

The Reversion of Okinawa as the Origin of the Senkaku Islands Issue – Chiang Kai-shek and his Turbulent Seeds in East Asia –

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Introduction

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Based on a study of the Chiang Kai-shek Diaries, this paper¹ traces the changes made by the top leader of the ROC government² in his policy toward the Senkaku Islands. The following describes how Chiang Kai-shek’s assertions regarding Senkaku originated in his assertion of a territorial claim to Okinawa, following which his main objective turned to ensuring oil titles.

Introduction

Located at Stanford University, California, USA, The Hoover Institution Library & Archives collect important documents covering international politics and make them open to the public on weekdays in the form of the original, microfilm, and other forms. The documents may be reproduced and photographed in principle. The facility attracts a steady stream of researchers.

In particular, the Chiang Kai-shek Diaries, which have been opened to the public one by one since March 2006 in hardcopy form based on the microfilm version, are accessible only here in the whole world. Although the diaries are exceptionally not permitted to be reproduced or photographed, they are requested almost every day. Each of the boxes, which fill the entire space on two mobile bookshelves, contains about one year’s worth of diaries, partitioned into folders by month. They are

¹ This paper presents my personal view, not representing the Government of Japan or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

² During the period dealt with in this paper, Japan had official diplomatic relations with the Republic of China’s Government. To avoid confusion, except for their geographic designations, I will basically call the Government of the Republic of China as the “ROC government,” and the Government of the People’s Republic of China as the “Chinese government.”

permanently placed behind the seat of the clerk responsible. Researchers ask for each folder, limited to only one month's worth each time, then set to work on viewing and copying them by hand. I too have been using the service, taking advantage of living near the library.

Chiang Kai-shek kept his diary almost every day without fail. His diaries predominantly cover what he reflected on and his future challenges he thought about each day. The entry of August 27, 1971 alone, however, looks back on the Cairo Conference held as long as 28 years ago and studies what he thought was the main cause of his failure. According to Chiang Kai-shek, it was not only that the USA had requested him to attend the conference three days before at short notice, "requesting display of your utmost flexibility," but also that they had not given him any explanation of the agenda, so he was obliged to let his staff officer attend part of the conference on behalf of himself without having time even to appoint a person to accompany him or prepare relevant documents³.

Why did Chiang Kai-shek suddenly write about the past event? If one remembers the incident important to the ROC government that had taken place immediately beforehand, one will realize that it was not due to nostalgia. It was none other than the Agreement between Japan and the United States of America Concerning the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands, which was signed on June 17, prior to the incident. And it is clear that the reason why Chiang Kai-shek was ruminating over his failure in Cairo, which would lead to the abovementioned Ryukyu Agreement, was the intention of the ROC government to assert its sovereignty over Senkaku. We can thus conclude that its origin was not in ensuring oil titles, which has long been an established theory, but was initially to assert a territorial claim to Okinawa.

1. His Initial Main Aim Was Not to Ensure Oil Titles

What mistake did Chiang Kai-shek make in Cairo? In his diary entry dated November 23, 1943, the second day of the conference, Chiang Kai-shek writes that he proposed that Okinawa ("Ryukyu" in the original; the same applies hereafter) be commissioned to an international organization and jointly

³ Copyrighted, Chiang Kai-shek's Diaries require their potential publishers to apply to the copyright-holding bereaved family for a permission. The permission procedure has, however, been suspended since his bereaved family began their dispute over who is to inherit what. According to the Hoover Institute's person responsible, publication of a small portion of the diaries may be acquiesced as fair use (I interviewed them on June 5 this year.) This paper, however, except for the portions already permitted and reported in the mass media and the like, is limited to a summary of the contents of the diaries. Among the main reports already published are Homare Endo, *Completely Deciphering the Aims of "China's Diplomatic Strategy"* (Work, July 2013) and Susumu Yabuki, *The Senkaku Conflict Begins with the Reversion of Okinawa* (Kadensha, August 2013). Referring to page 8 of Yabuki, *The Senkaku Conflict Begins with the Reversion of Okinawa*, Yabuki seems not to have referred to the original.

run by the USA and China. He says that he did this to reassure the USA and in consideration of the fact that Okinawa had already belonged to Japan before the First Sino-Japanese War.

