

**THE ESCALATION OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN IN
THE PURCHASE OF SENKAKU ISLANDS FROM A PRIVATE SECTOR
IN 2012**

THESIS



**UNIVERSITAS
ISLAM
INDONESIA**

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FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIO-CULTURAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INDONESIA**

2023

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Proposed to the Department of International Relations
Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences
Universitas Islam Indonesia As a partial fulfillment of requirement to earn a
Bachelor Degree in International Relations



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I hereby declare that this undergraduate thesis is the result of my own independent scientific work, and that all material from the work of others (in books, articles, essays, dissertations, and on the internet) has been stated, and quotations and paraphrases are clearly indicated.

No other materials are used other than those contained. I have read and understood the university's rules and procedures regarding plagiarism.

Making false statements is considered a violation of academic integrity.

26 December 2022,



Arisara Korsema

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Competition for the influence of superpowers In particular, China and Japan are important factors that affect the situation in the South China Sea and tend to increase tension. Following the private purchase of three islands in the Senkaku Islands, on September 11, 2012, the Japanese government under the leadership of Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda announced the completion of an agreement to purchase three out of five islands. (Grieger and Claros 2021) are Uotsuri-Jima, Kita-kojima and Minami-kojima Island. In the Senkaku Islands from the former private owner Kunioki Kurihara for about 20.05 million yen. (Hyuga et al. 2012) This issue has created a new round of tensions between the two countries. The controversy began in April 2012, when Tokyo Metropolitan Government Shintaro Ishihara, recognized as a conservative and nationalist personality, announced as Traveled to Ashington, US that the Tokyo city government is planning to buy these islands and plans to build ports and other facilities. Including inviting the Japanese government to explore the area in this island area as well Later, Mr Ishihara announced public donations for the purchase of the islands. which was able to collect up to 700 million yen in just the first month for the Japanese government led by the Prime Minister. Noda at that time It is expected that China will understand the reasons for this decision to buy the islands, but the outcome is not what Japan expected. “The Tokyo administration's purchase of the islands does not change the fact that Japan stole these islands from China. If Japan insists on buying the island, it will have serious consequences. claim ownership and

expanding its claims to islands in the South China Sea. Claims of territorial waters and islands in the South China Sea are one of China's core national interests that China will not compromise. And do everything possible to protect their maritime interests in addition to the construction of various facilities. on the islands in the South China Sea. China can make more military moves to protect its maritime sovereignty. (Wiegand 2016)

The beginning of the dispute in the past came when China formally began claiming sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands in the early 1970s. After experts pointed out that oil may be present in these islands, China claims ownership of the islands based on history and international law. China claims to possess and control the Senkaku islands. Since 1403 During the Ming Dynasty, however, China was forced to cede these islands along with Taiwan to Japan following the Shimonoseki Peace Treaty in May 1895 after China lost the war to Japan (1984-1985). (Scoville 2014) but following the Potsdam Declaration of July 1945 and the Cairo Declaration of December 1943, the Allied leaders of World War II agreed that Japan must return all territories captured by the invasion. When China regained Taiwan, the Senkaku Islands, which were part of Taiwan, also belonged to China.” Claims of the Formosa Islands and Fesca Cores Islands Joint Declaration on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and China 1972 of China General Chinese people, whether living in the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao or other overseas Chinese, believe in this. (Szczepanski 2019) Japan claimed that when these islands were found, in addition to being uninhabited, There is still no sign of Chinese control over the islands. The Japanese government annexed it as part of the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) in

January 1895, before Japan acquired Taiwan under the Shimonoseki Treaty, and planted a flagpole showing that he had sovereignty over this land. In addition, a Japanese named Tatsushiro Koga visited and used these islands regularly for many years when China and Japan signed a peace treaty in 1978. (Scoville 2014) Pledged not to let the dispute over the islands become a major obstacle to relations between the two countries. From time to time, both China and Japan concentrated on their sovereignty.

The dispute over the Senkaku Islands is a long-running territorial dispute between Japan, China, and Taiwan. The islands are located in the East China Sea and are claimed by all three parties. Tensions increased dramatically in 2012 due to a series of events. In 2012, the Japanese government bought three Senkaku islands from Japanese private owners. (Takenaka 2012) The move was intended to prevent nationalist politicians from buying the island and potentially worsen the situation. However, the purchase by the Japanese government has sparked discontent in China and Taiwan. Protests erupt in China. The protesters target Japanese businesses and embassies. This led to diplomatic tensions between Japan and China. This included an encounter between a Chinese ship and a Japanese Coast Guard ship near the island. The situation has also strained economic relations between the two countries. Due to anti-Japanese sentiment in China, Japan's exports to China declined, and China's tourism to Japan declined. The dispute also led to concerns about potential military escalation. Both Japan and China increased maritime patrols in the East China Sea. Causing fears of an accidental clash or confrontation, Taiwan also claims the islands, which adds another layer of complexity to the dispute. Much of Taiwan's claims mirror those

of China. The Senkaku Islands dispute remains unresolved. (Tan 2023) And tensions continued to erupt from time to time. It remains a sensitive and complex issue in East Asian geopolitics. As it deals with historical, territorial, economic and nationalist factors, the dispute has been a source of ongoing discord in the region. and affects regional stability and international relations.

Disputes over the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea in 2012 did not result in a clear "winner" in the traditional sense. The situation during that year was characterized by escalating tensions and diplomatic conflicts between Japan and China, which also had economic implications. However, these events did not bring about a resolution to the underlying territorial disputes. During that period, the Japanese government acquired three islands from private Japanese owners, a move that triggered widespread protests and fueled anti-Japanese sentiment in China. (Ristagno 2023) Consequently, economic activities between the two countries were temporarily suspended, exerting an impact on bilateral relations. Despite the fervor surrounding the 2012 dispute, it did not lead to a definitive settlement or induce changes in the territorial claims of any of the parties involved. The tensions that emerged during that time have persisted beyond 2012, fueling ongoing controversy. Consequently, the situation in the East China Sea remains intricate and sensitive within the context of East Asia's geopolitics. This complex dispute carries implications for both regional stability and international relations. (Barker 2016)

1.2 Research Question

How has conflict escalated between China and Japan in regarding the Senkaku Islands issue?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- a. To analyze the rise of tensions after the private purchase of the Senkaku Islands by the Japanese government and the timeline that took place in 2012.
- b. To analyze the behavior of the Chinese government toward Japan. And the behavior of the Japanese government toward China; and
- c. To analyze power conflicts related to the Senkaku Islands and The Senkaku Island Dispute Efforts in International Organizations

1.4 Research Scope

The main theme of this research is the growing conflict between China and Japan over the private sector purchase of the Senkaku Islands in 2012, in particular. This research provides scope to look at the origins and causes of the escalation in violence that occurred in 2012. The authors will also elaborate on the process of increasing tensions. Considering the historical conflicts between China and Japan Noting that in 2012, both countries had a desire to occupy the Senkaku Islands. Thus, the purchase by the Japanese government sparked discontent in China and Taiwan, causing protests to erupt in China. The protesters target Japanese businesses and embassies. This led to diplomatic tensions between Japan

and China. The Senkaku Islands dispute remains unresolved. And tensions continued to erupt from time to time. It remains a sensitive and complex issue in East Asian geopolitics. due to economic factors and nationalism too The dispute has been the source of ongoing discord in the region. and affects regional stability and international relations. In this research The authors use Conflict Escalation Theory to examine the tensions in the dispute over the Senkaku Islands claims.

1.5 Literature Review

This research is a continuation of previous studies. The author uses previous research as comparison material with the topic of earlier research being that related to The dispute of Senkaku islands between China and Japan

First, In an article written by Kallie Szczepanski in 2019 entitled *The First Sino-Japanese War of 1894 to 1895*: States that Japan and China fought the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894–95 which marked the emergence of Japan as a significant world power. The war grew out of a conflict between the two countries for supremacy in Korea. By 1895 the Japanese had successfully invaded Shandong province and Manchuria and had fortified posts that commanded the sea approaches to Beijing. In the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which ended the conflict, China recognized the independence of Korea and ceded Taiwan, the adjoining Pescadores, and the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan. (Szczepanski 2019)

Another article by Brian Victoria in 2020 entitled *The shifting US position over the Senkaku Islands*: Reported that, since the Nixon administration, the US has taken the position that territorial sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands was decided by Japan, China, and Taiwan. Until recently, the main concern regarding

the islands had been ownership of resources like oil and gas. But in recent years they have become increasingly important as a key link in a chain that prevents access to the Pacific. (Victoria 2020)

An article by Zheng Wang and Sebastian Strangio in 2014 entitled *History Education: The Source of Conflict Between China and Japan*: said that, tensions between China and Japan can be explained as a clash of histories. People of the two countries have quite different attitudes and approaches toward history. Without addressing the underlying roots of hostility, the two nations cannot build a normal relationship, writes Chen Bingtao. China and Japan have very different approaches to and systems of history education. China's curriculum is heavily loaded with content on China's traumatic national experience from the First Opium War (1839–1842) through to the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1945. In Japanese history textbooks, there is no mention of the Nanjing Massacre or the "Nanjing Incident" Zungu, Z. (2022, May 23). In 2005, the Japanese Education Ministry's approval of a version of the New History Textbook ignited outrage and large-scale demonstrations in several Asian countries, especially China and South Korea. The bilateral relationship between China and Japan has always been fragile and dangerous. Historical issues and interpretations of the past have been major barriers to reconciliation. (Wang and Strangio 2014)

The articles outlined above discussed past conflicts rather than claims. Since the issue of conflict stems from China's claim to Senkaku, (Szczepanski 2019) Which in an issue that tends to escalate conflict, and sovereignty exists to reflect the intent and ambitions of the state, increasing the intensity of the Senkaku debate could result in violence. Thus the author has put more emphasis

on China's infiltration by Japan and the United States, (Victoria 2020) and the future cooperation of these three countries. Although there is no current conflict in the land dispute, concerns regarding Senkaku tend to impede collaboration in other ways. However, the above article also mentions in the context of the region that there is also hatred between China and Japan, This hatred has been influenced by historical events, economic relations, and current events. Therefore, in this study, the author puts forward the case of wanting to see the views of Asians as very different. Here are two East Asian countries with centuries of history. (Wang and Strangio 2014) Beijing and Tokyo were separated by wars and clashes in the past, now there is a conflict over power over an uninhabited island group in the East China Sea named Senkaku by the Japanses and Diao Yu by the Chinses. (Wiegand 2016)

1.6 Research Framework

To answer research questions proposed, the author used the “*Conflict Escalation concept*”. The author chose this idea because it felt appropriate to explain this contradiction.

