

Survivors made it to the largest of the Senkakus. With no fresh water, the refugees faced the same problems that workers at Koga's venture encountered. Several days after Japan's surrender, a Japanese troop ship returning from the Chinese coast rescued Kedashiro, his mother, and his sister, who were among the minority of bombing survivors still alive.

In 1995, Kedashiro and some fellow survivors of the bombing responded to Japan's fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war commemorations by building a marker to their personal histories that have been long-forgotten by others. Annually ever since, they have observed July 3 as the Senkaku Islands' most meaningful day in its modern history, and the survivors insist their islands' stories teach peace: "Because the Senkakus are the nation's frontier, [using these islands] to protect [Japan] is wrong; opening them up is best."

Japan, China, and Taiwan all use maps and records from 1895 and earlier to make their respective claims today. Since 1945, however, American decisions concerning control over the East China Sea's territories have for all practical purposes rendered earlier assertions moot, unless Washington accords ownership to a specific contender.

All sides appear to agree that history matters, yet the determination to see it as background music to the present instead of learning from it has transformed the twentieth century's historical legacies into contemporary security problems. The United States did not create many of the pasts that fuel these battles, but as victors in 1945 Washington drew expedient boundaries to contain them, that no longer hold.

America continues to lose traction in the region by failing to address the deep-seated roots of these tensions. Injunctions for all sides

to "calm down" are at best disingenuous and at worst paternalistic. The United States must confront the history of the region's conflicting maps together with Japan and China (and Korea and Russia, too) in order to remember in practical terms how these problems began in the first place. ■

NOTES

1. For elaboration, see Yabuki Susumu and Mark Selden, "The Origins of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute between China, Taiwan and Japan," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 12, issue 2, no. 3, last modified January 13, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/nnvoops>.
2. See Takahashi Junko's excellent essay about Kedashiro published in the *Asahi Shinbun* opinion section on October 3, 2012; see also Takahashi's blog commentary at <http://tinyurl.com/os6pdzw>.

The Senkaku Islands and Japan's Evolving Diplomacy

By Sheila A. Smith



SHEILA A. SMITH, an expert on Japanese politics and foreign policy, is Senior Fellow for Japan Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Smith is currently completing the project on Japan's Political Transition and the US-Japan Alliance, and has started a project on Japan's New Strategic Challenge, the subject of her next book. In fall 2014, she will launch a new project on Northeast Asian Nationalisms and Alliance Management. She also writes for the CFR blog *Asia Unbound*. Smith's newest book, *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (Columbia University Press, 2014), will be available in December. She earned her MA and PhD degrees from the Department of Political Science at Columbia University.

With surprising rapidity, tensions between Japan and China over the Senkaku Islands, a small group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea, are raising the specter of a potential armed clash between Asia's two major powers.

In 2010, a Chinese fishing trawler rammed two Japan Coast Guard (JCG) vessels in the waters around the Senkakus. For the first time, the Japanese government decided to indict the fishing trawler captain because of his dangerous and provocative behavior. A two-week diplomatic standoff with China ensued as Beijing escalated its diplomatic pressure on Tokyo. An informal embargo of exports of rare earth minerals to Japan and the arrests of four Japanese businessmen in China during the crisis ushered in a new phase of confrontation in the Japan-China relationship.

In 2012, however, the Japanese government's purchase of the islands from their owner instigat-

ed a virulent response not only from Beijing but also from demonstrators across China. Facing a challenge at home from the nationalist governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintaro, a longtime advocate of greater Japanese defenses of these remote islands, Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko sought to prevent further activism over the islands. But the eruption of protest in China made cooperation between the two governments impossible.

The Chinese government sent maritime patrols to the disputed islands, increased its surveillance of the East China Sea, and announced a new Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) that includes the disputed islands. For the first time since the Treaty of Peace and Friendship was concluded between Tokyo and Beijing in 1978, the two countries seemed locked into a potentially disastrous confrontation over the Senkakus.

