

## Summary

### **It's a sheer lie that the Senkaku Islands have been Chinese territory since the Ming Dynasty**

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Professor Shimojo states that the current dispute between Japan and China over the Senkaku Islands is based on a highly dubious Chinese historical claim to the islands. A distorted reading of history by Japan's neighbors is leading to more and more aggressive actions against Japan in territorial disputes. The ramming of a Japan Coast Guard vessel by a Chinese fishing trawler is one such act of aggression. Professor Shimojo points out that before formulating a strategic response to Chinese actions regarding the Senkaku Islands, it will be necessary to clearly understand the historical basis for Chinese thinking.

As Chinese Dynasties have done in the past, the current Chinese Communist Party Government seeks to lay claim to neighboring territories it does not currently occupy and turn them into tributaries, that is, extract economic benefits. Unlike the past, however, the Chinese Communists are not entirely relying on force to advance their interests. Rather, in the diplomatic arena, they are utilizing a history view that is entirely distorted. Surprisingly, the Chinese have utilized the distorted history authored by a Japanese academic.

Professor Shimojo points out that the Senkaku Islands were never an "intrinsic territory" of China since ancient times, counter to the Chinese claim. The Chinese claim that the Senkaku Islands were a part of Taiwan when it was incorporated into Qing China. However, it is pointed out that the extent of Qing China, based on documents from that era, ended at Mount Jilongshan on Taiwan and the extent of the Ryukyu Kingdom ended at Gumishan (on present-day Kumejima). Thus, the islands in between, including the Senkakus, were in a no-man's land—China never possessed the islands in this area. By contrast, the islands have been continuously in Japan's possession since 1895, except during the period of Allied occupation of Japan following the Second World War.

Unfortunately for Japan, China and South Korea appear to be utilizing the other's territorial issues to their advantage, which may mean that at some point, these and other countries, such as Russia, may form a coalition against Japan in order to press their demands. Thus, Professor Shimojo stresses, it would be best if Japan now learned to both understand and refute the historical arguments behind the current territorial issues.