Glasl's Nine-Stage Model of Conflict Escalation is a conceptual framework developed by Austrian psychologist Friedrich Glasl to describe the progressive stages through which conflicts can intensify from their initial mild state to more severe and potentially destructive levels. This model provides insight into the psychological and behavioral dynamics that underlie conflicts and helps individuals, parties, and mediators better understand the escalation process. It offers a structured way of analyzing and categorizing the various stages that

conflicts may pass through, Using Glasl's nine-step conflict guide conflict resolution. In which each stage has different characteristics, behaviors and related dynamics, the conflict at hand can be analyzed to determine which stage it is currently falling into. Consider the behaviors, emotions, and actions performed by the parties involved. This assessment provides a starting point for understanding the dynamics of the conflict. By using Glasl's nine-step model of conflict escalation deeper understanding of conflict. Anticipating potential challenges and deploy optimized strategies to prevent escalation and find solutions. Keep in mind that conflicts are ever-changing and multi-faceted. Therefore, flexibility and adaptability in your approach is essential. Here are the nine stages of conflict escalation according to Glasl's model:

1. Hardening: In this initial stage, parties involved in the conflict start to form rigid positions and become less open to alternative viewpoints. Communication becomes more confrontational, and differences become apparent.

2. Debate: As tensions increase, discussions turn into debates with a focus on convincing the other party of one's own perspective. The parties try to strengthen their positions and emphasize their differences.

3. Actions, Not Words: In this stage, parties start taking action to back up their positions. Diplomacy and communication give way to concrete actions, which may include demonstrations, protests, or symbolic gestures.

4. Images and Coalitions: The conflict becomes more public, and parties seek support from allies and coalitions. They attempt to shape public opinion in their favor and gain backing for their stance.

5. Loss of Face: As the conflict intensifies, parties may feel that they cannot back down without losing face. Maintaining reputation becomes a priority, which makes finding a compromise more difficult.

6. Strategy of Annihilation: In this stage, parties may adopt a more hostile and aggressive approach, seeking to weaken or harm the opponent. The focus shifts from addressing the original issue to inflicting damage.

7. Limited Destructiveness: Conflict starts to have serious negative consequences on both sides. Parties may realize that the costs of continuing the conflict are becoming too high and consider seeking mediation or negotiation.

8. Fragmentation of the Enemy: Parties involved may experience internal divisions, where different factions within the groups have varying views on how to proceed. This internal fragmentation can complicate efforts to find a resolution.

9. Together into the Abyss: At the most severe stage, parties may be so deeply entrenched and committed to their positions that resolution becomes nearly impossible. The conflict may escalate into violence or extreme measures, with potentially severe consequences for all parties involved. (Jordan 2000)

Matters associated with problems or cases related to the ‘Conflict Escalation Theory’ of the escalation of conflict between China and Japan in the purchase of the Senkaku Islands can roughly be described as follows:

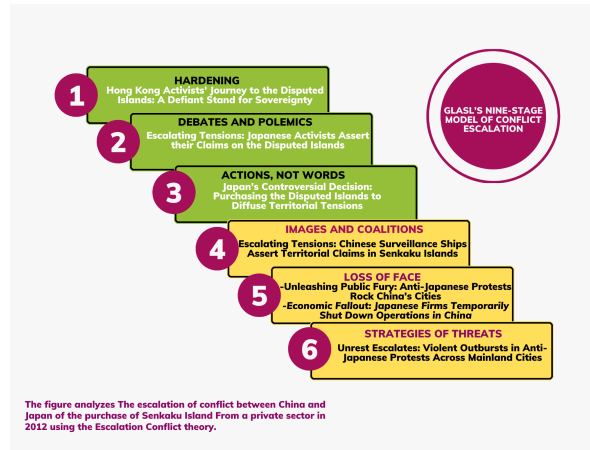


Figure 1 The escalation of conflict between China and Japan regarding the purchase of the Senkaku Islands from a private sector in 2012 using the Conflict Escalation theory.

Based on the diagram, The case of Escalation in the Senkaku Islands conflict between China and Japan in 2012, can be analyzed in 6 steps according to the view of Conflict Escalation Theory.

1.7 Provisional Argument

the Senkaku Island conflict escalation rises through 6 steps. Base on using Glasl's Nine-Stage Model of Conflict Escalation to analyze the Senkaku Islands dispute in 2012 can provide insights into the conflict's dynamics and suggest strategies for preventing further escalation. This begins by identifying which stage of conflict escalation the Senkaku Islands dispute was in during 2012. Based on the analysis provided earlier, it appears that the dispute progressed through at least

the six stages of Glasl's model. The dispute over the Senkaku Islands between China and Japan did not escalate to a serious level. As both China and Japan are aware of the risks associated with further escalation, including potential military clashes and severe economic and political consequences. And The economic interdependence between China and Japan played a role in preventing further escalation. Both countries have strong economic ties, and a full-scale economic conflict would have negative consequences for both parties. While the dispute did involve significant tensions and some aggressive actions. The presence of various restraining factors, combined with the rational assessment of the risks and consequences, helped prevent the dispute from progressing to a more hostile and destructive level.

1.8 Research Method

1.8.1 Type of the Research

In this study, the author will use qualitative methods to describe and analyze the problems identified from the case studies to answer the research question. A qualitative approach using descriptions makes it easier for writers to gather information. Such an approach includes a literature review and supporting data from various study as secondary information that facilitate the research process.

1.8.2 Subject and Object of the Research

The subject of the research conducted in this paper is China. The author has attempted to analyze why China disagreed with the announcement of Japan for a plan to push for a deal to buy the Senkaku Islands and overlapping areas in the East China Sea claimed by both China and Japan. What about a proprietary dispute? Therefore, the aim of this research is to analyze the case of the Japanese government's purchase of the three Senkaku Islands from the private sector in 2012, led by the Prime Minister at the time, Yoshihiko Noda. In this analysis, the author has attempted to clarify the legal rights of commercial claims and the history of the two countries in regards to the overlapping areas. This leads into answering the question of the state of the conflict between China and Japan on this issue.

1.8.3 Method of Data Collection

The method of collecting information used by the author was collection through secondary sources, such as books, and journals, as well as relevant information from the Internet, news, magazines, and websites.

1.8.4 Process of the Research

This study used a qualitative method. by obtaining information from various reliable sources. Preliminary data collection used literature review techniques. and obtained information from books, journals, and related news articles. The accuracy of the data is obviously very important to the production of the research. After collecting the sources and identifying the facts the information was further explained according to the theory chosen by the author.

1.9 Thesis Outline

In Chapter I, the author explains the background of the research, problem determination, purpose of writing, importance and the scope of research. It also outlines the literary study, fundamental concepts, writing methods, and systematic discussion.

In Chapter II, the author attempts to explain the tension between China and Japan in regarding to the East China Sea escalated in 2012.

In Chapter III, the author analyzes the conflict between China and Japan. After reviewing existing literature, the author chose the Theory of Conflict Escalation to analyze the cause of this conflict, as well as the timeline of event during 2012

The fanal chapter, Chapter IV , presents a summary of research that has already been carried out and answers the final research question. The author then provides feedback and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II
THE ESCALATION OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN OF
THE PURCHASE OF SENKAKU ISLAND FROM A PRIVATE SECTOR
IN 2012

2.1 The relationship between China and Japan about the dispute of Senkaku Islands

The dispute over the Senkaku Islands, known as the Diaoyu Islands in China, is a longstanding and complex issue between China and Japan. The islands are a group of uninhabited islets located in the East China Sea. The core of the dispute revolves around territorial sovereignty, historical claims, and access to potentially valuable maritime resources in the surrounding waters. Therefore, Key points in the relationship between China and Japan regarding the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute include in Historical Claims. (Sato and Chadha 2022) Both China and Japan have historical claims to the islands. Japan asserts that it has maintained administrative control over the islands since the late 19th century, whereas China argues that the islands were historically part of its territory. Ownership and Legal Status, The islands are considered part of Okinawa Prefecture under the Japanese administration. However, their ownership has been contested. International law and legal frameworks like the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) are often invoked in discussions about the dispute. Escalation and Tensions, The dispute periodically escalates, leading to heightened tensions between the two countries. (T.B. 2023) Actions such as naval patrols, maritime law enforcement activities, and official statements from both sides have contributed to these tensions. Resource Concerns, The waters surrounding the

Senkaku Islands are believed to hold significant oil, natural gas, and fishing resources. This has increased the economic and strategic importance of the islands. That make both country have Impact on Bilateral Relations. The dispute has negatively impacted China-Japan relations over the years. It has led to diplomatic spats, economic boycotts, and nationalist sentiments on both sides, making it a contentious issue in bilateral relations. Which both countries have engaged in diplomatic efforts to manage the dispute Talks, negotiations, and dialogue channels have been established intermittently to prevent further escalation. And Involvement of the United States is an important player in the dispute due to its security alliance with Japan. The U.S. has stated that the Senkaku Islands fall under the scope of the U.S.-Japan security treaty, which obligates the U.S. to defend Japan in case of armed attack. The dispute is situated within broader regional dynamics in East Asia. (Harding 2020) Other countries in the region, including South Korea and Taiwan, have interests in the resolution of the dispute due to potential implications for territorial disputes of their own. however The history of Japan's imperial expansion and militarism in the first half of the 20th century has also added a layer of historical sensitivity to the dispute, influencing perceptions in both countries. Efforts to resolve the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute have proven challenging, and the situation remains volatile. The ongoing dispute underscores the complexities of territorial disputes, historical narratives, and the broader geopolitical context in East Asia.

