The Conflict, Cooperation, and Competition of Sino-Russian Relations: Focused on Tumen River and the East Sea*

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1. Introduction

Russo-Chinese cooperation has been carried on inland. Border trade and oil pipeline from Skovorodino to Daqing are showing the characters of cooperation between continental nations. On the contrary, ocean cooperation and the ocean-inland cooperation have not been promoted effectively since Russia and China did not succeed collaboration in their common waters and eastern border. Originally, they have public waters in Tumen River(图们江). This ocean root of Tumen River gives access to the East Sea. It is favorable to promote their trade and economic growth. For this reason, Russia and China have struggled and competed for obtaining the entrances to the East Sea in Tumen River. However, they are promoting economic collaboration near Tumen River since the 1990’s. Then, why have Russia and China disputed for the channel of the East Sea for a long time? What will convert the collaboration in Tumen River and the East Sea between China and Russia? What are the remaining obstacles and forthcoming difficulties of cooperation in the East Sea to both states? Will they be able to promote cooperation to the alliance level in the East Sea? These questions are important to understand the character of Russo-China relations and to predict the future of Sino-Russian relations. Nevertheless, previous studies researched Russo-Chinese dispute for entrance to the East Sea minimally. The East Sea is originated from the Russian pursuit of unfrozen port and Manchuria (Junkee, Baek, 2007). In addition, it is only a result of the battle of Zhangqiaofeng (张鼓峰), the battle of Nomonhan between Russia and Japan (Alvin, Brooks, 1990; Woyun Ma, 2009). 1From August 1945 to the end of the Second World War to 1989, the China's Limit of entering the East Sea from Tumen River due to Russia is one of the important impediments in Russo-Chinese relations. However, it is difficult to find researches; there are some studies about Tumen River Area Development Project (Icksoo Kim, 1995; Blanchard, F. Jean-Marc, 2000). In addition, there is a study on the relation between Chinese security strategy and Tumen River Area Development Project (Freeman, P. Carla, 2010). They did not clearly analyze the causes of conversion from conflict to cooperation in Tumen River and East Sea between Russia and China. This paper will study the

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1 The Battle of Zhangqiaofeng and Battle of Nomonhan controlled Japanese expansion in northeastern Asia by the Soviet Red Army. It was a fight between the Soviet red army and the Japanese Kuandong Army from Jul 29, 1938 to Aug 11, 1938. The battle of Nomonhan was a military collision from 11 May to 16 September 1939.
historical, economic, and political reasons on the change of Sino-Russian relations in the East Sea to fill in the blanks of previous studies. It will organize as follows. Chapter 2 researches conflicts in the Northeastern China and the East Sea from Late Qing Dynasty to 1930. Chapter 3 analyzes the revival and resolving of the conflicts in the East Sea between Russia and China from 1935 to 1984. Chapter 4 explains the gradual change and its causes in the Tumen River and the East Sea from 1985 to 1991. Chapter 5 examines the process of Tumen River Area Development Plan (TRADP) and Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI), and the reasons for promoting TRADP and GTI, including North Korea. Chapter 6 studies the recent competition and conflict between China and Russia. Chapter 7 concludes this paper, predicting whether Russia and China will enhance cooperation to an alliance level in the East Sea.

2. The Onset and Resolving of the Conflict in the East Sea

The dispute for the exit of the East Sea started in the Qing Dynasty. Czarist Russia wanted to obtain Manchuria, located in the Northeastern part of Qing, since Northeastern China has non-frozen ports and roots for the East Sea. By Czar Nicolas, Russia carried forward to attain Manchuria and the non-frozen ports. Although there was an argument on Russia's access to the sea between the Russian ministers, Czar Nicolas II chose an aggressive advance to the ocean. In order to achieve his aim, Czar invested the construction of Russian Navy fleets and intervened the internal affairs of Late Qing Dynasty that has diminished its power since the defeat of the First Opium War (1839-1842) with United Kingdom. In 1860, Russia and other western power nations signed the Beijing Protocol with Qing dynasty. Through Beijing protocol, Russia obtained Haisenwei (海参威), non-frozen port in the northeastern China and the 3,500 km territory of Manchuria, changed its name as Vladivostok. This shows that Czarist Russia accomplished its goal. On the other hand, Qing dynasty lost the exit of East Sea due to the cession of Haisenwei to Russia and gave a big burden to Qing. To recover the route to the East Sea, Wu Dacheng (吳大澂) represented Qing Dynasty, negotiating the right to enter the East Sea to Czarist Russia. His effort made the Russo-Chinese Eastern Border Treaty in April, 1886. Although T type retreated 5km from the ocean, which was more than ratified border line, Qing secured the right to access the East Sea.3

