

East Asia and the Law of the Sea, by Choon-Ho Park

Lyou Byung Hwa

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LAND, AIR AND WATER USE AND PLANNING
THE LAW OF THE SEA

EAST ASIA AND THE LAW OF THE SEA. By Choon-ho Park. Seoul, Korea: Seoul National University Press, 1983, 445 pp.

The law of the sea has been the subject of much controversy and discussion over the last forty years as new jurisdictional regimes, such as the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone, gained rapid acceptance. In East Asia, however, the law of the sea first became controversial in the mid-1960s when the presence of possibly prolific oil reserves in East Asian offshore areas was reported. The coastal states immediately began to proclaim legal rights in their continental shelves and the adjacent waters. These unilateral actions contradicted one another and East Asian seas are now among the most troubled seas in the world. To complicate matters further, political relations between the East Asian countries are very delicate. Many of them do not maintain diplomatic relations with one another. Because of the political situation, the solution of legal disputes through bilateral or multilateral negotiations is extremely difficult. A glance at a list of countries in this area suggests the complexity of these problems. Countries in the area include the People's Republic of China (Mainland China), the Republic of China (Nationalist China), Japan, North and South Korea, Vietnam, the Soviet Union, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Understandably, most of the boundary disputes in this area remain unnegotiated. Accordingly, maritime boundary claims in the East Asian seas can be expected to be a source of continuing controversy.

In light of the importance and intransigence of these problems, *East Asia and the Law of the Sea*, written by Professor Choon-ho Park of Korea University, is an important contribution to the burgeoning literature on the law of the sea. This book, published by the Institute of Social Science at Seoul National University, consists of fifteen papers written by Professor Park during the last ten years. These papers deal with the legal and geopolitical aspects of East Asian disputes over offshore fisheries and oil reserves and related problems. The topics of the essays include the Northeast Asia Sea-Bed Controversy; the Northeast Asia Fisheries Controversy; the Sino-Japanese-Korean Resources Controversy; Joint Development of Mineral Resources in Japan and South Korea; South Korea and the Law of the Sea; the fifty-mile Military Boundary Zone of North Korea; the Legal Status of the Paracel and Spratly Islands; the South China Sea Disputes; China and Maritime Jurisdiction; Offshore Oil Development in the China Seas; China's Oil Policy; and Indonesia's Oil Relations with the United States and Japan.

Professor Park's book is an extremely useful, well-integrated, and up-to-date treatment of the law of the sea in East Asia. Although the book consists of separately published papers, Professor Park has carefully arranged them in thematic and chronological order to achieve a cohesive whole.

Professor Park attended all of the sessions of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and, accordingly, his essays include discussion of the most recent legal rules and practices, particularly as reflected in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea¹ and the negotiations preceding it. In addition, Professor Park is well-informed concerning the concrete, factual aspects of legal problems in East Asia. Because of this breadth of knowledge, the book contains both legal theory and practical, factual information.

East Asia and the Law of the Sea is one of the most useful sources available on the law of the sea in the East Asian area. The beginner will find the book extremely accessible, the legal issues clearly explained, and the detailed accompanying maps helpful. More advanced students and researchers will particularly appreciate the depth and comprehensiveness of Professor Park's footnotes and bibliography. For these reasons, *East Asia and the Law of the Sea* is an essential resource for the student of legal problems in the East Asian seas.

*Lyou Byung-Hwa**

1. United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, *opened for signature* Dec. 10, 1982, U.N. Doc A/CONF. 62/122 (1982), *reprinted in* 21 I.L.M. 1261 (1982) *and in* UN CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA 1982 (K.R. Simmonds ed. 1983).

*Ph.D. in Public International Law, Université de Paris 2; Professor of Law, Korea University.