

# History Problem, Territorial Disputes And The Future of East Asia Regionalism



# Historical Tensions in East Asia



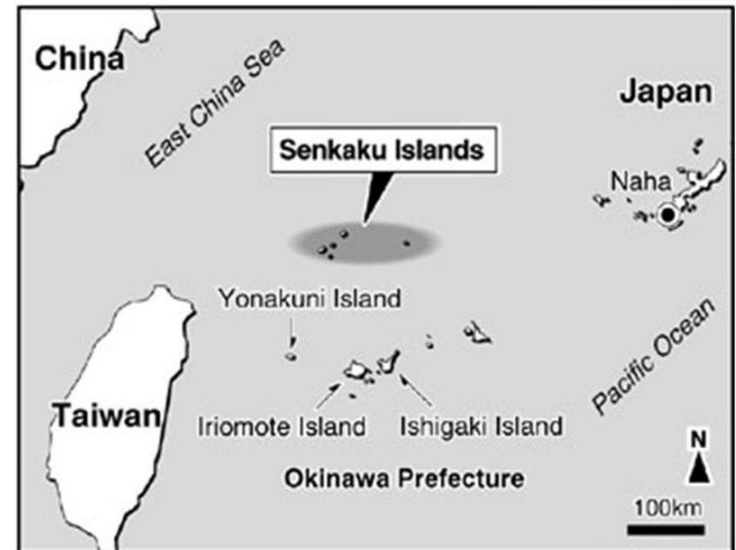
a journalist snapped a picture of Japan's prime minister, Shinzo Abe, grinning from the cockpit of a fighter jet. No sooner had the photograph of Abe appeared than howls of anger erupted across China, and one of South Korea's largest newspapers, Chosun Ilbo, excoriated him for his **"never ending provocations."**

**731** is the number of an infamous Imperial Japanese Army unit that conducted hideous chemical weapons experiments on live victims in Manchuria some 70 years ago.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1995/03/17/world/unmasking-horror-a-special-report-japan-confronting-gruesome-war-atrocity.html>

# Senkaku / Diaoyu

- Beijing and Tokyo are locked in an escalating squabble over the control of some desolate islets known in Chinese as the Diaoyu and in Japanese as the Senkaku islands, with armed ships from both countries playing a dangerous game in the waters offshore.
- They matter because they are close to important shipping lanes, offer rich fishing grounds and lie near potential oil and gas reserves
- Japan nationalized these islands in 2012 provoking Chinese reactions in the form of patrols around the islets and the unilateral declaration of an Area Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in 2014



# Takeshima /Dok Do Island

- South Korea calls it Dokdo, which means solitary islands. Japan calls it Takeshima, which means bamboo islands.
- Claimed by Japan and South Korea, but occupied by South Korea since 1954
- The islands are in good fishing grounds and it is thought that gas reserves may also lie nearby, although their amount is not clear.



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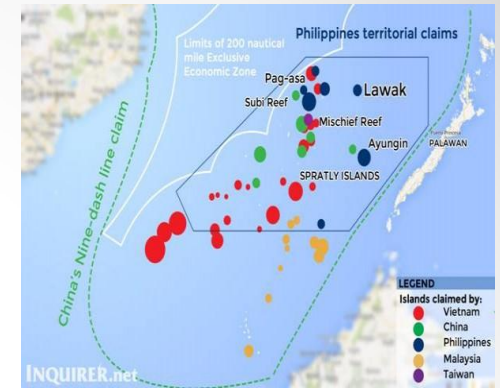