3. The Recurrence and Resolving of Entanglements in the East Sea

Qing had accessed the East Sea from Tumen River after the ratification of the Hunchun Eastern Border Treaty. However, Qing could not continue the access to the East Sea due to Japanese invasion to Manchuria in 1931. Qing lost the exit to the ocean again. Japan wanted to obtain Manchuria's natural resources. Coal, oil, and various resources can carry out Japan's lack of resources. Japan was not satisfied with the control of Manchuria and began to attack the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, which broke Czarist Russia, did not want to fight with Japan. However, the Japanese expansion to the border between China and the Soviet Union made her feel threatened. The Japan Guandong Army attacked Soviet at Zhangqiaofeng（張鼓峰）in 1938. At that time, Soviet sent Red Army to beat Japan Guandong Army. Nonetheless, the Japanese army did not stop the expansion to the northeastern China. It made a military confront between Mongolia and Soviet. In 1939, the Mongolian army went to Halha River, located in the border from Mongolia and Manchuria. The Japanese army did not sanction the Mongolian access to the Halha River and attacked the Mongolian army. At that time, Mongolia was a satellite nation of Soviet. Soviet did not like the Japanese attack on Mongolia. Zhukov led the Red Army and Mongolian army and defeated the Japanese army again. After Soviet red army won the Zhangqiaofeng fight and Nomonhan fight, he did not authorize the

Chinese right to freely access the East Sea from Tumen River. Although Soviet signed the treaty with Japan in 1939, this limitation did not lift. Military cooperation between Chinese Communist Party and Guomintang tried to recover the right to free access to the East Sea but did not come true. Soviet Red Army participated the Second World War in March 1945 and acquired Kuril Islands. In addition, Soviet secured his right to access the East Sea without any limitation. However, he did not want to open the waterway to China. A Soviet acquired Lushun port (旅顺港) which is an important route to the East Sea and Pacific in China through Yalta Agreement on February, 1945. After the end of the Second World War on August, 1945, Soviet did not open the root to China. Moreover, Ideological dispute between Soviet communist party and China communist Party and eastern border fight blocked negotiation on the exit of the East Sea with Soviet and China. It resolved the conflict in the East Sea between them.

4. Gradual Alleviation of Dissension

The conflict between Soviet and China was eased by Gorbachev’s domestic politics and diplomatic policy change. Since 1985, when Gorbachev became the secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, he chose to open, reform, and detente with the enemies during the Cold War. He wanted to normalize the relations with China. The Chinese Central Government also wished to recover the Sino-Russian relations. China wanted to talk about the exit to the East Sea with Gorbachev’s Soviet. In 1988, the Chinese Central Government officially proposed a negotiation with Soviet Foreign Ministry. Through intra-government discussion for about two years, Soviet agreed China’s free voyage to the East Sea. In February 1990, a Chinese science probe voyaged from Tumen River to the East Sea. At that time, North Korea did not block the Chinese free voyage. This is the first free voyage since Russia had won Battle of Lake Khasan (also called as the battle of Zhangqiaofeng) in 1938. In 1991, President Jiang Ze Min (江泽民) talked about the right to access the East Sea with Gorbachev, permitting Chinese ships’ free pass. On May 16, 1991, the Chinese Central Government and the Soviet Federal Government ratified Sino-Russian Eastern Border Protocol. This protocol secured the Chinese free access to the East Sea. However, North Korea did not want to open a watercourse to the East Sea. The establishment of diplomatic relations between China and South Korea made the North Korea’s attitude stronger. To ameliorate North Korea’s hard line, China wanted to search a breakthrough. It was an economic cooperation in Tumen River that linked North Korea to open a waterway to the east ocean.

