## Maritime Disputes in the East / South China Sea and Nationalism

Jaehyon LeeAsan Institute for Policy Studies8 November 2018



- Introduction
- Setting the Scene: disputes
- Stakes and Northeast Asia
- Shared Element
- Concluding Remarks

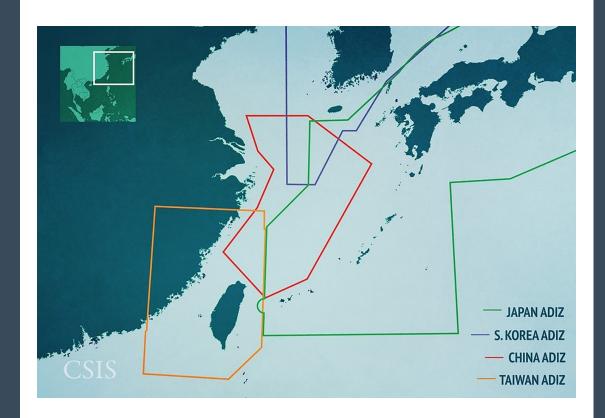
## **Complicated Setting**

- Northeast Asia perspective on SCS dispute?
- Perspectives of Northeast Asian countries
  - Parties and non-Parties in the dispute
  - Costs of engaging or disengaging
  - Different security threat perceptions
  - Regional institutions ASEAN and Trilateral Cooperation (?)
  - How to define region NEA, SEA, East Asia, Indo-Pacific etc.
- Going beyond imaginary SEA/NEA division
- A shared element in both

## Setting the Scene in SCS and ECS

- Centre of Gravity plagued by disputes
  - Regional and global
- South China Sea dispute
  - Various layers
- East China Sea
  - Senkaku/Diaoyudao
  - Overlapping ADIZs
  - Delimiting EEZs and Socotra rock







**Korea Times** 

# Stakes at Risk

#### Economic stakes

- Economic growth and energy demands
- Imported energy dependent NEA: transit and sources
- Drying up fishing stock and fishery in the region
- Trade dependency and safety of trading routes

#### Strategic Stakes

- SCS and Regional hegemony
- Military implications
- Defining regional order

## Element shared by SEA and NEA

#### • Argument

- Great explanations and analyses existing
- Illuminating an often forgotten aspect

#### • China

- In both SCS and ECS maritime disputes
- Geographical factor
- Grievance, confidence
- Is China an exception?

### Regional countries and nationalisms

- What fuels ever increasing tensions in the region?
- Relatively young nation-states
  - Nation-states mostly born after WWII
  - Sense of sovereignty, national interests and nationalism
- Cold-War constraints
  - Limited interactions: between/within blocs
  - Imperatives of nation-building and economic growth
  - Putting potential disputes aside: SCS, Senkaku

#### Regional Countries and Nationalisms

- Post-cold war context
  - Environment: No more Cold-war constraints
  - Instrument: Rapid economic growth and confidence
  - Nature: Young nation-state with strong nationalisms
  - European nation-states in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries?
- One big dispute
  - NEA/SEA, SCS/ECS division?
  - Different aspects of a big dispute
  - A particulate stage of historical development



- Maritime dispute in the region
  - Economic, strategic, military issues
  - Expression of full-blown nationalisms
  - No SEA and NEA division
- Regional countries at a cross-road
  - Cooperation among countries
  - Shared sense of threat or crisis