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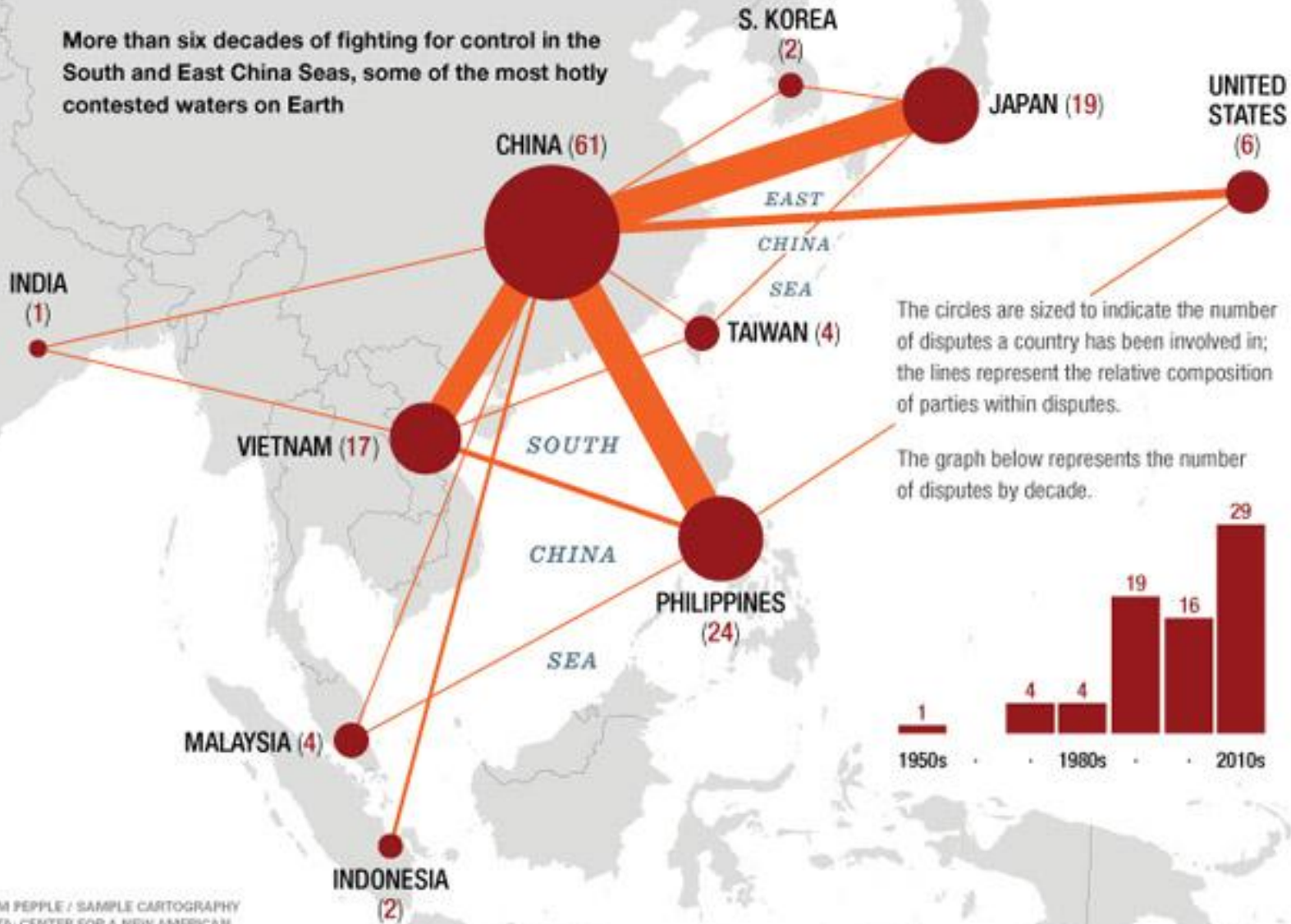
# South China Sea

- Rival countries have wrangled over territory in the South China Sea for centuries, but tension has steadily increased in recent years.
- China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei all have competing claims.



*China has opposed negotiations with ASEAN*

More than six decades of fighting for control in the South and East China Seas, some of the most hotly contested waters on Earth



# Japan and South Korea agree WW2 'comfort women' deal

- Japan and South Korea have agreed to settle the issue of "comfort women" forced to work in Japanese brothels during World War Two, in their first such deal since 1965.
- Japan has apologised and will pay 1bn yen (\$8.3m, £5.6m) - the amount South Korea asked for - to fund victims.



Activists for comfort women erected a statue of a girl which they call a 'peace monument' outside the Japanese embassy in Seoul in 2011

- East Asia regional architecture is very complex, although it developed only recently, mainly after the end of the Cold War, the international regime was based on a network of bilateral alliances and a few multilateral institutions with limited prerogatives
- The growing geopolitical rivalry in East Asia, can regionalism provide a platform of security and stability to the region?

# East Asia's regional architecture is very complex...

The main actors in the Asia-Pacific were (and still are):

- Japan, which faced hostility and mistrust from other countries that suffered Japanese colonization in the early 20th century
- The US, the regional hegemon which maintained a very passive approach to regionalism and a clear predilection for a “hub and spokes” system of alliances (in which Washington is the central hub playing a high degree of control over the spokes)
- China, which was very reluctant to play a leading role in regionalism
- North Korea and Kim Jong-un's belligerence has proved more a blessing than a curse, since his temper tantrums only underscore the need for his neighbors to work together.

# Reference :

- Regionalism in East Asia: A Bumpy Road to Asian Integration ,  
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