5. Russo-Chinese Cooperation in the East Sea

1. Tumen River Joint Development Cooperation

Originally, Tumen River Area Development Plan (TRADP) was proposed by UNDP in 1990. This plan gave an opportunity to talk about the collaboration between Russia and China in the East Sea. Their discussion has continued since 1992 when Russia Federation was established. They have some economic and strategic consideration to propel TRADP. China looked forward to acquiring the exit of the East Sea. China has a port in Lushun (旅顺); however, it costs more time than using the port near Tumen River. It was inconvenient to trade with neighboring countries, including the United States and other countries in the Pacific region. Hunchun (珲春) is connected with Khasan, Russia and Unchung, North Korea, but it does not have a port that leads to the East Sea. The limitation of Northeastern China has deepened by economic development of coastal region since its reform and open. The Chinese Central Government had established Hunchun border with economic cooperation section to overcome obstacles in the Northeastern China. China thought it can boost economic

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cooperation with Russia and North Korea. In addition, it can use North Korean ports that lead to the East Sea. Russia looked forward to the linkage with Far Eastern economic development. Far Eastern has huge natural resources, but there is a lack of workforce. It is a big challenge to enhance economic growth and does not have enough funds to boost development plan. Russia thought TRADP would be helpful to use Chinese and North Korean workforce and foreign investment funds that wanted to obtain energy and minerals, which are the fruits of economic development. Moreover, Russia wanted to construct and use an unfrozen port to go to the east ocean. It costs more time to voyage from Vladivostok to the East Sea than from Tumen River. Their anticipation made them cooperate for TRADP. In 1993, Russia and China started to discuss on the construction of railway from Hunchun to Kraskino. They had established Gold ring Joint stock Holding Company(金环股份公司) to construct an unfrozen port that can give access to the East Sea.

Figure 1. Tumen River Economic Development Area

![Tumen River Economic Development Area](image)


Based on the preparation on the construction of transportation system, China and Russia had discussed the TRADP between leaders. On June 30, 1995, Chinese Premier, Li Peng(李鹏), and Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, agreed on the promotion of TRADP. After their agreement, Russia, China, and UNDP proposed the participation of North Korea, Mongolia, and South Korea. Russia and China needed the cheap workforce and natural resources from North Korea and Mongolia and the fund from South Korea. Especially, On December, 1995, the Parties (China, Russia, and North Korea) and non-parties (South Korea and Mongolia) signed TRADP. At that time, the world economy was relatively good; China and Russia looked forward to the investment from companies and governments in East Asia and advanced countries. Unfortunately, the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 decreased the drive of TRADP. Japan, South Korea, and other Asian countries faced depression. China and Russia could not obtain foreign fund for the economic development of Tumen River area. Since 2001, the end of Asian financial crisis, China and Russia changed the funding method. Instead of anticipating overseas investment, they started investment from their domestic enterprises and funds. Since China has not opened domestic financial market, it was able to avoid the negative impacts of financial crisis. Furthermore, many local companies in China started to accumulate capital owing to economic growth. Russia has started to recover its domestic economy since Putin became the Russian President in May 2000. North Korea permitted the Chinese free voyage to the East Sea from 2004. The development of Chinese economy, recovery of Russian economy, and the opening of sea route in Tumen River in North Korea gave a new opportunity on the development of TRADP. In 2005, China, Russia, North and South Korea, and Mongolia decided the extension of agreement to 2015, enlarging from TRADP