2.2 Timeline of conflict the Senkaku Islands between China and Japan in 2012

The year 2012 witnessed a crucial juncture in the ongoing dispute over the Senkaku Islands. This timeline delves into the series of events that unfolded during this pivotal year, illustrating the intensifying tensions and evolving dynamics between China and Japan. From territorial claims to diplomatic protests, from naval deployments to political transitions, these events collectively shaped the narrative of this enduring conflict, leaving a lasting impact on regional geopolitics and bilateral relations.

2.2.1 Hong Kong Activists' Journey to the Disputed Islands: A Defiant Stand for Sovereignty

On August 14, 2012, a group of Hong Kong activists made a bold move that would reignite tensions in the region. After a 16-year hiatus, seven determined individuals reached the disputed islands by sea, symbolically asserting Hong Kong's sovereignty and challenging the status quo. The disputed islands, known as the Diaoyu Islands in China and the Senkaku Islands in Japan, have long been at the center of a territorial dispute between these two nations. The dispute dates back to the late 19th century and has remained contentious, often causing diplomatic tensions between China and Japan to flare. (Kang-chung 2022).

The arrival of the Hong Kong activists on the disputed islands in 2012 marked a significant departure from the status quo. The group, consisting of seven individuals, defied the 1996 agreement, which had restricted any landings on the

islands. Their purpose was to assert Hong Kong's claim to sovereignty over the islands, as they believed that the territory rightfully belonged to China. The activists' expedition represented a courageous stand by Hong Kong citizens to challenge the perceived encroachment on their sovereignty. (KAWASE 2022) By venturing to the disputed islands, the activists aimed to raise awareness of the ongoing territorial dispute and highlight Hong Kong's desire for self-determination. It also demonstrated the growing discontent among Hong Kong residents regarding their political status and relationship with mainland China. As Hong Kong transitioned from British colonial rule to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, there were concerns about the erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy and democratic freedoms. The activists' journey was a poignant expression of the frustration and desire for self-governance felt by many Hong Kong citizens. The activists' expedition had far-reaching implications for the future of the region. It reignited public discourse on the territorial dispute and generated international attention. It also exposed the simmering tensions between China and Japan, leading to an escalation of nationalist sentiments in both countries. This event played a part in fueling subsequent protests and actions by activists, further exacerbating the fragile diplomatic relations between the two nations. Moreover, the expedition and the subsequent reaction from Chinese and Japanese authorities highlighted the complexities of resolving long-standing territorial disputes. It underscored the need for diplomatic negotiations and multilateral dialogue to find peaceful resolutions that satisfy the interests of all parties involved. (Broadhead 2012).

2.2.2 Escalating Tensions: Japanese Activists Assert their Claims on the Disputed Islands

On August 19, 2012, a new chapter unfolded in the longstanding territorial dispute over the disputed islands in the East China Sea. Ten Japanese activists swam ashore and raised Japanese flags on the island chain, escalating tensions between Japan and China. (Villar 2013) This audacious act further fueled the already simmering dispute and intensified the nationalist sentiments on both sides.

-Exacerbating Tensions and the Diplomatic Fallout:

The activists' action, while some in Japan, exacerbated tensions between Japan and China. The Chinese government vehemently condemned the act as a violation of their territorial sovereignty and lodged a diplomatic protest against Japan. (Quintana 2012) The incident further strained the already fragile diplomatic relations between the two nations, leading to a deterioration in bilateral ties. Nationalist sentiments in both countries were further stoked, intensifying the rhetoric surrounding the disputed islands. The territorial dispute over the islands became a focal point of regional politics and influenced the dynamics between various countries in the region. It led to an increase in military posturing, territorial claims, and strategic alliances, further complicating the already fragile situation. (Campbell and Raushenbush 2013)

2.2.3 Japan's Controversial Decision: Purchasing the Disputed Islands to Diffuse Territorial Tensions

On September 10, 2012, the Japanese government made a significant and controversial announcement. It declared its decision to purchase the disputed

islands from a private Japanese owner in an effort to diffuse territorial tensions. This move by Tokyo aimed to assert Japanese sovereignty over the islands and establish a legal framework to manage the dispute. (Wee 2012) However, instead of mitigating tensions, the decision sparked a new wave of diplomatic friction and exacerbated the already strained relations between Japan and China. The disputed islands, known as the Senkaku Islands in Japan and the Diaoyu Islands in China, have long been a source of contention between the two nations. The islands, located in the East China Sea, are believed to hold valuable maritime resources and strategic significance. Historical claims and nationalist sentiments have fueled the dispute, which intensified following Japan's decision to nationalize the islands in 2012.

-Motivations behind Japan's Decision:

The Japanese government's purchase of the disputed islands can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, it aimed to solidify Japan's claim to sovereignty over the islands, reaffirming its territorial integrity in the face of China's increasing assertiveness. Secondly, by acquiring the islands from a private owner, Japan sought to establish a legal framework for the islands' management and avoid potential complications arising from private ownership. The decision to purchase the disputed islands had far-reaching consequences. (Barker 2016) Diplomatic relations between Japan and China deteriorated rapidly, with China viewing the move as a provocation and a violation of its sovereignty. The Chinese government responded with strong protests, boycotts of Japanese goods, and increased maritime patrols in the region, which heightened tensions and escalated nationalist sentiments on both sides.

-Regional and Global Implications:

Japan's decision had wider regional and global implications. It further complicated the geopolitical landscape in East Asia, with other countries closely monitoring the situation. (McDevitt and Lea 2013) The United States, a close ally of Japan, expressed its support for Japan's decision while urging a calm and diplomatic resolution. The dispute also drew attention to the importance of freedom of navigation, regional stability, and the need for dialogue to address territorial disputes in a peaceful manner.

2.2.4 Escalating Tensions: Chinese Surveillance Ships Assert Territorial Claims in the Senkaku Islands

On September 14, 2012, the ongoing territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea reached a new level of tension. Six Chinese surveillance ships sailed into the waters around the islands, asserting China's territorial claims and citing "law enforcement" as their rationale. This provocative act by China further heightened tensions between China and Japan, exacerbating the already strained diplomatic relations and raising concerns about regional stability. (Ristagno 2023) The presence of Chinese surveillance ships in the waters around the Senkaku Islands significantly escalated tensions between China and Japan. Japan, which considers the islands part of its territory and calls them the Senkaku Islands, denounced the Chinese incursion as a violation of its sovereignty. The incident led to a sharp diplomatic protest from Japan, further straining the already fragile relations between the two countries. It also heightened concerns among neighbouring countries, as the dispute threatened to disrupt the

delicate balance of power in the region. The presence of Chinese surveillance ships raised anxieties about potential maritime clashes and the escalation of the conflict. It also prompted other countries to closely monitor the situation and express their concerns about the implications for regional security. (Withington 2023)

2.2.5 Unleashing Public Fury: Anti-Japanese Protests Rock China's Cities

On September 15, 2012, a wave of unprecedented anti-Japanese protests swept across China, marking the largest display of public anger towards Japan since the two countries normalized diplomatic relations in 1972. Fueled by the escalating territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands, thousands of Chinese citizens took to the streets in cities across China. (Zhang 2015) The Japanese embassy in Beijing became a focal point of the demonstrations, facing a siege of protesters hurling rocks, eggs, and bottles. The anti-Japanese protests that erupted, represented a release of public fury over the Senkaku Islands dispute. Chinese citizens, deeply aggrieved by Japan's perceived encroachment on their territorial sovereignty, took to the streets in unprecedented numbers. The protests were a manifestation of nationalist sentiments and a response to domestic and international actors' perceived mishandling of the dispute. (Hille and Nakamoto 2012) The scale of the protests was notable, with thousands of demonstrators gathering in major cities across China. The demonstrations were marked by fervent displays of nationalism, anti-Japanese sentiments, and demands for a stronger stance by the Chinese government. The Japanese embassy in Beijing became a target of the protesters' rage, symbolizing the direct expression of their discontent. The anti-Japanese protests had a profound impact on Sino-Japanese

relations. The besiegement of the Japanese embassy and the widespread anger directed at Japan deepened the divide between the two nations. Diplomatic efforts to resolve the territorial dispute were further complicated as the protests intensified nationalist sentiments and hardened public opinion on both sides. The strained relations caused by the demonstrations had long-lasting consequences on bilateral cooperation and trust. The anti-Japanese protests drew international attention and raised concerns about the potential for violence and the need for a peaceful resolution to the dispute. Governments worldwide called for calm, urging both China and Japan to exercise restraint and seek diplomatic solutions. The protests also brought attention to the importance of open dialogue, confidence-building measures, and efforts to de-escalate tensions in order to maintain regional stability. (Wallace 2005)

2.2.6 Unrest Escalates: Violent Outbursts in Anti-Japanese Protests Across Mainland Cities

September 16, 2012, witnessed a continuation of the anti-Japanese protests that had erupted across China, further intensifying the already volatile situation. Demonstrations spread to dozens of mainland cities for a second consecutive day. (Lim 2012) While some protests remained peaceful, a distressing turn of events occurred as clashes between protesters and police escalated. Instances of violence emerged, with attacks on Japanese-made cars and vandalism targeting Japanese restaurants. These acts of violence underscored the deep-seated anger and frustration among some segments of the Chinese population. The clashes between protesters and police threatened public safety and stability, posing challenges for law enforcement authorities. Moreover, the attacks on Japanese businesses and

property harmed bilateral economic ties and affected innocent parties, such as employees and local communities, who suffered the consequences of the violence. (TANG 2012)

