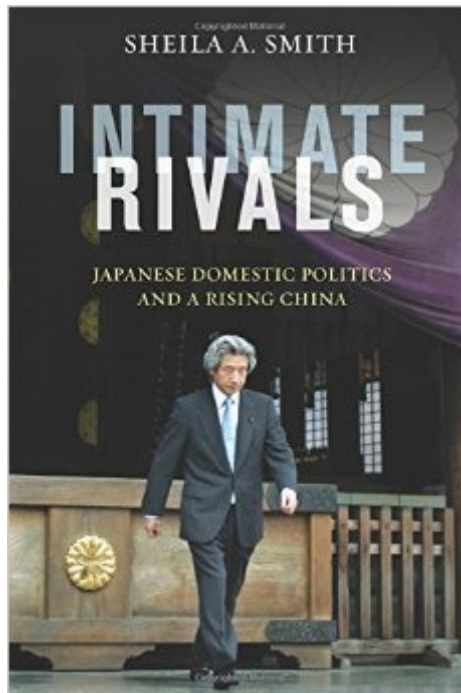


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Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics And A Rising China (A Council On Foreign Relations Book)



Synopsis

No country feels China's rise more deeply than Japan. Through intricate case studies of visits by Japanese politicians to the Yasukuni Shrine, conflicts over the boundaries of economic zones in the East China Sea, concerns about food safety, and strategies of island defense, Sheila A. Smith explores the policy issues testing the Japanese government as it tries to navigate its relationship with an advancing China. Smith finds that Japan's interactions with China extend far beyond the negotiations between diplomats and include a broad array of social actors intent on influencing the Sino-Japanese relationship. Some of the tensions complicating Japan's encounters with China, such as those surrounding the Yasukuni Shrine or territorial disputes, have deep roots in the postwar era, and political advocates seeking a stronger Japanese state organize themselves around these causes. Other tensions manifest themselves during the institutional and regulatory reform of maritime boundary and food safety issues. Smith scrutinizes the role of the Japanese government in coping with contention as China's influence grows and Japanese citizens demand more protection. Underlying the government's efforts is Japan's insecurity about its own capacity for change and its waning status as the leading economy in Asia. For many, China's rise means Japan's decline, and Smith suggests how Japan can maintain its regional and global clout as confidence in its postwar diplomatic and security approach diminishes.

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Customer Reviews

Wonderful book! For someone like me who doesn't read books on foreign policy all that much, but

has an interest in Asia, this book is well written and clearly depicts the complex nature of the Japan-China tensions. I especially liked the chapters on Yasukuni Shrine visits and Food Safety. I have been seeing the Shrine issue in the newspapers and this book gave me a deeper understanding of the history of the issue and why it is so important to the Japanese psyche. The food safety chapter certainly raises important questions about how in this globalized world we ensure (or don't) that our food is safe. This book is important! Please read!

"A must read for anyone interested in the intricacies of the postwar relationship between Japan and China and how that history presents itself in the 21st century. Dr. Smith examines Japan's changing internal politics and the international events that shape the Sino-Japanese relationship ."

I'd like to point out, as a person originally from Japan, that a big picture is missing in this otherwise impressive book. Japan is a democratic and peace-loving country, and China is not. China operates by the dictatorship of the Communist Party, has poor human rights records, and expanded after WWII by sacrificing the Tibetans, the Uyghurs, and the Mongols. China is now focusing on maritime expansion in the East and South China Seas, at the expense of Japan as well as many Southeast Asian nations. I don't see how the Japanese people and government can begin to trust the Chinese government, though they respect Chinese culture, history, and people in general. Yes, China is an economic giant today, and for this reason even America has become soft on China.

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