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6 China had decided to invest 5,200,0000 dollars.
The development area expanded from Tumen River border between Russia, China, and North Korea to Northeastern part of Inner Mongolia, Yeonhaezhu (Primorsky Kray, Russia), and the East Sea in South Korea. Nevertheless, the development of nuclear weapon, unstable economy in North Korea diminished the investment capacity. The brittle ability to invest became the obstacles of promoting GTI in North Korea. North Korea wanted to decrease difficulty by giving a 50-year usufruct the third, fourth darks to Russia in 2008. Russia helped the construction of railway from Rajin to Khasan until 2012. In December, 2009, North Korea gave a 10-year right of using the first wharf in Rajin Port to China. More progressed economic cooperation could not be propelled. It affected the enforcement of Russo-Chinese cooperation on GTI. China and Russia propelled a possible plan and opened the Russo-Chinese railway, road from Hunchun, inland border region in China to Zarubino, a sea route from Zarubino to Pusan. It helps Hunchun to overcome its geo-economic limit due to lack of port. Chinese and Russian ships can go to the East Sea and southern part of Korea. It is useful for an effective transportation of Chinese and Russian goods to overseas markets.

2. The Reasons for Russo-Chinese Cooperation in Tumen River and the East Sea

   1) The Necessity of the exit to the East Sea

   China and Russia have a common weakness: lack of ports that can go to the Pacific through the East Sea. Russia is depending on Vladivostok Port, obtained from Beijing Protocol in 1860. Northeastern China had a difficulty on the right of going to the East Sea through Tumen River. For Tumen River is public water shared with Russia and North Korea, voyage in Tumen River needs Russia and North Korea’s permission. Russia did not assent the Chinese free voyage right in Tumen River until the 1980’s; North Korea did not open the sea route of Tumen River to China until 2003. Before the opening of the sea route in Tumen River by North Korea, it took China more time in Dandong, Lushun, and Yingkou to go to the East Sea and Pacific. Going to Pacific from Dalian, Lusun needs about two weeks. On the contrary, a voyage to Pacific from ports in Tumen River costs 3 days. From 2004, Chinese ships can access Tumen River without any limitations. Their difficulties are aggrandized by rapid economic growth and the increment of international trade in China and Russia. They had tried to construct new port in Tumen River, faced difficulty from huge construction cost. They are promoting GTI to overcome disadvantages and are using wharfs in Rajin port in North Korea. It is helpful to counteract the growth of commercial traffic. China reduces transit time by using Rajin port. It took Chinese ships 12 days from Dalian to Nigata, Japan, but it now costs only one day from Rajin to Nigata. It can improve economy by transporting commercial goods to Japan and other countries in Asia pacific.

   2) Economic cooperation with North Korea

   The economic collaboration with North Korea is necessary for Russia and China. North Korea has a sea route and ports that can lead to the East Sea and Pacific. In addition, it has diligent and cheap human resources and abundant energy. Their strong points are useful to push forward with economic growth in Northeastern China and Far eastern Russia. North Korea also needs investment from China and Russia. The North Korean government had constructed a free trade zone in Nasun city, a merging region between Rajin and Sunbong propels economic growth. However, Nasun free trade zone had not succeeded due to the difficulty of attracting foreign investment. In 2010, the North

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8 Victor Ishayev, The minister of Far Eastern Russia government wanted to open a sea route from Far Eastern Russia to Busan, Korea. The opening of Zarubino-Busan is the realization of his wish.
Korea government appointed Nasun city as a special economic zone and tried to solicit investment from Russia and China.