After WWII, while Okinawa was under U.S. rule, the problem never arose. However, when both Japan and the USA expressed their policy on the reversion of Okinawa⁴, Chiang Kai-shek took it gravely. This was because at the Cairo conference, although he had not asserted the Republic of China's territorial right to it, he had the view that the Republic of China had title to Okinawa anyway.

That understanding is expressed in his diary entries before and after November 21, 1969, when Prime Minister Eisaku Sato made his joint statement with President Nixon to bring about the reversion of Okinawa by 1972 while on his visit to the USA. On that day, Osamu Itagaki, the Ambassador to the Republic of China, visited Chiang Kai-shek at his residence and explained how the negotiations on the reversion of Okinawa had gone. On or around the page indicating that date, the diary asserts that this joint statement was “an insult and neglect by the USA and is a new humiliation for our country” and that it was urgently necessary for the ROC government to consider making its own statement. The diary goes on to say that such a statement to be made should assert that the ROC regrets that the USA had made its hasty decision without going through the necessary process and that an assertion to that effect would prepare for retaining a future claim to Okinawa issues.

Among these developments, the ROC government gave a U.S. oil company title to an oil mine concession on or around Senkaku. This trend has been interpreted as having emerged from a desire to ensure oil titles, as it had become clear that the seabed around the Senkaku Islands might contain oil deposits comparable to those of Iraq⁵. In fact, in his diary entry dated December 7, 1970, which describes to the effect that he would not interfere with the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku for the

⁴ On November 15, 1967, Prime Minister Sato and President Johnson announced a joint Japan-U.S. statement to the effect that the reversion of Okinawa would continue to be discussed.

⁵ Since 1961, when Professor Hiroshi Niino of Tokai University pointed out the possibility of oil deposits at the sea bottom of the Senkaku Islands, there has been growing interest in the issue. In early September 1968, the Okinawa economic investigation mission visited Okinawa and suggested a possible investigation of the Senkaku Islands. Probably with the involvement of ECAFE, the government-commissioned Senkaku Islands investigation mission, led by Professor Niino, announced the possibility of oil field deposits on July 8, 1969. Then, in June 1970, under the same mission leader, the Senkaku Island investigation mission for the surroundings of the Senkaku Islands conducted a secondary investigation and reported a high possibility of oil and natural gas around the Senkaku Islands (The Society of Supporters of Southern Compatriots, *Records of the Reversion of Okinawa*, 1972).

time being, he also writes, not without disobedience: “Only, I cannot give up our oil agreement between China and the USA.”

However, ensuring oil titles alone does not explain the subsequent entries logically.

2. Stepping Stone to Asserting a Territorial Claim to Okinawa

In his diary entry dated August 11, 1970, Chiang Kai-shek says in response to Japan’s opposition to the ROC government’s provision of a title to oil concessions that “Japan has stated that the Senkaku Islands⁶ have traditionally belonged to Ryukyu and that it opposes the plan of the USA and our country to perform trial drilling of the offshore oil field in the relevant region,” thereby indicating that he was on the alert. This indicates his intention to challenge Japan’s issue of sovereignty over Okinawa and his readiness to face Japan’s resistance. Five days later, on August 16, 1970, he states, “Regarding the issue of sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands, we have never abandoned the issue of sovereignty over Ryukyu. Nor has any government historically or politically recognized it as belonging to Japan.” He did not declare that Senkaku was part of Okinawa, but in discussing the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku, he did raise the issue of sovereignty over Okinawa. It is therefore clear that Chiang Kai-shek’s understanding at this time was that Senkaku was part of Okinawa. From this series of developments, I reason that instead of providing the title to oil concessions without being aware of the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku, Chiang Kai-shek did understand clearly that the assertion of a claim of a territorial right to Okinawa certainly entailed a dispute over sovereignty over Senkaku as well, and that he intended to drive a wedge in future negotiations by giving the title to the oil concessions to the U.S. company, that country being one of the parties to the negotiations on the reversion of Okinawa.