The eruption of violence in the anti-Japanese protests further strained the already tense relations between China and Japan. The escalation of hostilities, attacks on Japanese symbols, and the inability to maintain law and order created additional obstacles to resolving the underlying territorial dispute. Diplomatic channels were further complicated as the violent protests deepened mistrust and made it increasingly difficult to find a peaceful resolution. (Naidu 2012)

2.2.7 Economic Fallout: Japanese Firms Temporarily Shut Down Operations in China

On September 17, 2012, the economic impact of the escalating tensions became evident as major Japanese companies, including Toyota and Honda, made the difficult decision to temporarily shut down their factories and offices across China. This caused significant economic disruption. Toyota and Honda, among other companies, took this precautionary measure to protect their employees and assets amidst the escalating anti-Japanese sentiment and violent protests. The shutdowns disrupted production and supply chains, leading to losses in revenue and creating challenges for the affected companies. (McCurry 2012) The shutdowns not only affected Japanese firms but also had implications for their suppliers, distributors, and other business partners, creating disruptions that extended beyond national borders. It also further strained bilateral relations, challenging efforts to find diplomatic resolutions and creating long-term uncertainties for economic cooperation. The closure of the Japanese firms'

operations in China also had consequences for public perception and consumer behavior. (White and Buckley 2012) The protests and the subsequent shutdowns intensified anti-Japanese sentiment among Chinese consumers, leading to boycotts of Japanese products and a shift in consumer preferences towards domestic or non-Japanese alternatives. This change in consumer behavior impacted not only Japanese companies but also the broader business environment in China.

2.2.8 Simmering Tensions: Japanese Activists Land on the Diaoyu Islands Amidst Anti-Japanese Protests

On September 18, 2012, the escalating tensions between China and Japan reached a new height as two Japanese activists landed on the disputed Senkaku Islands. This provocative act coincided with the anniversary of Japan's invasion of Manchuria, which further fueled the already widespread anti-Japanese sentiments across China. (McCurry and Branigan 2012) The landing of two Japanese activists on the Senkaku Islands marked a significant escalation in the territorial dispute. This act, viewed by China as an intrusion into its sovereign territory, further strained bilateral relations. The timing of the landing, coinciding with the anniversary of Japan's invasion of Manchuria, amplified the historical grievances and added an extra layer of sensitivity to the situation. These protests, fueled by historical animosity and the ongoing territorial dispute, symbolized deep-seated resentment towards Japan. Demonstrators expressed their anger through marches, rallies, and other forms of public display, highlighting the intensity of public sentiment. The landing of the Japanese activists and the widespread anti-Japanese

protests deepened the rift between China and Japan. (Pomfret and Sieg 2012) The provocative act and the strong reaction from China heightened tensions and eroded trust between the two nations. The incidents hindered diplomatic efforts and exacerbated the fragile state of bilateral relations, making it difficult to de-escalate the situation and find common ground. (Cuilik and Xiaoping 2017).

2.3 The behavior of the Chinese government toward Japan.

The behavior of the Chinese government towards Japan in the context of the Senkaku Islands conflict has been characterized by a mix of assertiveness, diplomatic maneuvering, and occasional escalations. The following sections outline some key aspects of China's behavior specifically related to the Senkaku Islands dispute.

2.3.1 Sovereignty Claims

China asserts its sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands and consistently challenges Japan's control and administration of the islands. The Chinese government refers to the islands as the Diaoyu Islands and maintains that they are an inherent part of China's territory. China's stance includes the deployment of government vessels, maritime law enforcement ships, and aircraft to assert its claims in the waters surrounding the islands.

2.3.2 Regular Patrols and Incursions

China conducts regular patrols and incursions into the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands. Chinese government vessels, including Coast Guard ships

and fishing boats, enter the disputed area, sometimes leading to confrontations with Japanese vessels. These actions are intended to challenge Japan's control and affirm China's presence in the region.

2.3.3 Diplomatic Protests and Statements

The Chinese government lodges diplomatic protests with Japan when it perceives actions to be provocative or a violation of China's sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands. Official statements from China regularly express dissatisfaction with Japan's administration of the islands and reiterate China's claims.

2.3.4 Nationalist Sentiment and Public Demonstrations

The Chinese government at times allows or even encourages nationalist sentiment and public demonstrations against Japan regarding the Senkaku Islands dispute. These demonstrations can involve street protests, online campaigns, and boycotts of Japanese products. The government may utilize nationalist sentiment to rally public support for its stance on the islands and maintain domestic cohesion.

2.3.5 Regional and International Diplomacy

China engages in regional and international diplomacy to advance its position on the Senkaku Islands dispute. It seeks to garner support for its claims, raise awareness of the issue, and pressure Japan diplomatically. China may use forums like the United Nations, ASEAN, or bilateral meetings to voice its concerns and advocate for its position.

2.3.6 Escalation Risks and Escalatory Actions

The Senkaku Islands dispute carries the risk of unintended escalation. There have been incidents in the past where Chinese and Japanese vessels collided or engaged in dangerous maneuvers, increasing tensions between the two countries. Such incidents highlight the potential for miscalculations or escalatory actions that could further strain the bilateral relationship.

It is important to note that the behavior of the Chinese government towards Japan in the Senkaku Islands conflict can vary depending on the political climate, leadership dynamics, and broader regional and international considerations. While China maintains its assertive stance on the dispute, it has also sought to balance its actions to avoid an all-out conflict that could have far-reaching consequences. Efforts to manage the dispute through diplomatic channels, dialogue, and crisis management mechanisms remain crucial in preventing unintended escalation and finding a peaceful resolution.

2.4 The behavior of the Japanese government towards China

The behavior of the Japanese government towards China in the Senkaku Islands conflict has been characterized by a combination of firmness in defending its claims, diplomatic engagement, and efforts to manage tensions. The following sections outline some key aspects of Japan's behavior specifically related to the Senkaku Islands dispute.

2.4.1 Asserting Administrative Control

Japan asserts its administrative control over the Senkaku Islands, considering them an inherent part of its territory. The Japanese government refers to the islands as the Senkaku Islands and maintains a physical presence on the islands, with the Japanese Coast Guard patrolling the surrounding waters. Japan's stance emphasizes its sovereignty over the islands and its responsibility for their administration.

2.4.2 Diplomatic Engagement

Japan engages with China through diplomatic channels to manage the dispute and express its concerns. High-level meetings, diplomatic exchanges, and official statements are used to communicate Japan's position and seek avenues for dialogue. Japan has consistently emphasized the importance of peaceful resolution, adherence to international law, and the preservation of regional stability.

2.4.3 Security Cooperation and Alliances

Japan has developed security cooperation and alliances with other countries, most notably with the United States. Japan's security partnership with the U.S. is seen as a deterrent against potential aggression and provides a measure of assurance in the face of the territorial dispute. The U.S.-Japan security alliance signals Japan's commitment to defending its territory and interests.

2.4.4 Exercising Restraint

Japan seeks to manage tensions and prevent escalations in the Senkaku Islands dispute. The Japanese government has generally pursued a cautious approach, avoiding actions that could further strain relations with China. Japan's efforts to manage the conflict include diplomatic measures, de-escalation strategies, and crisis management mechanisms to prevent unintended incidents from spiraling into full-blown conflict.

2.4.5 Strengthening Defense Capabilities

Japan has taken steps to bolster its defense capabilities, including enhancing its maritime surveillance and response capabilities in the East China Sea. This includes increased patrols by the Japanese Coast Guard and improvements in intelligence gathering and monitoring activities. Japan's defense measures are primarily aimed at maintaining its presence and asserting its administrative control over the islands.

2.4.6 Economic Interactions

While the Senkaku Islands dispute has strained political relations between Japan and China, economic ties between the two countries remain significant. Japan and China are major trading partners and have substantial economic interdependence. Both countries recognize the importance of economic stability and have sought to balance economic interests with political differences.

It's important to note that Japan's behavior towards China in the Senkaku Islands conflict is influenced by its commitment to defending its territorial

integrity, preserving regional stability, and maintaining a delicate balance between asserting its claims and managing tensions. Japan's approach is guided by the principles of diplomacy, international law, and crisis management to prevent the dispute from escalating into a broader conflict. Efforts to engage in constructive dialogue, enhance crisis management mechanisms, and promote confidence-building measures are crucial in managing the conflict and working toward a peaceful resolution.

2.5 The Power Dispute in the Senkaku Islands

The Senkaku Islands dispute is a longstanding territorial conflict between China and Japan that revolves around power dynamics in the region. Both China and Japan assert their sovereignty over the islands, leading to a dispute that has implications for regional power balance and strategic interests. The conflict is rooted in historical and geopolitical factors, as well as the potential resources and economic benefits associated with the islands. The dispute has become a manifestation of the power struggle between China and Japan in East Asia. (Jash 2016)

Both countries view control over the islands as crucial for asserting their influence in the region, safeguarding their maritime claims, and securing access to potentially valuable resources such as oil, gas, and fishing grounds. The contestation over the islands is not only about physical control but also about projecting power and maintaining national pride. It has resulted in heightened tensions, nationalist sentiments, and occasional clashes between Chinese and

Japanese vessels. The involvement of other regional actors, such as the United States, further adds to the power dynamics of this dispute. The U.S. has a security alliance with Japan and has expressed its commitment to supporting Japan should there be any conflict over the islands, which has implications for the broader regional power balance and stability. (Zhou 2015).

