

Introduction

Japan and China are the two leading powers in East Asia. For decades it was Japan that was considered as the most influential country in the region. As the second economy of the “free world” and the sole non-Western member of G-7, in the Cold War period Japan constituted a developmental model for the Four Asian Tigers (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore). As a result, Japan to some extent represented the interests of all Asian states on the international arena.

Nevertheless, much has changed during the last 25 years. After the Cold War came to a close, East Asia has attested profound power shifts resulting from the sudden rise of China. The People’s Republic of China had already attained the status of a political power in 1971, when it replaced Taiwan as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, but it is the economic reforms that to a much greater extent decided China’s international position. The path of free-market-oriented changes and opening up to the external world was maintained even after the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989. Since the 1990s China has started displaying an increased assertiveness in foreign policy. China not only exerted pressure on Taiwan in the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1995/1996, but also became antagonized with Japan and Southeast Asian states due to the unshelving of territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas. The balance of power in the region was ever increasingly challenged by China’s growing military budget. Moreover, Japan was increasingly concerned with the strengthening of anti-Japanese nationalism in China. In 2010 China’s GDP exceeded the one of Japan, which symbolized the transition of the center of power in the region from Japan to China.

The aim of this book is to show the complexity of Japan and China’s responses to global and regional challenges. Both countries are following their own paths, which run in parallel to each other, though occasionally meeting or crisscrossing. It is in the common interest of these two powers to establish mutually beneficial cooperation and create a stable environment for economic growth. Nevertheless, China and Japan differ in terms of political regime, level of economic development, and geopolitical

position. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the aims of their foreign policies are divergent in many fields and often clash on the international arena. This book provides an insight into selected factors influencing the diplomacy of both countries.

The first chapter by Karol Żakowski analyzes the evolution of factions inside the Democratic Party of Japan. While internal divisions in this party, which ruled over Japan from 2009 to 2012, were mainly focused on domestic affairs, they also exerted influence on Japan's diplomacy. After all, the ideological leaning of the groups that prevailed facilitated or complicated Japan's cooperation with China and other East Asian states. In the second paper Agnieszka Ploetzing describes the crucial problems in relations between Japan and North Korea, such as historical legacy, the abduction issue, and development of weapons of mass destruction by Pyongyang. Japan's policy towards North Korea illustrates the growing assertiveness of Japan's approach to security issues. Ivaila Aleksova follows with an examination of the human security concept as an element of the non-traditional security policy of Japan. It is important to note that despite the increased awareness of external threats since the end of the Cold War, due to constitutional constraints Japan has maintained a relatively low-profile policy, trying to avoid using military force abroad.

The subsequent three chapters tackle various aspects of China's diplomatic activities and domestic determinants of foreign policy. Runya Qiaoan analyzes how cultural products stimulate nationalism, thus affecting China's policy towards Japan. Klaudia Malczewska examines the territorial dispute over the South China Sea from the perspective of China's interpretation of international law. Yang Long, Chen Xin, and Jiang Liu, in turn, present their research on the use by China of the system of international friendship cities, with special emphasis on cooperation with Poland.

The last four chapters are devoted to two case studies that illustrate the interests and instruments of China's foreign policy. Oleg Timofeev and Andrea Chiriu tackle the problem of China's stance on the Ukrainian crisis. They both find China's position on the conflict prudent and dominated by pragmatism. On the one hand, due to its own problems in Xinjiang or Tibet, China did not want to legitimize the annexation of Crimea nor the separatist movement in Eastern Ukraine, but on the other hand China skillfully avoided a deterioration of relations with Russia in order to gain a better bargaining position in negotiations on the import

of energy resources from Russia. The second case study concerns China's use of information technologies in diplomacy – both in the positive and negative meaning. Weijin Wang analyses cyber diplomacy as an element of China's public diplomacy. His findings indicate that despite large investments in new information media, due to an assertive security policy and human rights issues China has not been successful in improving its image abroad. One of the factors that has hindered China's public diplomacy has been its use of cyberspace as a weapon. Andrzej Kozłowski examines Chinese cyber warfare and cyber espionage in the context of a potential threat for Taiwan.

All of the abovementioned issues constitute only a small part of the regional and global challenges that Japan and China have to face in the 21st century. We hope, however, that this book will contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of Japan and China's interests as well as the instruments that are used to promote these interests.

Note on Conventions

Original spelling of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean names is preserved in the book – with family names preceding given names. The only exception is made for the Asian authors of English-language titles – in that case the version that appeared in the cited publication is used.