Why did he wait until then to raise the issue of sovereignty? Chiang Kai-shek stated that “all our government did was try not to present an issue of sovereignty and disturb relations in view of neighborly friendship” (August 16). This is not an excuse for failing to act until it was too late, but suggests that as long as the reversion of Okinawa had not been put on the agenda in the diplomatic schedule, he had intentionally taken a halfhearted policy regarding sovereignty. “Sovereignty” referred to here, of course, refers not only to Senkaku but to the whole of Okinawa⁷.

⁶ The subsequent entries, too, all refer to them as “Senkaku” on three occasions: August 14, 16, and 18.

⁷ Naturally, mere subjective ideas cannot function as a disclaimer on territorial disputes.

Conversely, as a result of the development of the negotiations over the reversion of Okinawa, he decided to change his hitherto halfhearted attitude, after becoming obliged to assert clearly the ROC's territorial claim to Okinawa. At that time, he took advantage of the announcement of the possibility of an oil field, used Senkaku as a means of breakthrough by providing a title to oil concessions, and tried to provide leverage for the ROC government to interfere with the negotiations over the reversion of Okinawa.

On the other hand, by considering that his main aim was, all along, to ensure a title to oil concessions, something illogical emerges. The outline for the reversion of Okinawa had been presented by 1967. Actually providing a title to oil concessions in order mainly to ensure a title to oil interests with that timing would mean that in wanting a title to oil interests, he would come into conflict with both Japan and the USA over the issue of sovereignty, which involved a political cost that was far too high. If he had ended up doing so, it would have been simpler and clearer if he had asserted at that time that Senkaku was part not of Okinawa but of Taiwan⁸. But he did not do that. This was because his main objective was to assert his country's sovereignty over Okinawa; providing the title to the oil concessions was merely a tool for that purpose.

It is necessary to understand this in order to understand the background behind the optimism that he showed on August 14, 1970 to the effect that "Now that China and the USA have signed their plan to perform trial drilling of the offshore oil field at the Senkaku Islands, Japan will no longer have the courage to make further opposition." That is, it is not so simple as saying that, now that their agreement on the title to the oil concessions had become a *fait accompli*, Japan would address the ROC government in view of that, but rather it is one step beyond: he seemed to be confident that through this *fait accompli* with the USA involved, the ROC government could no longer be ignored in the negotiations over the reversion of Okinawa.

3. A Change in Position based on the Reversion of Okinawa

The entry of September 11, 1970 indicates a change in position from the above. This was the day after September 10, when U.S. Department of State Spokesperson McCloskey stated officially that "The Senkaku Islands are part of Ryukyu, which was under U.S. administration as per the Treaty of Peace with Japan." On that day, Chiang Kai-shek said, "I have decided to sanction my country's agreement with an American firm over the issue of exploring the continental shelf for oil. As I see it

⁸ It is true that this assertion brings about a logical contradiction in general as will be described below. But the question remains why this assertion had not been made at this point in time if at all.

(以我測度判斷), the USA is afraid that more trouble will be caused by returning Ryukyu to Japan and allowing Japan to rule the oil fields on the continental shelves⁹.” This entry reveals that Chiang Kai-shek decided to provide the title to oil concessions to allow the ROC government to get the right to speak on the issue of Okinawa while predicting that the inclusion of Senkaku in the portion to be returned to Japan by the USA would give a headache to the USA. This too indicates that his assertion of ROC sovereignty over Senkaku was initially motivated by the territorial claim to Okinawa.

As a continuation of that entry, however, Chiang Kai-shek states that “the Diaoyu Tai Islands affect our national defense, so I cannot accept that they belong to the range of Ryukyu.” That is, in view of the fact that Senkaku (which he began to call “釣魚台 Diaoyu Tai” this day but which he called “釣魚島 Diaoyu Dao” on September 14 alone, thereby being inconsistent; the Chinese government calls it “Diaoyu Dao”), as part of Okinawa, would be delivered into Japan’s hands, he understood that he could no longer call Diaoyu Tai a part of Okinawa, so he changed his direction to separating Senkaku from Okinawa. If he had understood all along that Senkaku was part of Taiwan, he would not have needed to mention the possibility of separating them apart. Accordingly, it is even clearer that his initial understanding was that Senkaku was, in fact, part of Okinawa.