2.5.1 Is Taiwan involved in the power conflict in the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands?

Taiwan is involved in the power conflict over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Taiwan, officially known as the Republic of China (ROC), has asserted its sovereignty over the islands and considers them to be part of its territory. (Wei 2014) However, Japan, officially known as the State of Japan, currently administers the islands and considers them to be an integral part of its territory.

Taiwan's involvement in the power conflict includes the following aspects:

- *Historical claims:* Taiwan argues that the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands have historically been part of its territory. It claims that the islands were ceded to Japan along with Taiwan under the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 and should be returned to Taiwanese control. (Tan 2023)

- *Political stance:* The Taiwanese government consistently asserts its sovereignty over the islands and actively supports its claims in various international forums. Taiwan's position aligns with China's, which also claims sovereignty over the islands. (Kuok 2022)

- *Diplomatic measures:* Taiwan engages in diplomatic actions to assert its claims. This includes making official statements, releasing position papers, and presenting

historical evidence to support its stance on the sovereignty of the islands. (Ratner 2022)

- *Patrol activities*: Taiwan has occasionally dispatched naval patrols in the vicinity of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands to demonstrate its presence and assert its claims. These patrols are intended to safeguard Taiwan's interests and maintain its position in the power conflict.

It is important to note that the power conflict primarily involves China, Japan, and Taiwan, with each party asserting its sovereignty claims over the islands. The situation remains a contentious issue in the region, contributing to tensions between the involved parties.

2.6 Attempts to Settle the Dispute of the Senkaku Islands by International Organizations

There have been attempts to address the dispute over the Senkaku Islands in various international forums and organizations. However, it's important to note that the nature of the dispute is primarily bilateral between Japan and China, and both countries have generally been reluctant to involve international organizations in the resolution process. Nevertheless, a few examples of international involvement related to the Senkaku Islands dispute are outline in the following sections.

2.6.1 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1994

The United Nations has not played a direct role in resolving the dispute, as it primarily focuses on issues related to international peace and security,

development, and human rights. However, both Japan and China have used international legal frameworks and conventions related to maritime boundaries to support their claims. These legal arguments often include references to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which provides guidelines for maritime rights and territorial claims. Nevertheless, the UN has not issued an official ruling on the sovereignty of the islands. (Miranda and Maljak 2022)

2.6.2 International Court of Justice (ICJ)

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, and it has the authority to hear cases related to disputes between states. While the ICJ can potentially provide a mechanism for resolving territorial disputes, neither Japan nor China has referred the Senkaku Islands dispute to the ICJ for arbitration. Both countries prefer bilateral negotiations and diplomatic channels to address the issue. It's worth noting that states need to consent to ICJ jurisdiction in such cases.

2.6.3 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

While the Senkaku Islands are not within the ASEAN region, the dispute's impact on regional stability has led some ASEAN countries to express concerns about tensions in the East China Sea. ASEAN has not played a direct role in mediating the dispute, but it has encouraged dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflicts. The organization's principles of non-interference in member states' internal affairs limit its involvement in disputes outside its immediate geographical focus. (Simões 2022)

2.6.4 Track II Diplomacy:

Various regional forums and track II diplomatic initiatives have provided opportunities for scholars, experts, and officials from Japan, China, and other relevant countries to engage in discussions. (Wong, Siu, and Scholar 2023) These dialogues aim to build mutual understanding and explore potential avenues for cooperation. While these initiatives contribute to building trust and providing alternative perspectives, they have not resulted in a formal resolution due to the complex nature of the dispute.

2.6.5 Bilateral Dialogues:

Japan and China have engaged in bilateral diplomatic talks to address the dispute. These dialogues have taken place at various levels, including high-level meetings and working-level discussions. While these talks have helped manage tensions and prevent escalations, they have not led to a definitive resolution of the sovereignty issue. The deeply entrenched national interests and historical factors underlying the dispute make finding common ground challenging.

2.6.6 Shelving the Dispute:

Both Japan and China have recognized the potential dangers of allowing the dispute to escalate and have taken steps to manage the conflict. At certain points, they have chosen to "shelve" the dispute by focusing on other aspects of their bilateral relations, such as economic cooperation and cultural exchanges. This approach has helped prevent immediate escalations but does not provide a long-term solution to the sovereignty disagreement.

It's worth noting that despite these international efforts, the Senkaku Islands dispute remains unresolved, and the two countries continue to hold opposing positions on the sovereignty of the islands. The primary focus of negotiations and discussions has been on managing tensions, preventing incidents, and maintaining stability in the region.

CHAPTER III

**ANALYSIS OF THE CONFLICT TENSION BETWEEN CHINA AND
JAPAN OVER THE PRIVATE PURCHASE OF THE SENKAKU ISLANDS
IN 2012 VIEWED THROUGH CONFLICT ESCALATION THEORY**

The previous chapter mentioned an escalation of conflict between China and Japan over the purchase of the Senkaku Islands. To answer the question of this study, the author used Conflict Escalation Theory by Austrian psychologist Friedrich Glasl to describe the progressive stages through which conflicts can intensify from their initial mild state to more severe and potentially destructive levels. to analyze this issue and provide a framework to understand how conflicts between parties can intensify over time. The theory and framework examine the various factors and dynamics that contribute to the escalation of tensions and hostile actions between parties involved in a dispute.

3.1 Hardening

Stage 1: Hardening is the initial stage in the nine-step model of Glasl conflict augmentation. The parties involved in the conflict begin to develop rigid stances and attitudes, or inflexible positions, in this stage and it is where the parties begin to adopt inflexible and less open positions in considering other points of view. The parties are more concerned with defending their position than seeking common ground or understanding. Chinese officials consistently reiterated the historical basis for their claims and emphasized their determination to safeguard what they viewed as Chinese territory. Chinese officials and state

media used strong and often nationalistic rhetoric to convey the seriousness of their position. They framed the issue as a matter of national sovereignty and pride, resonating with domestic sentiments and promoting unity among the Chinese population. China escalated its maritime presence around the disputed islands during this stage. Chinese government vessels, including maritime law enforcement ships, were frequently dispatched to patrol the waters around the Senkaku Islands. This demonstrated China's determination to physically assert its presence in the disputed area. And China took diplomatic and economic measures to assert its position. For instance, there were reports of Chinese authorities detaining Japanese nationals and businessmen in China during the height of the conflict, potentially using these actions as political leverage. While China's behavior became more assertive, there were also diplomatic efforts to communicate its position to Japan and the international community. However, these efforts were often intertwined with China's firm stance, making it challenging to find common ground for dialogue. The Chinese government capitalized on public sentiment to reinforce its position. Nationalistic sentiments were stoked, and anti-Japanese protests were allowed to take place, which not only demonstrated public support for the government's stance but also conveyed to Japan the potential consequences of further escalation.

During the "Hardening" stage of conflict escalation in the Senkaku Islands dispute between China and Japan, Japan's behavior demonstrated several key elements of this theory. The "Hardening" stage is characterized by increased commitment, determination, and a reduced willingness to compromise. Japan's behavior during the "Hardening" stage reflected a clear commitment to its

territorial claims over the Senkaku Islands. The Japanese government's decision to purchase and nationalize some of the islands conveyed its determination to maintain administrative control and sovereignty. Furthermore, Japan responded to China's assertiveness by increasing its maritime presence around the disputed islands. The deployment of coast guard vessels and naval assets demonstrated Japan's resolve to physically protect its territorial interests. Japan sought to garner international support for its position through diplomatic channels. The government aimed to convey its perspective on the dispute, highlight its historical evidence, and secure international acknowledgment of its sovereignty. The Japanese government emphasized its commitment to protecting its territorial integrity. This was done not only to convey a firm stance to China but also to unify the Japanese population behind the government's actions. Additionally, Japanese officials used firm rhetoric to convey Japan's determination. While diplomatic efforts were made to find resolutions, the language employed highlighted Japan's unwillingness to compromise on its territorial claims.

In Stage 1 of Conflict Escalation Theory, known as Hardening, the focus is on the hardening of positions and the assertion of sovereignty claims. In the context of the Hong Kong activists' journey to the disputed islands, Stage 1 represents the initial phase of the conflict where the activists firmly assert Hong Kong's claims to sovereignty over the islands. (Kang-chung 2022) During this stage, the activists may be driven by a range of motivations, including nationalist sentiments, a desire to protect Hong Kong's interests, or the belief in the historical or legal rights of Hong Kong to the disputed territory. They may view the islands as an integral part of Hong Kong's identity and sought to defend that identity

through their actions. Activists' assertions of sovereignty can manifest in different ways. They may engage in public discourse, media campaigns, or social media advocacy to raise awareness about Hong Kong's claims and garner support for their cause. They may emphasize historical, cultural, or legal arguments to support Hong Kong's position and challenge the claims of opposing parties.

Additionally, Stage 1 may involve symbolic gestures or acts such as those that symbolize Hong Kong's ownership or control over the disputed islands. For example, the activists may raise flags, organize events, or make public declarations asserting Hong Kong's sovereignty rights. (KAWASE 2022) During this stage, the activists may encounter opposition and criticism from opposing parties who hold different views on the sovereignty of the disputed islands. The conflict begins to take shape as positions become entrenched, and both sides assert their claims more forcefully. It is important to note that in Stage 1, the conflict is still primarily characterized by nonviolent actions, such as public statements and symbolic gestures. However, as the conflict progresses and moves into subsequent stages, the potential for escalation and the use of more confrontational tactics increases.

3.2 Debate and Polemics

In this stage, the conflict becomes more visible, and parties engage in debates and arguments. The focus now is on proving oneself right and the other party wrong. Communication is often characterized by defensiveness, criticism, and attempts to undermine the opponent's arguments.