(2) China’s Demand

1) The Development in Northeastern China

Northeastern China is an important base for transportation and natural resources in China. Advanced western countries, Russia, and China wanted to obtain northeastern China to utilize economic and strategic advantages from 1880’s to World War II. Japan constructed factories, ways, and railways to transport war material during the Chinese invasion. Northeastern China became the center of industry and transportation. After the end of the Second World War, the Communist party and Guomintang fought for ruling mainland China. They wanted to obtain Northeastern China to use it as its economic strength. The Chinese Communist Party pushed forward to economic growth through the industrial bases in Northeastern region. Nonetheless, the failure of Great Forward, Cultural Revolution, and economic growth in the coastal areas since 1978 made Northeastern China one of the underdeveloped regions. The economic gap between Northeastern China and coastal cities have widened in the 1990’s. The restructuring of national owned companies in China made many people in Northeastern China unemployed at that time. It became an important social and economic problem in China. The Chinese Central Government started the development of Northeastern China (振兴东北) from October, 2003 to promote balanced national development. However, Northeastern China did not have sufficient ports and needed more time to get to the East Sea and Pacific than Russia and North Korea. The Chinese Central Government started to propel the plan on cooperated development in Tumen River area of China (Chang-Ji-Tu advanced region development plan) to overcome difficulty of the Northeastern part. The development of Changchun, Jilin, and Tumen aims to co-operate economic development of border cities between Russia and North Korea and to secure the exit to the East Sea and Pacific. China utilized the advantages since the development of Chang-Ji-Tu. Local companies and individual proprietors are employing North Korean workforce in factories and restaurants of Hunchun (珲春), Tumen (图们). The wage of North Korean workers is cheaper than the Chinese. Workers from North Korea are generally diligent and capable; Chinese employees are very satisfied with their abilities. Free access to the East Sea was more convenient before the development of Chang-Ji-tu. Rajin port and Wonsan port are open to Chinese ships. Furthermore, the road Quanhe custom in Hunchun – Wonjeongli – Rajin port has been widened and paved recently through Chinese investment. Widened and paved road upgraded the accessibility to Rajin port. It is very beneficial to improve economic feasibility of Chinese companies. Moreover, China is importing coal and minerals from North Korea. The Chinese companies in northeastern region are using North Korean natural resources to construct buildings and making steel products. Natural resources in North Korea are helpful to counteract mounting Chinese economic needs.

(3) Russia’s Demand

1) Fund and Workforce for the economic development in Far Eastern Russia

Far eastern region in Russia has various natural resources; however, hard frost and insufficient workforce restricts economic growth. Subjugation of these weak points needs cooperation with adjacent nations, China and North Korea. Northeastern China has huge workforce that Russia does not have. Many Chinese companies are developing and have the ability to invest. It is a

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9 About Two thousand North Koreans are working in Hunchun and Tumen.

10 “China invested 40 billion Korean won to wide and pave road from Quanhe custom to Rajin. The passed people in Quanhe custom is increased. In 2010, 163,000 people are passed through Quanhe custom (圈河海关). Last year, 232,000 people used Quanhe custom to go to North Korea.” Minjae Shin (2012). “Emerging lodgement area of China-North Korean economic cooperation: Hunchun.” Yonhap News, Sep 2.

11 There are about Seventeen hundred million people in Northeastern China.
favorable condition to attract funds to develop Far Eastern Russian economy. North Korea has cheaper and capable workers. Nowadays, many Chinese and North Korean workers are working in Russia. According to the report of Federal Migration Service of the Russian Government, Chinese workers in Russia are 76 thousand, North Korean are 20 thousand. Many of them are working in Far Eastern Russia. Some of them are working in Russky Island, which is a hosted city of APEC conference to construct buildings and roads. They earned fixed wage, additional income. It is an uncommon, good chance to make money to North Korean workers. Chinese workers are also working in the sites, which are lack of workforce. Unlike the majority of the Russians, the Chinese people are working in farms. Most farms in Far Eastern Russia do not have sufficient Russian native workers. Chinese workers participates Russian farming from 1990’s. They are making more money than working in China. Logging in woods also needs many workers. There are various woods, which is an important material of Furniture in Far Eastern Russia. However, Russian workers are not sufficient to confront supply in the Far Eastern Russia. Chinese and North Koreans do not mind cold weather, participate logging in woods. They are beneficial to resolve the lack of workforce in Far Eastern Russia.

