

Let's Bridge the Gap of Misunderstanding between Japan and China

by Satoshi Amako

This summer, when games of the Asian Cup for soccer took place in China, strong anti-Japanese actions occurred in various stadiums. A friend of mine, who has been living in Beijing for a long time, went to the stadium to watch the final between Japan and China and sent me a long letter about it, saying that it was a harder and more (1) situation for the Japanese than expected.

That being the case, however, I do not think that the problem can be solved by (2) and acting in such ways as "I will buy into their fight" or "If they become anti-Japanese, then we will become anti-Chinese." The point is what both Japanese and Chinese should learn from the "(3) anti-Japanese uproar." First of all, let's confirm the "facts" upon which we should base our approach.

Firstly, I would like to point out that, having (4) the process of opening up and reforming the nation, Chinese society has (5) into various categories of opinion. Among them are a group of people who are (6) to be anti-Japanese and nationalistic and a liberal group which emphasizes international collaboration but there are many groups which are (7). In late July and mid-August, I visited China but the Chinese with whom I had contact were not particularly anti-Japanese. On the contrary, it can even be said that a "silent Japanese boom" is occurring in China.

Secondly, economic relations are becoming closer. According to August projections by JETRO (the Japan External Trade Organization) for Sino-Japanese trade this year, it is estimated that it will substantially (8) last year's 130 billion dollars, which was the previous highest record, and be more than 150 billion dollars. Whereas overall foreign direct investment by Japan tends to be decreasing, its direct investment in China has shown an increasing trend since China joined the WTO (World Trade Organization) in 2001. Since 1990s, Japanese companies,

primarily manufacturers, have (9) production sites from Japan to China, where there are already more such production sites operated by Japanese firms than in the U.S.

Thirdly, exchanges between the peoples of the two countries are (10). The number of Chinese people who legally entered Japan increased from slightly over 380,000 in 2000 to a little under 530,000 in 2002, with more than half being newcomers. In 2003, the total number of foreign students in Japan was more than 100,000 of which about 65% were Chinese. In (11), more than 3 million Japanese visit China annually. Joint ventures between Japan and China and international marriages are becoming ever more numerous, and (12) exchanges have already reached the stage where nobody can stop them. Therefore, we must mutually (13) efforts to somehow ameliorate existing emotional (14).

What measures, therefore, should we take? As a person who has had a long (15) in Japan-China relations, I strongly feel that "a huge (16) of misunderstanding" straddles the two countries.

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Question1. When you watched strong anti-Japanese actions by Chinese supporters before the games, during the games and after the games, how did you feel?

Question2. What do you think caused them to take such strong actions? Give several reasons.

Question3. What do you think of and learn from the “facts” Mr. Amako mentioned in the passage?

Question4. Write an essay on Japan-China relations. Your essay must include the following points.

***Why did they show such hatred toward the Japanese?**

***If the Asian cup had taken place in Japan, how would Japanese people have behaved during the game against China? Why?**

***What measures should we take to improve Japan-China relations?**