China's behavior during the "Debate and Polemics" stage of the Senkaku Islands conflict aligned with the principles of conflict escalation theory. Especially, Historical and Legal Claims. China invoked historical documents, ancient maps, and cultural heritage to support its sovereignty claims over the Senkaku Islands. By presenting these claims as deeply rooted in historical precedent, China aimed to establish a legitimate basis for its position. Chinese authorities and state media employed nationalistic rhetoric to generate strong public sentiment in favor of China's claims. This rhetoric emphasized historical injustices, portraying China as the rightful owner of the islands and appealing to patriotic sentiments. China's nationalistic narrative resonated with the domestic population, fostering unity and a shared sense of purpose. The portrayal of the dispute as a matter of national pride aimed to ensure public support for the government's stance. China used diplomatic channels, official statements, and international forums to present its perspective on the dispute. By engaging with the international community, China aimed to garner support for its claims and counter Japan's narrative. Which has Condemnation of Japan's Actions, China criticized Japan's purchase and nationalization of the islands as provocative and illegal. This condemnation aimed to position China as the aggrieved party and cast doubt on Japan's actions. China emphasized the cultural and historical significance of the islands to Chinese maritime history. This narrative connected the dispute to China's national identity and historical continuity, reinforcing its claims. Also China employed economic measures, such as boycotting Japanese products and canceling official visits, as a form of pressure. These actions were intended to signal China's resolve and willingness to take economic measures in

support of its claims. China engaged in diplomatic activities to communicate its perspective on the dispute. Official statements and diplomatic exchanges were used to articulate China's claims while highlighting its commitment to dialogue. China presented its claims within the framework of international law, emphasizing its adherence to established norms and principles. This approach aimed to portray China as a responsible actor seeking a peaceful resolution.

Japan's approach involved constructing a narrative that highlighted its historical and legal claims to the islands. The Japanese government consistently referred to historical records dating back to the late 19th century to underscore its administrative control over the islands during that period. By framing the dispute within a historical context, Japan aimed to establish the legitimacy of its position. Japan emphasized international law and legal agreements to support its stance. It cited treaties and documents that it believed substantiated its territorial claims. This approach aimed to present Japan's position as being grounded in recognized legal principles, appealing to the international community's sense of legality. In addition, Japan actively engaged with international organizations and forums to present its case. This included addressing the United Nations and other diplomatic platforms to articulate its position, highlight China's actions, and garner international support for its claims. Also Japan utilized media channels to communicate its perspective. Japanese officials provided interviews, statements, and op-eds to present their viewpoint and counter any misinformation or biased coverage. Japan's diplomatic efforts were aimed at countering China's narrative and portraying itself as a responsible and law-abiding actor in the conflict. By engaging in diplomatic dialogues, Japan sought to convey its commitment to

resolving the dispute peacefully. The Japanese government underscored the historical and cultural significance of the islands to foster domestic consensus. By portraying the islands as an intrinsic part of Japan's national heritage, it aimed to gain public support and create unity in the face of external challenges. Japan leveraged its alliance with the United States to garner international support and legitimacy. The U.S. acknowledged Japan's administrative control over the islands under the U.S.-Japan security treaty, lending credibility to Japan's position. While actively presenting its case, Japan also worked to prevent further escalation. It aimed to balance its assertive stance with diplomacy to avoid the conflict spiraling into more dangerous territory.

The incident of Japanese activists asserting their claims on the disputed islands in "Escalating Tensions: Japanese Activists Assert their Claims on the Disputed Islands" can be related to Stage 2: Debate and Polemics in Conflict Escalation Theory. This stage is characterized by verbal disputes and diplomatic negotiations as the parties involved engage in discussions to advance their interests and resolve the conflict. In this scenario, the Japanese activists assert their claims to the disputed islands, which leads to an escalation of tensions. This escalation prompts a response from opposing parties, such as the government or activists from other countries involved in the dispute. During Stage 2, both sides may engage in a battle of words to support their claims and counter the arguments put forth by the opposing party. The Japanese activists may have used public discourse, media campaigns, or legal arguments to strengthen their position and challenge the claims of other parties involved in the territorial dispute. (Villar 2013) At the same time, diplomatic channels may be utilized to seek dialogue and

negotiation in an attempt to find a resolution to the conflict. The Japanese government or representatives of the activists may have engaged in diplomatic discussions with other countries or international organizations to assert Japan's claims and seek recognition and support for their position.

Stage 2 is characterized by a mix of communication, negotiation, and potentially confrontational rhetoric as the parties involved battle for their respective interests. It is a crucial stage where the conflict moves beyond symbolic gestures or initial assertions and enters a phase where dialogue and diplomatic efforts are employed to further their positions.

3.3 Actions, Not Words

In the "Actions, Not Words" stage of conflict escalation theory, the focus shifts from rhetoric and diplomatic posturing to actual actions taken by the parties involved in the conflict. This stage often involves concrete steps that demonstrate a commitment to the conflict's goals and a willingness to back up words with deeds. The first reason is Maritime Patrols and Law Enforcement. China's behavior in this stage included the frequent dispatch of maritime law enforcement vessels to the waters around the Senkaku Islands. (Furuya 2021) These actions demonstrated China's commitment to assert its presence and sovereignty over the disputed area, going beyond mere rhetoric. China engaged in coordinated patrols by multiple vessels in the vicinity of the islands. These actions were designed to project a consistent and sustained presence, signaling China's determination and potentially wearing down Japan's capacity to respond. Chinese vessels, including coast guard ships, occasionally entered Japan's claimed territorial waters around

the islands. For example, in 2012, a Chinese fishing trawler collided with Japanese Coast Guard vessels near the islands. This incident resulted in the arrest of the trawler's captain and triggered a diplomatic crisis. In addition to maritime actions, China also conducted airspace intrusions in the vicinity of the Senkaku Islands. This included the deployment of military aircraft, further escalating tensions in the region. China engaged in military exercises in the East China Sea, including areas near the Senkaku Islands. These drills showcased China's military capabilities and underscored its readiness to defend its perceived interests. China invested in infrastructure improvements for its maritime and naval forces, such as the construction of new coast guard vessels. These developments signaled China's intention to maintain a sustained presence in the disputed waters. While not solely related to the Senkaku Islands, China's establishment of an ADIZ in the East China Sea, covering the disputed islands, marked a significant action that further heightened tensions and raised concerns about the potential for unintended military incidents. (Jinping 2015)

Japan's behavior during this stage included the Japanese government's decision to purchase and nationalize some of the Senkaku Islands. This action demonstrated Japan's commitment to maintaining its administrative control and sovereignty over the disputed territory. Japan increased the presence of its maritime assets, including coast guard vessels and naval forces, in the waters around the Senkaku Islands. This reinforced Japan's determination to protect its territorial claims and effectively countered China's assertive actions. Japanese coast guard vessels conducted regular patrols and monitoring of the area around the islands. These actions demonstrated Japan's proactive efforts to monitor and

respond to any potential intrusions or incursions. Japan responded to incidents with assertiveness. For example, when a Chinese fishing trawler collided with Japanese Coast Guard vessels in 2012, Japan arrested the trawler's captain, sending a strong message about upholding its jurisdiction in the area. Japan took legal and administrative measures to solidify its position. This included designating the islands as a "municipality" within Okinawa Prefecture, further emphasizing Japan's sovereignty. While actively asserting its territorial claims, Japan also engaged in diplomatic efforts to manage the conflict. It sought to convey its position to the international community and gain support for its stance. Japan leveraged its alliance with the United States for security and support. This included cooperation in intelligence-sharing and joint military exercises, showcasing Japan's commitment to protect its interests. Japan invested in the enhancement of its maritime capabilities, such as upgrading coast guard vessels and improving surveillance systems. These actions showcased Japan's commitment to maintaining control over the disputed waters.

The issue of Japan's controversial decision to purchase the disputed islands to diffuse territorial tensions is most relevant to Stage 3 Conflict Escalation Theory Actions, Not Words. Stage 3 is characterized by parties involved in the conflict moving beyond verbal disputes and taking concrete actions to assert their claims and interests. Japan's decision to purchase the disputed islands represents a tangible action aimed at solidifying Japan's control and asserting its sovereignty over the territory. By acquiring the islands, Japan sent a clear message to the opposing parties that it was willing to take proactive steps to reinforce its claims. (Wee 2012) This action can be seen as a demonstration of Japan's commitment to

its territorial integrity and its determination to protect its interests. The decision to purchase the disputed islands also had the potential to escalate tensions. It challenged the claims and actions of opposing parties, who may view Japan's move as an aggressive act or a violation of their own claims. This could lead to a cycle of action and reaction, with opposing parties responding to Japan's purchase through their own assertive measures. Additionally, the controversial nature of Japan's decision can triggered strong emotional responses from the public and various interest groups involved in the territorial dispute. This led to increased activism, protests, and heightened public sentiment on the issue, further escalating tensions.

3.4 Images and Coalitions

In the "Images and Coalitions" stage of conflict escalation theory, parties involved in a conflict aim to shape public perceptions, build alliances, and garner international support for their positions. This involves leveraging media, diplomatic efforts, and coalition-building strategies. Japan engaged in media campaigns to present its perspective on the dispute. The Japanese government provided information through various media outlets to shape public opinion domestically and internationally. Japan used diplomatic channels to convey its position to other countries and international organizations. By articulating its stance through official diplomatic channels, Japan aimed to influence international opinion. Japan strengthened its relationships with like-minded countries that shared concerns about regional stability and adherence to international law. The U.S.-Japan alliance played a key role in this context, with the U.S. acknowledging

Japan's administrative control over the islands. Japan engaged with regional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to discuss the dispute and garner support for its position. (Simões 2022) By doing so, Japan aimed to create a coalition of support within the region. Japan brought the dispute to multilateral forums like the United Nations and international conferences. By presenting its perspective in these forums, Japan aimed to gain international acknowledgment of its stance and concerns. Japan responded diplomatically to China's assertive actions. For instance, when China established an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) covering the disputed islands, Japan registered its objections and worked to rally international opposition. (Jinping 2015) The Japanese government communicated its position to the domestic population to foster unity. This unity was crucial in conveying to the world that Japan stood firm in defending its interests. Japan highlighted its economic and strategic interests in the region, stressing the importance of maintaining stability for regional development and trade. This framing aimed to appeal to countries with shared economic interests. Japan sometimes emphasized the cultural heritage of the Senkaku Islands as part of its narrative. By portraying the islands as part of Japan's historical and cultural identity, Japan aimed to gain sympathy and understanding.