Moreover, if he had recognized it as the ROC’s territory all along, he would not have needed to rename it. If “Diaoyu Tai” had been Taiwan’s traditional designation of Senkaku, it would have sufficed to call it “Daioyu Tai” in his diary from the beginning. There can be no explanation other than that precisely because the name “Senkaku” would imply it was Japanese territory, he had been obliged to rename it.

As described above, the U.S. Department of State clarified its attitude, and so Chiang Kai-shek was obliged to change direction. Three days later, on September 14, 1970, he changed his position,

⁹ The passage in the Chiang Kai-shek Diaries contains no punctuation. It can therefore be interpreted in several ways, and some interpret this portion as “According to my conjectural judgment, after the USA returns Ryukyu, Japan will monopolize the petroleum deposits on the continental shelves, which would add future problems to the USA.” But I do not accept that interpretation. I believe that (1) the reversion of Okinawa had already been determined by this time and there was no justifiable reason to doubt that Japan would rule the oil fields on the continental shelves (the original says “rule,” not “monopolize”), so there is no need to draw a “conjectural judgment”; (2) The judgment of “which would add future problems to the USA” is the result of logical thought, not the result of conjectural judgment (翟翔, Zhái Xiáng, 環球時報 Global Times, November 23, 2012, translated by Motofumi Asai. Available at <http://www.ne.jp/asahi/nd4m-asi/jiwen/thoughts/2012/502.html>. None of Zhái Xiáng’s details, including who he works for, have been clarified.)

saying that “I will not cause discord on the land of Diaoyu Dao¹⁰, nor will I approve of Japan’s ownership of the land. I will keep it pending.” The reason why he switched from his strong attitude on August 14 to avoiding a head-on collision only one month later is that the USA clarified its position on Senkaku on September 10, that is, that Senkaku was part of Okinawa and that Okinawa would be returned to Japan, and so Senkaku would be returned to Japan. Although the USA disappointed him regarding the return itself, Chiang Kai-shek remained persistent, showing his craftiness.

The reversion of Okinawa would deny the ROC government’s assertion of its territorial right to Okinawa outright. For the ROC government, however, that was not the sole problem. Chiang Kai-shek’s Diaries reveal his anxiety that after the reversion of Okinawa, the U.S. would be relieved of some of its burden about the military base, and that this might cause the U.S. to retreat from the ongoing Vietnam War. That would give North Vietnam an advantage and cause the expansion of Communist forces, which would be disadvantageous to the ROC in its confrontation with the Chinese government. The Chiang Kai-shek Diaries in those days sporadically mention South Vietnamese President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu.

The issue of Okinawa was, for the ROC government, not only the target of irredentism but an issue linked directly to its very existence as well.

4. Indetermination to Defend the Senkaku Islands

What is meant by the term “national defense” in his September 11 entry?

The reversion of Okinawa was, at that time, a de facto established principle. If, therefore, Chiang Kai-shek had kept insisting that Senkaku was part of Okinawa, he would have had to give up the title to oil interests including oil concessions. I used to believe, in accordance with the common view, that the reason why Chiang Kai-shek started to assert that Senkaku was part of Taiwan is that he wanted to continue to pursue oil interests. As long as the reversion was to become a reality, he would logically have to separate Senkaku from Okinawa, otherwise his original assertion of titles to oil concessions itself would fall apart.

Chiang Kai-shek, however, stated that the reason for continuing to assert claim to Senkaku, going as

¹⁰ The “land of Diaoyu Dao” refers to the earth’s surface. Taiwan has not relaxed its assertion of the portion under sea, including the continental shelves.

far as to change his previous premise to the view that “Senkaku is part of Taiwan,” was for reasons of “national defense.” Surely, if he had to dispute sovereignty over Senkaku with Japan, he would have to see his country’s interests in national defense with Japan, over the territorial right to Senkaku. There is a possibility to interpret his use of the term “national defense” as implying that, with the issue reaching this stage, for just wanting oil interests he had ended up in conflict with both Japan and the USA over the issue of sovereignty.