During these recent tensions, the United States and Japan have sought to clarify their

alliance response in order to deter aggression. Worries that China might attempt to occupy these offshore islands prompted Japan's security planners to develop island defenses. Japan's management of the island dispute will shape its diplomacy not only with China, but also with the United States and other Asian maritime powers.

The Senkakus: The Sovereignty Conundrum

The seeds of the sovereignty dispute lie in the postwar settlement with Japan. The 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty stipulated that the Ryūkyū Islands were Japanese territory, but the United States retained control over Okinawa for decades after treaty ratification. Repeated meetings between US and Japanese leaders noted Japan's "residual sovereignty."

In 1971, as Washington and Tokyo finalized the Okinawa reversion agreement, the Republic of China (Taiwan) noted its objection to including the Senkaku Islands in the territory reverted to Japanese sovereignty. By the end of the year, the PRC had followed suit.

The Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China was concluded in 1978, but in final negotiations, the PRC's Senkaku claim emerged at the fore. Indeed, a very similar drama of a showdown over the islands erupted in April 1978 as negotiators labored to finalize the treaty. Hundreds of Chinese fishing boats appeared offshore in numbers far too large for Japan's small Coast Guard to manage. After Japanese government protest, however, the ships returned home, and the Chinese government claimed there was

no connection between their appearance and bilateral treaty negotiations. In October 1978, when Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping traveled to Japan to ratify the treaty, he noted at a press conference that this difficult territorial dispute must be left to future generations to resolve. China's decision to set aside the island dispute in the interest of a peace treaty and significant Japanese economic assistance for the market reforms Deng and others brought to China was the basis for a bilateral strategy for postwar relations.

The Senkakus and Japan-China Relations

Japan's plans for assuming administrative control over its southern islands were interrupted by the diplomatic opening to China. Okinawa reversion had opened the way for restoring local authority over the islands. While four of the five islands (Uotsurijima, Minamikojima, Kita-

jima, and Kubajima) were privately owned, the national government began its survey and consultations with the local municipality of Ishigaki, which had administrative responsibility for managing the Senkakus. Ishigaki City argued the need for enhanced islands access, with rough seas and distance making the idea of a heliport attractive, and the national government approved Ishigaki's initial construction plan. Ishigaki fishermen also requested that a lighthouse and emergency port facility be built where they could take refuge in case of storms.

Within Japan, the opening to China was widely embraced. Business in particular saw great opportunity, and there was a popular desire for reconciliation that had been delayed by the Cold War. The appearance of Chinese fishing vessels in the final phase of negotiations over the treaty,

however, raised concerns among Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) conservatives.

Tokyo and Beijing, however, preferred to avoid focusing on their differences over the islands and concentrated instead on broader postwar reconciliation. Japan invested heavily in China's transition to a market economy, providing loans and grants for the five-year plans that built Chinese infrastructure and expanded industrial growth. Political tensions arose over issues of history, however, and from the mid-1980s onward, periodic strains over the visit of Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine and over revisions to Japan's nationally approved textbooks emerged.

Growing Pressures on Bilateral Management of the Dispute

Over time, citizen activists challenged Japan and China's quiet management of their differences over the islands. Within Japan, there were some who resented the compromise with China and the decision to abandon plans for the construction of facilities on the islands. Local politicians and fishermen also advocated for a stronger Japanese government position on sovereign control over the Senkakus. The government regulated access to the island as best as they could, but by the 1980s, Taiwan and Hong Kong-based activists also sought to land on the islands to plant their flags and assert their sovereignty. These landings were televised in Japan, drawing popular attention to the isolated and uninhabited islands in the East China Sea and to growing sentiments in Taiwan and China contesting Japan's sovereignty.

Another factor complicated quiet management of the territorial dispute. In 1996, Japan and China ratified the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. This new maritime regime created Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of 200 nautical miles for coastal states. With only 360 nautical miles between them in the East China Sea, Japan and China had to negotiate their maritime boundary to establish their EEZs. Each took a different approach. While Japan offered the median line halfway between their two coastlines, China argued instead for the extension of its coastal demarcation to include the continental shelf extending almost two-thirds of the way out from the Chinese coastline, where the Senkakus are located.