China engaged in media campaigns to present its perspective on the dispute. Chinese state-controlled media played a role in shaping domestic and international narratives to support China's claims and portray Japan's actions negatively. China used nationalistic rhetoric to rally domestic support and frame the issue as a matter of national pride and sovereignty. This resonated with the

Chinese population and created unity behind the government's stance. China conveyed its position through diplomatic channels and international platforms. By presenting its perspective in international forums, China aimed to influence global opinions and build support for its claims. China sought to build alliances with regional partners, emphasizing shared interests in maintaining stability and opposing actions it viewed as provocative. Building alliances aimed to strengthen China's position in regional discussions. China's economic influence was sometimes used as a tool to garner support. It aimed to build coalitions with countries by leveraging economic ties and signaling potential economic consequences for those supporting Japan's position. China emphasized the historical and cultural significance of the Senkaku Islands to its identity. This narrative aimed to create empathy and understanding among international audiences about China's perspective. China sometimes used legal arguments within international frameworks to support its claims. While UNCLOS primarily addresses maritime issues, China used legal language to assert its position and portray Japan's actions as violations. (Miranda and Maljak 2022)

Stage 4: Images and Coalitions focuses on the efforts of parties involved in the conflict to shape public opinion, gather support, and form coalitions to strengthen their positions. In the scenario described, the actions of Chinese surveillance ships in the Senkaku Islands aimed to assert China's territorial claims and influence public perception of the dispute. During Stage 4, the involved parties may engage in various communication strategies to shape the narrative surrounding a dispute. This can include media campaigns, public statements, and other forms of information dissemination to portray their position as legitimate

and garner support domestically and internationally. (Ristagno 2023) In the context of the Chinese surveillance ships, China may use this presence as a means to project strength and establish an image of control over the disputed islands. By publicizing the presence of the ships and asserting their claims, China aimed to influence public perception and create an image of legitimacy for its actions.

Furthermore, Stage 4 involves forming coalitions or alliances with like-minded individuals, organizations, or international actors who share similar concerns or interests. China may seek support from other countries or organizations that were sympathetic to its territorial claims or had shared geopolitical interests. By building coalitions, China aimed to strengthen its position and gain backing for its stance in the dispute. At the same time, the actions of Chinese surveillance ships elicited responses from other parties involved in the territorial dispute, such as Japan and other countries supporting Japan's claims. These parties may have also engaged in communication strategies to counter China's narrative and gather support for their own position.

In the scenario described, the landing of Japanese activists on the Diaoyu Islands amidst anti-Japanese protests contributed to the formation of polarized identities and the strengthening of coalitions on both sides of the conflict. The actions of the activists reinforce the Japanese narrative of asserting sovereignty over the disputed islands, while the anti-Japanese protests in response reflect a collective identity and mobilization against Japan's claims. (McCurry and Branigan 2012) These actions and reactions contribute to the solidification of opposing positions, as each side reinforces its own image and narrative while

vilifying the other. The formation of coalitions or alliances, whether among activists or within the broader public, further polarizes a conflict and makes resolution more challenging. Stage 4 is a critical stage in conflict escalation as it sets the foundation for further escalation. The construction of strong identities and the formation of coalitions create a dynamic where compromise becomes difficult and the conflict becomes more entrenched.

3.5 Loss of Face

In this stage, the focus shifts from the substantive issues to preserving one's honor and reputation. Parties become more concerned with avoiding humiliation and maintaining their self-esteem. Actions and statements are often driven by the need to save face, which can further escalate tensions and hinder constructive resolution.

China faced internal pressure to maintain a strong stance on the Senkaku Islands issue due to the significance attached to national sovereignty and historical claims. Backing down might be perceived as a loss of face domestically. China's portrayal of the issue in nationalistic terms created an environment where any perceived concession could be seen as compromising national pride and historical justice. Therefore, China aspired to portray itself as a strong regional leader and defender of its territorial claims. Backing down could be seen as weakening China's image as a powerful and resolute nation. China's assertive actions in the early stages of the conflict, including maritime patrols and territorial assertions, established a precedent. Changing course could be interpreted as inconsistency, undermining China's reputation. China's actions in the Senkaku Islands dispute

were also viewed by neighboring countries, including allies and rivals. Any perception of backing down might affect China's position and credibility in the broader regional context. China's efforts to build alliances and garner international support would be compromised if it were perceived as losing face. Allies and partners might question China's commitment and reliability in the face of adversity. Maintaining a strong stance on the dispute helped China foster domestic unity and distract from internal challenges. A perceived loss of face could lead to internal criticism and instability. China's media campaigns and public messaging created a narrative of determination and assertiveness. Any shift away from this stance might be viewed as a loss of face in the eyes of the public. China's connection of the dispute to historical narratives of sovereignty and identity made it difficult to backtrack without facing criticism for compromising these important historical claims.

Japan faced internal pressure to maintain a strong stance on the Senkaku Islands issue due to public sentiment and historical ties. (Kim 2015) A perceived loss of face might lead to criticism from the public and political opponents. Japan portrayed the Senkaku Islands as a matter of historical and cultural importance. Any perceived concession might be interpreted as relinquishing a symbol of national heritage. The dispute was framed as a matter of preserving Japan's national identity and sovereignty. Backing down could be seen as compromising Japan's image as a strong and resolute nation. Japan aimed to demonstrate its leadership in the region and among its allies. A perceived loss of face might weaken Japan's image as a reliable and steadfast partner. Japanese society's expectation of assertive actions to defend territorial claims created pressure on the

government to avoid any actions that could be seen as submission. Japan's alliance with the United States played a role in maintaining credibility. Japan's image on the global stage was tied to its behavior in the dispute. A perceived loss of face might affect Japan's diplomatic credibility and influence in international forums.

Stage 5: Loss of Face is characterized by the intensification of hostilities, demonstrations, and acts of protest by the public, aimed at expressing discontent and exerting pressure on the opposing party. In this scenario, the anti-Japanese protests in China's cities reflect the public's anger and frustration towards Japan's actions or perceived offenses. (Lim 2012) During Stage 5, public outrage often stems from a combination of historical, cultural, and nationalistic sentiments. The protests may be triggered by specific events or actions, such as territorial disputes or controversial decisions made by the opposing party. In the case of anti-Japanese protests in China's cities, these demonstrations represent a form of public expression of anger towards Japan's perceived aggression or policies. Protests can involve large gatherings, marches, and acts of civil disobedience, which aim to disrupt normalcy and draw attention to the issue at hand. They can have various consequences, both positive and negative, depending on their scale and impact. On one hand, they can serve as a means for the public to voice their concerns and pressure their government to take a stronger stance against Japan. The protests can also create solidarity among the demonstrators and galvanize nationalistic sentiments.

Actions and events that lead to humiliation, damage reputation, or are perceived as face, can be a significant blow to the parties' self-esteem and pride, leading to increased tension and a desire to restore honor or save face. The

Japanese firms temporarily shutting down operations in China, can be seen as a consequence of the escalating conflict between Japan and China. The economic fallout and shutdown of Japanese firms in China can also be viewed as a move by Japanese businesses to protect their interests and limit further damage to their reputation and financial stability. Temporary shutdown of operations is a concession or a step taken to avoid further confrontations or negative consequences in the face of mounting tensions. Here it reflected a recognition that the conflict had reached a point where continuing normal operations in China had become untenable or too risky. (McCurry and Branigan 2012) By temporarily shutting down operations, Japanese firms hoped to mitigate potential damage, preserve their long-term business interests, and demonstrate a willingness to address the concerns or demands of the Chinese side. It was a strategic move aimed at avoiding further loss of face and protecting their reputation in the Chinese market. (White and Buckley 2012) The act of shutting down operations had a significant impact on the perception of power, influence, and reputation of the Japanese firms involved. It may have seen as a concession or retreat, which can be interpreted as a loss of face in conflict dynamics. However, it's important to note that Stage 5: Loss of Face is not the final stage of the conflict escalation model. The response to the economic fallout and the actions taken by both parties in subsequent stages determines whether the conflict escalates further or moves towards de-escalation and resolution.

3.6 Strategies of Threats

In the "Strategies of Threats" stage of conflict escalation theory, parties involved in a conflict use various forms of threats and coercion to achieve their objectives. This stage involves a range of actions intended to increase pressure on the opposing party and compel them to comply with certain demands. Japan increased the presence of its maritime and naval assets around the Senkaku Islands. This demonstrated its readiness to respond to any perceived threats or provocations and signaled its determination to defend its territory. Japan closely monitored activities in the disputed area, such as Chinese vessels and aircraft. By doing so, Japan conveyed its ability to gather intelligence and respond swiftly to any potential escalation. Japan's assertive posture and maritime patrols were intended to deter China from taking actions that could escalate the conflict. This strategy aimed to raise the costs and risks associated with further assertive behavior. Japan leveraged its alliance with the United States to enhance its deterrence capabilities. The U.S.-Japan security treaty served as a deterrent signal to potential aggressors, including China. Japan occasionally used legal and diplomatic language to communicate its position forcefully. (Smith 2021) These threats aimed to underscore Japan's commitment to its stance and to signal that it would not back down. Japan engaged with regional partners to discuss concerns related to the dispute. Collaborative efforts aimed to build collective pressure and highlight potential negative consequences for any party escalating the situation. Japan sought international support through diplomatic channels and multilateral forums. By rallying allies and garnering international attention, Japan aimed to present a united front against any potential escalatory actions. Japan balanced its

assertive posture with diplomatic efforts to avoid accidental escalation. This strategy aimed to communicate its resolve while also signaling a willingness to engage in dialogue. Japan emphasized its preparedness to respond to threats. This communicated to the public and to external actors that Japan was committed to protecting its interests and was ready to take necessary actions.