However, if this were true, he would have reasoned that for the sake of Senkaku, they needed national defense. Thus, the assertion that national defense requires Senkaku is reverse logic.

In fact, the diary clearly shows that regarding Senkaku, Chiang Kai-shek was reluctant to spar with Japan. As described above, on September 14, when he changed his assertion of a claim to Senkaku, he was not willing to enter a dispute head-on over the issue of sovereignty itself. Moreover, in the abovementioned diary entry of December 7, 1970, Chiang Kai-shek stated that “regarding the issue of the Diaoyu Tai Islands, I should not discuss the issue of sovereignty now,” showing an even more negative attitude. The diary entry of April 7, 1971, the next year, is even clearer: he says that “This must not be settled by military means. Our country is now unable to reside on the relevant islands to defend them and the primary policy of our country is to recover Continental China and save our compatriots there.” Evidently, he did not intend to spare any military power to defend Senkaku¹¹.

Even though he expected to see a dispute with Japan over territorial sovereignty, he not only wanted to avoid military conflict but also was passive regarding defending Senkaku, instead putting priority on confrontation with Continental China. What does he mean by “national defense”? Why did lands that he was not even willing to defend remain a pending issue in national defense?

5. Ensuring Oil Titles as “National Defense”

¹¹ Nor does the present military authority of the ROC government show a clear intention to possess and defend Senkaku. On April 29, 2013, when the Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. held a symposium entitled “Taiwan’s Response to an Evolving Security Environment,” while a field officer grade officer of the ROC government was explaining the defense plan published by the ROC government for the first time in four years, The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), he mentioned the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku. In the Q&A session, therefore, I asked him, “Suppose that Japan delivers Senkaku to Taiwan, the People’s Liberation Army would surely come for Senkaku. What would you then do to defend your country?” Lost for words, the officer was unable to reply. At that time, Richard Bush, Director of the Brookings Institution Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, who was master of ceremonies, attempted to help by saying, “It is wise not to respond to hypothetical questions.” This response was thus an unexpected admission on their part that the assumption of Japan’s delivering Senkaku to the ROC government was hypothetical.

The ROC government's greatest concern over national defense was naturally the Chinese government. In that case, even if it occupied Senkaku and its surroundings alone, that would not be sufficient to withstand the Chinese government. As far as security of the whole region was concerned, the only nation that Taiwan could truly rely on was the USA. Assuming that the USA maintained diplomatic relations with the ROC government, the ROC could expect the U.S. base in Okinawa to remain while the Vietnam War was being waged. If the American base in Okinawa continued to exist, Taiwan could depend on the U.S. military for regional defense.

Should Okinawa have been returned to Japan, and should the base have undergone any change, the Self-Defense Forces of Japan still retained excellent equipment. If Taiwan still remained suspicious about Japan's local defense abilities, asserting a territorial claim to Senkaku alone while suffering new military tension with Japan with its excellent defense abilities would not have been realistic in view of the local situation. Chiang Kai-shek was neither keen to assert his sovereignty over Senkaku nor committed to defending Senkaku, as described above. The fact that defense was not a consideration indicates that what Chiang Kai-shek intended when providing a title to concessions was not to obtain oil titles while being willing to stand up to both Japan and the USA over the issue of sovereignty, but to highlight the issue of sovereignty itself.

However, with the reversion of Okinawa now just around the corner, no ground would be left to assert sovereignty over Senkaku. Continuing the assertion as before, therefore, required a new set of grounds. It was at that very moment, I believe, that the motivation for asserting sovereignty over Senkaku became focused on ensuring oil titles. It is therefore conjectured that the demand for "national defense" was to ensure the titles to oil concessions.

Taiwan depended on imports from overseas for oil. Before the oil crisis, the USA was an oil exporter that supplied to Taiwan. If Taiwan could obtain oil from the continental shelves of Senkaku under its adjacent seas instead of depending on imports, this would greatly strengthen national defense. On the other hand, the ROC did not show any intention to claim Senkaku as its territory. At this time, the ROC government's assertion was effectively no longer a territorial demand, but was in essence merely to ensure oil titles somehow.