5. Russo-Chinese Cooperation in the East Sea

1. The Competition on Rajin Port

Rajin port is one of the fastest ports to access the East Sea and an unfrozen port in winter. These advantages are very attractive for Russia and China. From the 1940’s to the 1970’s, the Soviet used Rajin port as a naval station for the pacific fleet. In the 1970’s, the Soviet utilized Rajin port to transport war materials to Northern Vietnam during the Vietnam War. The port connected the Russian broad-gauge railway to Rajin; it is an implement to transport Soviet aid effectively. In 1984, North Korea did not permit the Soviet’s right to use Rajin port. It was a relatively big strategic loss to Soviet. China was more difficult to use Rajin port than Soviet during the same period. North Korea did not want to open wharfs and waterway in Tumen River to China. This situation continued until 2007. Although North Korea also wanted an economic cooperation with China and Russia, it wished to construct independent special economic zones. In autumn 2002, construction of Xinyiju special economic zone was a symbol of its strong will. The North Korean president, Kim Jeong-il, appointed Yang bint(Yang Bin), a Chinese businessman, with Netherland nationality, as a minister of Xinyiju special economic zone to cooperate effectively with China. However, China arrested him due to corruption, and the promotion of Xinyiju SEZ was impossible. After his arrest, Kim Jeong-il started to discuss the use of Rajin port and construction of the Russo-North Korean railway with Russia. Also, He tried to negotiate the use of Rajin port with China. His bargain created a competition landscape on Rajin port between Russia and China. It helped to obtain profit maximization to North Korea. Russia decided to construct the railway from Khasan, a border region from Russia to Rajin. Russia invested 200 million dollars to connect a railway from Khasan to Rajin and gained a 50-year of using No.3 dock of Rajin port at the cost of a railway construction in April 2008. China was obtained a 10-year usufruct of No.1 wharf of Rajin port in October 2010 by Chuangli group (创力集团). Chuangli group invested 2,000,0000 yuan at that time. It became a big burden to manage group. Because they want to secure right to use No.1 dock of Rajin port which is a better passage to go to the East Sea and

13 About 6,000 people are working in Russky Island. http://www.chosun.com (Accessed: 2012.08.30)
Pacific. Chuangli got a huge loan by surety of Yanbian autonomous District government, overcame the difficulty of fund. Furthermore, Chuangli bought a big bulk carrier which can be loaded 22,000 tons of goods. After buying the usufruct of the first wharf in Rajin port, China started to construct highway and railway, which will be connected to Rajin. These constructing highway and railway will be used transport goods and people between China, Russia and North Korea. It will be useful to develop domestic economy in Chinese northeastern border districts, get an advantage in Rajin port where confronts Russian investment.

Graph 1. Chinese Highway, Railway Construction Plan, which is related to Rajin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Estimated year of Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paldo-Sanhap-Chengjin (H)</td>
<td>47km</td>
<td>2.8 billion Yuan</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunchun-Quanhe-Rajin (H)</td>
<td>39km</td>
<td>2.3 billion Yuan</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunchun-Changlingzi-Vladivostok (H)</td>
<td>14km</td>
<td>800 million Yuan</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumen-Nanyak-Tumen river-KKhasan (R)</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>2.43 billion Yuan</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumen-Chengjin (R)</td>
<td>171.1km</td>
<td>2 billion Yuan</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huarong-Nanping-Musun (R)</td>
<td>53.5km</td>
<td>1.6 billion Yuan</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumen-Rajin (R)</td>
<td>158.8km</td>
<td>1.27 billion Yuan</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(H): highway   (R): railway


Russian constructed railway from Khasan to Rajin was completed and started to drive a on October 13, 2011.19 Russia has a plan to start connected construction between Khasan-Rajin Section and Trans Siberian Railway (TSR) in the future.20 It will be helpful to secure cheap North Korean workforce and boost international trade between Russia and China.

This landscape still continues; it is a competition on the initiative of economic cooperation in Tumen River and the East Sea between Russia and North Korea.

2. Different Views on territory issues

Kuril Islands are located in the East Sea, between Sakhalin, Russia and Hokkaido, Japan.21 They are old troubled parts between Russia and Japan. Soviet acquired Kuril Islands from Japan through Red Army’s invasion during the Second World War. Russia and United States, United Kingdom, China and Japan discussed the possession of Kuril Islands in San Francisco, on August, 1951. Japan asserted the possession of Kuril Islands. However, Soviet does not return Kuril Islands. In 1956, Japan and Soviet agree on the normalization of their diplomatic relation. However, they did not find a solution on the disputed areas. Their dispute was started again from the term of Prime Minister Koizumi. Japanese government wanted to claw them back. But, Russia did not accept Japanese request. Also, Russia resisted Japanese demand and tried to cooperate with China. Kuril Islands has

economic value to Russia and Japan. There are abundant fisheries and natural resources in Kuril Islands. In particular, oil, gas, rare rhenium is valuable to Russia and Japan. Therefore, Russia and Japan do not stop dispute easily.