China increased the frequency and intensity of its maritime patrols in the vicinity of the Senkaku Islands. (Zhou 2015) These patrols were a form of coercive action that aimed to demonstrate China's presence, challenge Japan's administrative control, and assert its sovereignty claims. China conducted airspace incursions near the Senkaku Islands using military aircraft. These actions were intended to exert pressure and demonstrate China's military capabilities while challenging Japan's control over airspace. China engaged in naval exercises in the East China Sea, including areas near the Senkaku Islands. These exercises showcased China's maritime capabilities and conveyed its readiness for potential confrontations. China issued diplomatic warnings to Japan against actions that it deemed provocative or escalators. These warnings conveyed China's concerns and signaled its intentions to respond if its interests were threatened. While not exclusively in this stage, China used economic measures as a form of pressure. For instance, it used its economic influence to signal potential consequences for countries that supported Japan's stance. China occasionally used legal arguments and diplomatic language to assert its position more forcefully. These threats aimed to emphasize China's determination and willingness to defend its claims. China engaged in information warfare by using media and communication channels to frame its narrative, present its perspective, and counter Japan's claims. This aimed

to shape global perceptions and gain international support. China engaged with neighboring countries to discuss its concerns and garner regional support. Collaborative efforts aimed to strengthen China's position and create a unified front in the face of perceived provocations. China used propaganda and domestic messaging to foster a sense of national unity and rally public support behind the government's stance. This unity strengthened China's position and conveyed its resolve.

In the scenario described, the violent outbursts in anti-Japanese protests across mainland cities represent a significant escalation in the intensity and destructive nature of the demonstrations. During Stage 6, emotions run high, and the conflict becomes characterized by acts of aggression and violence. (Lim 2012) Initially peaceful protests may escalate to a point where they become violent clashes, vandalism, looting, or other destructive acts. The violent outbursts in the anti-Japanese protests led to confrontations with law enforcement, injuries, property damage, and disruptions to public order. The protesters may have specifically targeted Japanese-owned businesses, properties, or symbols associated with Japan as a means to express their anger and resistance. These violent outbursts are driven by intense emotions, a sense of injustice, and a desire to retaliate against Japan. They represented a dangerous phase in conflict escalation, they could perpetuate a cycle of violence and further escalate tensions between the two parties. It's important to note that Stage 6 involves limited destructive blows, meaning that the scale and extent of violence and damage are not yet widespread or all-encompassing.

**Table 1 Analysis the Escalation conflict and Timeline that occurred in 2012
after Japan announced the purchase of the Senkaku Islands**

Conflict Escalation theory Stage	Date	Timeline
Hardening	On August 14, 2012	Hong Kong Activists' Journey to the Disputed Islands: A Defiant Stand for Sovereignty
Debate and Polemics	On August 19, 2012	Escalating Tensions: Japanese Activists Assert their Claims on the Disputed Islands
Actions, Not Words	On September 10, 2012	Japan's Controversial Decision: Purchasing the Disputed Islands to Diffuse Territorial Tensions
Images and Coalitions	On September 14, 2012	Escalating Tensions: Chinese Surveillance Ships Assert Territorial Claims in the Senkaku Islands
Loss of Face	On September 15, 2012 On September 17, 2012	Unleashing Public Fury: Anti-Japanese Protests Rock China's Cities Economic Fallout: Japanese Firms Temporarily Shut Down Operations in China
Strategies of Threats	On September 18, 2012	Simmering Tensions: Japanese Activists Land on the Diaoyu Islands Amidst Anti-Japanese Protests

Source : (SCMP Reporter 2012)

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

4.1 Conclusion

Analyzing the dispute over the Senkaku Islands in 2012 through the lens of Conflict Escalation Theory doesn't necessarily result in identifying a clear "winner" or "loser" in the traditional sense. due to the complexities of the conflict and the nature of the escalation process. Conflict Escalation Theory provides a framework to understand how conflicts progress through different stages, but it doesn't always lead to a straightforward outcome of victory or defeat. Conflict escalation theory helps to understand the dynamics and progression of the conflict, rather than assigning a definitive outcome. In conclusion, the escalation of the conflict between China and Japan over the purchase of the Senkaku Islands from the private sector in 2012 has resulted in increased tensions and strained diplomatic relations between the two countries. The Japanese government's private purchase of the islands was seen by China as a provocative move and a violation of its territorial integrity, deepening the pre-existing mistrust between the two nations.

The escalation of the conflict can be understood through the lens of Conflict Escalation Theory, specifically, Glasl's Nine-Stage Model. This model formulated by Friedrich Glasl, identifies nine stages in the escalation of a conflict. Based on the analysis of the tension between China and Japan over the purchase of the Senkaku Islands in 2012 the tension of this issue occurred in stages 1 to 6 of Glasl's Nine-Stage Model. The analysis can be summarized as follows. First are

Hardening and Debate: Japan's decision to purchase the islands from private Japanese owners indicated a level of hardening of its position. The move demonstrated a proactive stance to assert its administrative control over the islands and reinforce its sovereignty claims. China's strong protests and condemnation showcased its opposition to Japan's actions. This marked a hardening of its position as well, emphasizing its historical claims and challenging Japan's sovereignty. Actions, Not Words: The actual purchase of the islands was a significant action that went beyond verbal debates. It was a concrete step to assert its control. China responded by increasing maritime patrols and surveillance activities around the islands, demonstrating its intention to assert its territorial claims through tangible actions. Images and Coalitions: Japan aimed to present itself as a responsible administrator of the islands, emphasizing its legal ownership. It attempted to gain international understanding for its actions. China used nationalist sentiments and historical narratives to galvanize domestic support and position itself as standing up against perceived historical injustices. Loss of Face: Both Japan and China were concerned about the potential loss of face. They faced pressures from domestic audiences to not appear weak or back down from their respective claims. And the last stage is Strategy of Annihilation: The dispute did not escalate to the extreme "Strategy of Annihilation" stage, which involves more aggressive actions to weaken or harm the opponent. While there were strong protests and increased patrols, the dispute did not escalate to armed conflict.

From a political perspective, Japan's government aimed to maintain its administrative control over the islands and prevent further escalation. By purchasing the islands from private Japanese owners, Japan sought to assert its

sovereignty and reinforce its territorial claims. While the move was criticized by China and led to anti-Japanese protests, Japan succeeded in maintaining its control over the islands and preventing them from falling into more radical hands. Contrary to China's political response involved strong protests and diplomatic condemnation of Japan's actions. China used the dispute to bolster nationalist sentiments and portray itself as standing up against historical injustices. China's government succeeded in rallying public support and conveying its resolve to assert its territorial claims, even though the immediate outcome did not change the islands' ownership. Therefore, The political dynamics in the region were influenced by the dispute. Neighboring countries, including South Korea and the Philippines, closely watched the situation and evaluated their own territorial disputes with China and other nations. The United States, which has a security alliance with Japan, expressed concerns about the escalation and emphasized the importance of peaceful resolution. In Legal Perspective, Japan has maintained that it has legal ownership and administrative control over the Senkaku Islands. It argues that the islands were legally incorporated into Japanese territory following World War II. (Murase 2013) Japan's actions in 2012, such as the purchase of the islands, were intended to reinforce its legal position. Nevertheless, China asserts that the islands have been part of its territory since ancient times and were unjustly taken by Japan during the First Sino-Japanese War in the late 19th century. (McCormack 2016) China's legal claims are based on historical records and documents. China's government used the legal argument to challenge Japan's actions and assert its own sovereignty. The international community remains divided on the legal status of the islands. While Japan maintains administrative

control, China's claims are supported by some historical and legal arguments. The dispute underscores the complexity of applying international law to longstanding territorial conflicts.

While neither Japan nor China achieved a clear victory in the dispute over the Senkaku Islands in 2012, both sides made efforts to reinforce their respective positions from political and legal perspectives. The dynamics within the region were shaped by nationalist sentiments, historical narratives, diplomatic maneuvers, and considerations of regional stability. The dispute highlighted the challenges of reconciling political and legal claims in the context of historical grievances and complex geopolitical dynamics. (Lipin 2012)

Overall, the application of Conflict Escalation Theory to the 2012 Senkaku Islands dispute illustrates how the conflict progressed through different stages of escalation. Both sides took actions and exhibited behaviors that aligned with the theory's stages. However, the dispute did not reach the most extreme stages of violence or complete breakdown of communication. The absence of armed conflict, despite the tensions, can be considered a "win" in the sense that both sides managed to avoid a full-scale confrontation. Nonetheless, the broader conflict's underlying issues and competing claims remained unresolved, reflecting the complex nature of territorial disputes and the challenges of achieving a clear "winner" or "loser."

4.2 Recommendations

This research discusses the escalating tensions surrounding Japan's purchase of the Senkaku Island in 2012, and has used, Conflict Escalation Theory to analyze the increased tension at each stage according to the model of this theory. In addition, this study adds an explanation of the timeline events in 2012. Because this research may still have shortcomings, The author has some suggestions for future research:

1. Given the complexity of analyzing more intense tensions from Japan's announcement of the purchase of the Senkaku Island in 2012, the author recommends further research analyze other possibilities for the timeline analyzed at each stage of this theoretical model, in addition to what has already been mentioned in this research.

2. As this case has quite a significant influence from the history of China and Japan prior to the conflict that arose from the announcement of the purchase of the Senkaku Islands, the author recommends further research to analyze real motivations. This could include studying the past conflicts of the two countries , because the incident of 2012 was considered violence that may be more than step 1.

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