It is a logical necessity that the ROC's assertion over Senkaku was no longer a territorial demand. With Senkaku separated from the issue, Taiwan's assertion of sovereignty over Senkaku had become even more unreasonable. That is, if it had asserted that Senkaku was part of Taiwan, America's right to administer Okinawa as per the Treaty of San Francisco would have been exercised not on Okinawa, which the ROC was ready to dispute for its territorial right, but on ROC territory itself.

The reasoning would then be that the administration by the USA had been illegal all along¹². The Treaty of Taipei was, however, based on the Treaty of San Francisco¹³, and therefore approved of American rule over Senkaku. This was the source of a fundamental contradiction.

The Chinese government's having begun to assert its sovereignty over Senkaku a little later than the ROC government would, after all, not have been limited to being obliged to assert its sovereignty over Senkaku as the mere result of the syllogism that "Senkaku is part of Taiwan; Taiwan is part of China; therefore Senkaku is part of China." Rather, it would be that the Chinese government aimed to leave a weakness in national defense without letting the ROC government obtain a stable source of oil. That was precisely why it began to make its assertion of not letting Senkaku go to the ROC government¹⁴.

6. The Shadow of Beijing

The Chinese government made another move that would become a reason for Chiang Kai-shek's not

¹² If they had wanted to assert a territorial claim to the whole of Okinawa, there would have been room to forcefully argue that "The ROC government has not abandoned it but has commissioned its right to administer it to the USA." If, however, they had taken the position that Senkaku was part not of Okinawa but of Taiwan, then they should have made an opposition or reserved the right when establishing the Treaty of Taipei in connection with Article 1-1 (b) of the Treaty of San Francisco, which stipulates that "(b) Japan renounces all right, title and claim to Formosa and the Pescadores." There are, however, no signs that the ROC government has done so.

¹³ Signed on April 28, 1952 and came into effect on August 5. Article 11 "Unless otherwise specified herein or any document complementing the same, any issue arising out of the presence of any war state between Japan and the Republic of China shall be settled according to the relevant provisions of the Treaty of San Francisco."

¹⁴ That the ROC government changed its assertion to Senkaku being part of Taiwan provided an opportunity for the Chinese government to intensify its excuse for intervention. This is because, if the People's Liberation Army were to occupy Senkaku, that would look to Japan like an illegal landing, but would be considered by the Chinese government to be recapturing part of Taiwan. At that time, if the U.S. military were reluctant to defend Senkaku, it would be noted abroad that the U.S. had approved of the Chinese government's title to Taiwan, putting the main island of Taiwan at jeopardy. In that sense, the defense of Senkaku is a test of U.S. commitment to Taiwan.

loudly pursuing the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku. He says in the abovementioned diary entry of December 7, 1970 that the reason why he “should not talk about” the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku was because “otherwise we would be alienated by the Communist bandits.”

That concern would become a reality in April the next year. At that time, the Communist forces showed signs of “provoking young students to stand up against the USA and Japan, thereby causing political waves in our country.” Chiang Kai-shek writes that “young people are ignorant and unforgivably demonstrating in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Boston, and elsewhere” while reassured that “happily they are not many” (in April 1971, the exact date is unknown). But on April 17, 1971, when an incident occurred in Taipei, his capital, whereby “international students from different universities called for demonstrations earlier this week and submitted letters of protest to the Embassies of the USA and Japan,” Chiang Kai-shek expressed his alertness, saying that “bandit spies are manipulating these developments by using the issue of Diaoyu Tai as their excuse.”¹⁵ He says that there were not many involved, but still clearly shows his alertness. He was then relieved, saying that “the government’s appropriate actions have calmed the disruption¹⁶.” To ensure oil titles for the ROC government and to confront the Chinese government, which had just begun to make assertions over Senkaku, he had to step up his own assertion too. But Chiang Kai-shek was unable to do so.