Figure 2. Disputed Area of Kuril Islands between Russia and Japan

Russia started to discuss joint military drill near Kuril Islands with China in 2010. However, China refused the joint military exercise; Russians could not promote military collaboration plan with China in the East Sea. It contrasts with Russo-Chinese naval joint military drill in the Yellow Sea on April 2012. Until now, China has not hesitated to cooperate on the territorial dispute in the East Sea with Russia. If China works together with Russia in the Kuril Islands, it officially demonstrates that China will agree with Russia’s substantial ruling on the Kuril Islands. It will not help Diaoyudao (钓鱼岛, Senkaku Islands of Japan) dispute between China and Japan.

Figure 3. Disputed Area of Senkaku Islands

Since Japan is ruling Senkaku Island s in substance from the ratification of the treaty of shinoshiki, 1895, it asserts Diaoyudao as its territory, which is the same logic with Russia. If the Chinese agree on the ruling of Russia on Kuril Islands, Japan will agitate its possession of Senkaku
Islands more strongly. In result, that is not profitable to China; resources and fish around Senkaku Islands will be possessed by Japan. In particular, Chuanxiao gas field near from Senkaku is very important to secure natural gas supply to China. It is not beneficial to counteract with soaring demand on the natural gas in China. Moreover, China and Japan are preparing a negotiation on the mutual free trade agreement. China-Japan free trade agreement is important for Japanese response to free trade competition in East Asia. It is very significant for China to cope with Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) which is leading by United States. Therefore, China does not want to cooperate on the territorial issue in the East Sea with Russia.

6. Conclusion

Russia and China had struggled for the exit to the East Sea. Qing dynasty’s defeat of Opium War by the Western power nations, Beijing protocol, and Zhangqiaofeng battle between Russia and Japan made China lose its waterway to the eastern ocean. After the end of the Second World War, the Soviet-Chinese relations blocked the opportunity to negotiate on the root of the East Sea. Moreover, North Korea did not open it to China due to the threat of Chinese expansion to the ocean. This uncomfortable situation to China had relaxed after the change of Soviet foreign policy by Gorbachev and mutual needs for normalization of Russo-China relations. The Tumen River Area Development Plan and Grand Tumen Initiative gave space and opportunity to cooperate between Russia, China, and North Korea. Although the International Financial Crisis and the collapse of Russian economy in the bottom of 1990’s gave difficulty to the boost of TRADP, Russia and China began to invest domestic funds from the 2000’s and was able to revive the plan. Moreover, aggravation of North Korean economy attenuated Kim Jeong-il and his government’s negotiation power to China since 2004. It helped the attainment of Chinese aim on the negotiation, the development of TRADP, with North Korea. TRADP changed the name to GTI in 2005. During the development process of GTI, North Korea constructed economic free zone in Nasun to cooperate with China and a railway from Rajin to Far Eastern regions with Russia. North Korea gave a wharf to Russia and China that need the expansion of unfrozen dock and speedy exit to the East Sea separately. It made GTI more sustainable. China and Russia need to develop eastern border districts to satisfy their skyrocketed economic demand; they want to secure the right to free access to the East Sea to reach the Pacific conveniently. Their economic cooperation in the Tumen River area can benefit the stabilization of eastern border and North Korea. It will be helpful to boost their economic growth in the Northeastern China and Far Eastern Russia. These linkages with domestic factors and international factors made Russo-Chinese cooperation in the East Sea sustainable. Nevertheless, there are remained and forthcoming impediments. The competition on the Rajin port and different views of military collaboration in the northern four Russian islands are unresolved obstacles of mutual cooperation in the East Sea. It is not clear if they will cooperate with the radical change of North Korea: the presence of United States Army in North Korea after the unification in the Korean peninsula. These reveal the character of comprehensive and overall strategic cooperated relations, which is called the Russo-Chinese relations by the Chinese Central Government. This cooperated relation is based on mutual interest; it is not a merciful and idealistic relation. Although Russia gave more territories to China in the first term of President Vladimir Putin, there is not a big yield and sacrifice to them. It is difficult to develop an alliance level. Russia does not mind the presence of US army in the Northeast Asia since Soviet. On the contrary, China does not like their activities near the eastern border and Taiwan. Perhaps their different perspective to the US army will make their cooperation challenging. Therefore, conflict, competition, and cooperation in the East Sea are representative cases that show the difficulty on the development of Russo-Chinese alliance. It proves that Russia and China cannot confront the ocean alliance among United States, Japan, and South Korea.