Finally, the Japanese government became increasingly concerned about the islands' ownership. Owners did not have the means to prevent activists from landing, and there were repeated offers to purchase the islands. In 2002, the Koizumi Junichiro cabinet offered to rent the islands from the owners in order to better regulate access and to provide owners financial assistance. Rumors of offers for purchase from Taiwanese and others often found their way into the Japanese press. The 2012 Japanese government

China's Maritime Disputes

InfoGuide, Council on Foreign Relations (2013)
Available at <http://on.cfr.org/Vj4LWL>



This digital guide is the best and most accessible teaching resource on both the overlapping claims of territorial sovereignty of China, Japan, and Taiwan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea and China's disputes in the South China Sea with Viet Nam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei over the Paracel and Spratly Islands. The economic and geopolitical stakes are huge in both

conflicted regions, and involve ownership of oil and other vital natural resources; uncertainty about Chinese naval strategy and intent; and, ambiguous at best, claims over national sovereignty. The US is inexorably involved in developments in the East and South China seas because of trade and security commitments and its announced strategic rebalance toward the region.

The issues are complex, but thanks to a team of CFR.org writers and producers and the CFR fellows who contribute to this interactive guide, most senior high school and undergraduate students can gain a basic understanding of the underlying problems between China and its neighbors. High school and undergraduate instructors also should learn a great deal from working through the guide.

The guide includes five sections. A short but informative overview video introduces the controversies and why they are important. The second segment of the guide is an interactive map that enables the viewer to visually conceptualize the scope of the contested claims. The "Historical Context" section contains, as of the publication of this issue (the guide is regularly updated), forty-two succinct, one-paragraph descriptions. The section also features supporting graphics and some URLs to documents of the historical background of the region that range from the end of the 1895 Sino-Japanese War to US President Barack Obama and Philippines President Benigno Aquino signing the April 28, 2014, ten-year US-Philippines military pact. "By the Numbers" is a short but data-packed infographic section that illustrates the economic and geopolitical magnitude of the issues encompassed in the disputes. The policy options section includes two short videos ("Preventive Measures," "Crisis Management") where policy experts discuss contingencies to prevent military conflict and scenarios that might occur. The *InfoGuide* concludes with resources for the classroom, including discussion questions for students and instructors, activities, twenty-four further readings on the topic, and a short glossary.

purchase was prompted in large part by Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro's offer to buy them from their owners.

The Impact of Two Crises: 2010 and 2012

The two crises between Japan and China over the islands changed the politics and the diplomacy over the Senkaku Islands. In the months following the two-week confrontation over the Chinese fishing trawler captain, conservatives strongly criticized the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) for its failure to manage the China dispute, suggesting that the Kan Naoto cabinet buckled under pressure from Beijing.

Advocates for stronger defense of Japanese sovereignty over the islands, such as Governor Ishihara, became openly critical of the DPJ government. By early 2012, Ishihara argued that the weakness of Japan's central government made it necessary for him to step in and purchase the islands to defend their sovereignty against China. This growing Senkaku nationalism also affected the LDP leadership race: all of the candidates advocated stronger island defense in preparation to challenge the DPJ in the anticipated late 2012 Lower House elections. The winner, Abe Shinzo, advocated the time had come to place government officials on the islands.

The JCG emerged as a focal point of policy contention. For much of the postwar years, the JCG had remained out of the public spotlight. Unlike Japan's postwar Self-Defense Force, the JCG had a civilian policing mission, and while

it was on the frontline of some of Japan's most pressing maritime challenges, the JCG sought to remain below the political radar. The Chinese fishing trawler incident, however, propelled the JCG into the testy parliamentary politics when one of their personnel leaked a video of the incident on YouTube.

