

Geopolitical Transformation in East Asia: Chinese Ambitions and Japan's Reaction toward an Emergence of a New Regional Order

Abstract:

A power shift is currently transforming the regional order of East Asia. As history shows us, this is not the first time that the world has undergone a hegemonic transition. But what can the past tell us about what the future beholds and what does Japan need to do in order to respond to this dynamic geopolitical change? As relative US dominance wanes in the region, a new political paradigm is gradually emerging as witnesses by an increasingly assertive and confident China that appears more willing to challenge the US in extending its sphere of influence.

China is not content with the current status quo and like Japan of the 1930s is seeking ways that it can challenge the existing order in order to better pursue its national interests. This can be seen in its rapid military build-up and modernization, artificial island building, and through global finance initiatives such as the recently established Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) that is led by China. How will the quest for a "Pax Sinica" impact Pax Americana in this region? With this as a backdrop, this talk will examine the evolution of the US-Japan-Asia strategic relationship as well as contemplating the significance of what this transformation means for the future of Asia.

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Tosh Minohara is a Professor of Japanese Diplomacy and US-Japan Relations at the Graduate School of Law and Politics, Kobe University, where he holds a joint position with the Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, Kobe University. He received his B.A. in International Relations from University of California, Davis, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science and Diplomatic History from Kobe University. He has had various visiting appointments with such universities as Harvard University, University of Oxford, Leiden University, Stockholm University, Kuwait University, and Seoul National University. He has just published a book from Asahi Shimbun that examines the immigration issue in context of US-Japan relations.

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