korea it resulted in a split of public opinion. In Japan not only have parties in and out of power welcomed the agreement, it has been received well by public opinion, and no great barrier to its fulfillment is in sight. If in South Korea there is insufficient cooperation from the remaining "comfort women" and their supporting associations and, even more, the agreement has been the object of serious criticism, this situation has not shaken Park's support base. This puts a burden on both governments to fulfill the terms of the agreement early in the midst of what may be temporarily stable conditions, especially when mutual distrust prevails in public opinion on both sides. A precious opportunity must be used effectively, Kimura concludes, since the agreement did not wipe away the distrust between the people of the two countries that formed from 2012. Supposing something happens between Japan and South Korea or if the two do not carry out the agreement, there will be a refocusing on distrust is Kimura's dire warning.