The Senkaku Islands dispute also drove the agenda of the US-Japan alliance. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton publicly stated US security protections for the islands in the midst of the 2010 confrontation with Beijing, and subsequent US defense and foreign policy leaders continued to warn China of the need to peacefully resolve their differences with Japan over the islands. Growing tensions, and the increasing concerns over an accident or miscalculation leading to a military clash, prompted high-level US attention to the dispute. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee also stepped in to reassure Japan, while cautioning China about US intentions should there be use of force against Japan over the islands. Even President Barack Obama sought to clarify the US commitment under the security treaty to the defense of the islands when he visited Tokyo in April 2014, the first US president to comment on the treaty's Article Five protections for the uninhabited islands.

Today's Asia and Japan's Island Dispute China's rise is putting increasing pressure on maritime Asia, and Japan's territorial dispute with China in the East China Sea is one of mul-

iple island disputes in the region. Maritime boundaries as stipulated under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) are demarcated by land features, and thus these island disputes carry significant meaning for the delineation of EEZs. Japan and China not only disagree over the Senkakus' sovereignty, but also continue to disagree over how to identify their maritime boundary across the East China Sea.

The East China Sea also is home to a growing military presence. The continuing focus of China on eventually acquiring Taiwan means the sea is home to both submarine and surface fleets. In addition to the maintenance of coastal defenses, North Korean nuclear and missile proliferation has also brought greater attention to anti-ballistic missile defenses. Increasingly sophisticated air forces operate in closer proximity, as the announcement of an ADIZ by Beijing last year demonstrates.

Beijing and Tokyo continue to find direct diplomatic dialogue on their relationship difficult, although efforts on both sides continue to find a way back to a bilateral understanding on managing their differences. While a resolution of the sovereignty dispute seems unlikely, Prime Minister Abe Shinzō and President Xi Jinping will need to embed this thorny dispute within a larger framework for Japan-China relations, one that recognizes their mutual interest in a peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific. ■

Explaining Recent Senkaku/Diaoyu Tensions *The Domestic Dimension*

By William Norris



WILLIAM NORRIS is currently an Assistant Professor at the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, where he teaches graduate-level courses in Chinese domestic politics, East Asian security, and Chinese foreign policy. Professor Norris heads the Graduate Certificate in China Studies at Texas A&M University and leads the China Studies Concentration at the Bush School. He is a Board Member of the Southwest Conference on Asian Studies and on the Faculty Advisory Board of the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs. Before coming to the Bush School, Professor Norris was a Fellow in the Princeton-Harvard China and the World Program, a joint

program created by the two universities to foster the study of China in the field of international relations. He completed his doctoral work in the Security Studies Program in the Department of Political Science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he specialized in the confluence of economics and security, focusing on the role of economics in contemporary Chinese grand strategy.

China and Japan have an ongoing territorial dispute over a series of small islands (called Diaoyu 钓鱼 in Chinese or Senkaku 尖閣諸島 in Japanese) in the East China Sea. This brief essay begins with a cursory

synopsis of recent events (since 2012) between China and Japan regarding this conflict. I then summarize China's perspective on the dispute before offering some hypotheses regarding possible domestic drivers of Chinese foreign policy

behavior in this context. The article concludes by examining some of the strategic implications stemming from this analysis.

This most recent round of frictions can be traced to the April 2012 announcement by Tokyo's nationalist governor, Ishihara Shintaro, of his intent to purchase the islands from a private Japanese owner. China viewed this action as a provocative move toward "nationalization" of the disputed territory. Shifting the ownership of the islands from the private sector to the public realm seemed—at least in China's eyes—to be a provocative escalation of the status quo. In response, Hong Kong activists set out for the Senkakus, and on August 14, 2012, seven of them disembarked onto one of the islands. Five days later, ten Japanese activists swam ashore and raised Japanese flags on the island chain. On September 10, the Japanese national government announced that it had decided to preemptively purchase the disputed islands. According to many in China,