22 E-mail interview with Professor Yunlong Lee, Institute of International Strategies, The School of Central Communist Party, August 8, 2012.
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Southern Weekend (南方周末): http://www.infzm.com
ABSTRACT

Russia and China had struggled for the exit to the East Sea since Qing Dynasty. Qing dynasty had defeated in the First Opium War and the Second Opium War by the Western powers nations and Russia. Czarist Russia obtained Vladivostok Port (In Chinese, 海參崴) due to Beijing Protocol on October 24, 1860. After ratification of Beijing Protocol, Wu Dacheng (吳大澂) represented Qing Dynasty, negotiating the right to enter the East Sea to Czarist Russia. His effort made the Russo-Chinese Eastern Border Treaty in April, 1886. Russo-Chinese Eastern Border Treaty secured Chinese right to access the East Sea. But, the battle of Zhangqiaofeng battle and the battle of Nomonhan made China lose its passage to the East Sea after the collapse of Qing Dynasty. After the end of the Second World War, the Soviet-Chinese relations blocked the opportunity to negotiate on the root of the East Sea. Moreover, North Korea did not open it to China due to the threat of Chinese expansion to the ocean. This uncomfortable situation to China had relaxed after the change of Soviet foreign policy by Gorbachev and mutual needs for normalization of Russo-China relations. The Tumen River Area Development Plan and Grand Tumen Initiative gave space and opportunity to cooperate between Russia, China, and North Korea. Although the International Financial Crisis and the collapse of Russian economy in the bottom of 1990’s gave difficulty to the boost of TRADP, Russia and China began to invest domestic funds from the 2000’s and was able to revive the plan. Moreover, aggravation of North Korean economy attenuated Kim Jeong-il and his government’s negotiation power to China since 2004. It helped the attainment of Chinese aim on the negotiation, the development of TRADP, with North Korea. TRADP changed the name to GTI in 2005. During the development process of GTI, North Korea constructed economic free zone in Nasun to cooperate with China and a railway from Rajin to Far Eastern regions with Russia. North Korea gave a wharf to Russia and China that need the expansion of unfrozen dock and the best exit to the East Sea separately. It made GTI more sustainable. China and Russia need to develop eastern border districts to satisfy their soared demand on domestic economic growth; they want to secure the right to free access to the East Sea to reach the Pacific without any limits. Their economic cooperation in the Tumen River area can benefit the stabilization of eastern border and North Korea. It will be helpful to boost their economic development in the Northeastern China and Far Eastern Russia. These linkages with domestic factors and international factors made Russo-Chinese cooperation in the East Sea sustainable. Nevertheless, there are remained and forthcoming impediments. The competition on the Rajin port and different views of military collaboration in the northern four Russian islands are unresolved obstacles of mutual cooperation in the East Sea. It is not clear if they will cooperate with the radical change of North Korea: the presence of United States Army in North Korea after the unification in the Korean peninsula. Therefore, these representative cases of conflict, competition, and cooperation in Tumen River and the East Sea revealed the characteristic of Russo-Chinese relation. Economic cooperation without mutual conflicts will be developed. But, different thought and conflicts made Russia and China develop their conventional security alliance. It proves that Russia and China cannot form continental alliance, which confronts the ocean alliance among United States, Japan, and South Korea.

KEY WORDS: Tumen River, The East Sea, Tumen River Area Development Plan (TRADP), Grand Tumen Initiative(GTI), Rajin Port, Territory Issues