Turning a blind eye to Chiang Kai-shek’s concerns, the Chinese government steadily worked to improve its relations with the USA. The USA under the Nixon administration also came closer, driving Chiang Kai-shek into a corner. He naturally became increasingly dissatisfied with Nixon, as is evident from his diary.

After Nixon was elected, Chiang Kai-shek referred to Nixon as “尼克生”, unlike “尼克森”, which was the official notation used in Taiwan (China refers to Nixon as “尼克松”). The Chinese character “生” conveys a “youngster” or “male actor” in traditional Chinese plays and is a rather humoristic notation. On August 14, 1971, however, he wrote “尼氏” and in September that year, he bothered to delete part of it and changed it to “尼丑.” The character “丑”, as compared with “生,” means a “clown,” and can be interpreted as a sign of his dissatisfaction with Nixon, who was getting closer to

¹⁵ Between these statements and the fact that a USA-based group friendly with North Korea is persuading and driving South Korean-Americans to campaign on the “Comfort Women” issue, some people spot a structural similarity.

¹⁶ In his *The Generalissimo*, Chiang Kai-shek biographer Jay Taylor notes that at the anti-American demonstrations in Taipei and other locations on Senkaku, Chiang Kai-shek and his son “allowed the protests to continue”, but the opposite is true. (Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo*, Belknap Harvard 2009, p. 557)

the Chinese government. A short time before that, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger visited China on a confidential basis and a plan for Nixon himself to visit China was announced. On the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek was troubled by insomnia and bloody urine almost every day.

Conclusion

In response to this series of developments, Chiang Kai-shek decided to make an official declaration of the ROC's sovereignty over Senkaku. On June 11, 1971, he wrote "I took a nap after writing a statement on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about Diaoyu Tai in the morning," and this date corresponds to the date the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China declared its claim over Senkaku for the first time in an official document, indicating that the statement was written by Chiang Kai-shek himself¹⁷.

While he believed that he was moving in the great stream of international politics, such as the issue of territorial rights in connection with the reversion of Okinawa and conflicts with the Chinese government, Chiang Kai-shek was steadily being deprived of options, eventually narrowing into a mere declaration of asserting ROC sovereignty over Senkaku. As we follow this process, we are reminded that Chiang Kai-shek learned the hard way that Taiwan was a limited stage for him to interact on an equal footing with the rest of the world. At the same time, we are led to notice that the stubbornness of the ROC leader, who always struggled against his destiny, still affects East Asia as a source of turbulence.

His stubbornness is eloquently reflected in the argument that "what is returned is the authority to administer," which the USA adopted in the last stage of the reversion. To date, the U.S. government has avoided taking a position on the sovereignty over Senkaku. This is generally interpreted as a desperate measure by America, faced with the ROC government's claim of sovereignty over Senkaku and likewise by the Chinese government. However, the argument on "the return of the authority to administer" covers the main island of Okinawa as well. The argument therefore leads to the reasoning that the U.S. military has tens of thousands of soldiers and hundreds of military aircraft stationed on an island in the region whose sovereignty is unclear. This explanation leads nowhere.

Both the description of the Senkaku issue and the description of the issue of the territorial claim to Okinawa in the Chiang Kai-shek Diaries, will soon cease to be debated. This is because on June 17, 1971, Japan and the USA signed the Agreement between Japan and the United States of America

¹⁷ 中華民國外交部關於琉球群島與釣魚台列嶼問題的聲明 (A Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China on the Issue of the Ryukyu Islands and Diaoyu Tai," June 1, 1971

Concerning the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands, thereby resolving the issue. On that day, Chiang Kai-shek writes that he consulted his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, who was to be his successor, about the fact that the USA was urging Japan and the ROC to negotiate the issue of the Diaoyu Tai Islands. The entry concludes by stating “Today the USA and Japan signed the document on the reversion of Okinawa.”

Then, about a year later, in July 1972, his diary itself came to an end¹⁸. Chiang Kai-shek passed away on April 5, 1975, just a year before Mao Zedong, his old enemy.

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¹⁸ In July of that year, Chiang Kai-shek had a heart attack and went into a temporary coma, after which he hardly ever appeared in public (*Ibid*, p. 581).