

The Salience of National Identity in the Arctic: Lessons from East Asia

James Manicom
Balsillie School of International Affairs
University of Waterloo

Paper Presented to the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference, Concordia University, Montreal, June 3 2010.

Work in progress, please do not cite or distribute without author's permission.

There is expected to be an overlapping extended continental shelf boundary between Canada, Russia and Denmark. Even though the overlap will be small and geographically remote, in light of the Arctic region's purported resource wealth and the growing accessibility of the region due to climate change, the Arctic dispute is a pressing foreign policy issue. Debates over the trajectory of the dispute vary between pessimistic predictions that emphasize the region's hydrocarbon wealth and Russia's assertive foreign policy turn and optimistic assessments based on the sanctity of international legal process for making boundary delimitations and the cooperative track record of the states involved. These differences in emphasis have been reflected by claimant states. Policymakers have highlighted the cooperative nature of their approach to Arctic issues while simultaneously asserting their claims rhetorically and physically. Whether the maritime claims are settled cooperatively or not will ultimately be a product of how policymakers in Ottawa, Copenhagen, and Moscow view the stakes of disputed Arctic boundaries, which in turn determines their policy priorities. By drawing lessons from maritime boundary disputes elsewhere in the world, this paper offers a first attempt at understanding these stakes.

There are a number of apparently contradictory trends in contemporary Arctic geopolitics. While Canada's cooperative track record in maritime boundary delimitations is encouraging, these agreements are predominantly with Canadian allies such as Denmark and the United States. From a theoretical perspective, whether based on complex interdependence or as a reflection of the democratic peace, this is not surprising. However, the potential dispute over the extended continental shelf in the Arctic is different. Russia is an authoritarian state that appears dissatisfied with some elements of the international order and, as witnessed in Georgia, is prepared to use force to assert its foreign policy interests. Finally, resource development appears to occupy pride of place in the Russian political economy, which may explain its stated ambitions for the Arctic continental shelf. In this context the climate of cooperation that has characterized the interaction between Arctic states since the end of the Cold War could be short-lived.

With a view to developing an understanding of how policymakers perceive the salience of disputed Arctic boundaries, this paper is interested in the influence of identity politics on the issue of Arctic 'sovereignty'. It is currently understood that Arctic boundary disputes are important because of the material value of the sea area and seabed under dispute. However, it is well known that identity politics, combined with resource pressures and rising military spending,

have exacerbated maritime boundary disputes in other regions such as East Asia.¹ This is viewed as an extension of the region's unsettled historical record combined with the salience of assertive nationalism to domestic audiences. Despite the salience of resource pressures and identity politics, however, East Asian states have avoided large scale military conflict over contested maritime space. On the surface the Arctic dispute seems markedly different. Canada, the United States and Denmark are long time allies. Although Russia was an adversary during the Cold War, the post Cold War period has seen, at least on the surface, a thawing of tensions between Russia and the West. However, the past decade has witnessed a marked assertive turn in Russian foreign policy, which has raised suspicions in the West about Russian ambitions.² Furthermore, the entitlement of coastal states to extended continental shelves combined with reports of resource wealth beneath thawing Arctic waters further highlights the similarities between the two regions.

This paper explores the impact of identity politics on the Arctic dispute in Canada and Russia, and compares it with the impact of identity politics on East Asia's disputed maritime boundaries. The paper finds evidence of the instrumental domestic use of identity politics in Russia and Canada vis-à-vis the Arctic dispute. However, this pales in comparison to the influence and extent of this language in the East Asia, particularly its influence at the popular level. However, given that the effect of the instrumental use of identity politics in East Asia has had a negative impact on dispute stability and cooperative efforts, policymakers in Ottawa and Moscow may consider re-thinking the role of the Arctic dispute in domestic electoral politics and nation-building rhetoric. These findings imply that policymakers in Arctic states derive a degree of utility from the Arctic disputes that goes beyond the material.

National identity, national sovereignty and disputed maritime boundaries

Assessing the influence of national identity on foreign policy is challenging for a variety of definitional, methodological and empirical reasons.³ National identity is conceptually fluid, difficult to measure, and its direct impact on leaders' decision making process nearly impossible to observe. The exercise is somewhat simpler when one is trying to observe the relationship between national identity and state posture towards disputed national territory however. National territory is engrained into national consciousness; threats to territorial integrity can be clearly conceptualized within the self-other distinction.⁴ Publics feel a strong attachment to national territory because it provides the container within which the 'nation' resides.⁵ On issues of territorial integrity therefore, the impact of national identity on foreign policy is similar to the impact of public opinion on foreign policy.⁶ National identity informs a society's perception of

¹ Mamdouh G. Salameh, "China, Oil and the Risk of Regional Conflict," *Survival* 37, no. 4 (1995-1996), pp. 133-46. Mark J. Valencia, "Energy and Insecurity in Asia," *Survival* 39, no. 3 (1997), pp. 85-106.

² Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The Unravelling of the Cold War Settlement," *Survival*, 51, no. 6, (2009), pp. 39-62.

³ Glenn Chafez, Michael Spirtas and Benjamin Frankel, "Introduction, Tracing the Influence of Identity on Foreign Policy," *Security Studies*, 8, no.2, (1998), pp. vii-xxii.

⁴ See generally, Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2 ed. (London: Verso, 1991), p. 6.

⁶ See Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies," *World Politics*, 43, no. 4, 1991, pp. 479-512. This is not to suggest the two are identical.

its environment and by extension the parameters of its domestic and international interests.⁷ Politics are more likely to mobilize when confronted with a slight to their territorial identity and, according to some authors, this can constrain leaders' policy options vis-à-vis a disputed boundary due to audience costs and associated political consequences.⁸ There is a correlation between the existence of a territorial dispute and war occurrence between states.⁹ While the material value of disputed territory is certainly one reason for this, the intangible value of territory and the role it plays in a nation's sense of self reduces the likelihood of cooperation and increases the likelihood of conflict over a given territorial dispute.¹⁰

It is widely accepted that territory is salient to policymakers for tangible reasons, such as resource wealth, as well as intangible reasons, such as the role of territory in creating a sense of belonging among a people.¹¹ However, this relationship is considerably less obvious in the maritime domain, particularly for international lawyers who consider territory and maritime space to be distinct concepts. Nevertheless, the influence of identity on disputed maritime space is pervasive; such is the influence of the "territorial temptation" on the human psyche.¹² When the international community created the pretext for expanded state authority over maritime areas, a trickle of claims to maritime domains became a flood. According to Bernard Oxman, this expansion of state jurisdiction seaward is both geographic – states have made claims to a greater percentage of the world's oceans, and substantive – states have adopted the widest possible interpretation of their jurisdictional entitlements.¹³ One possible side effect of the "territorialization" of ocean space is the extension of national identity over it. Consequently, disputes over maritime boundaries and islands may be no different from those over land territory, despite assessments to the contrary.¹⁴ While such a finding may be expected across some conflict prone dyads, such as over the Iria rocks between Greece and Turkey, the problem becomes significantly more alarming when evidenced across an entire region and includes boundary delimitation disputes where there is no island or mainland territory at stake.

Disputed space, whether land or maritime, challenges both internal and external conceptions of national identity.¹⁵ Internally, maritime disputes intersect with national identity in two ways. The first is when elites use national identity instrumentally to legitimize their rule by creating crises

⁷ Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 14.

⁸ Todd L. Allee and Paul K. Huth, "When Are Governments Able to Reach Negotiated Settlement Agreements? An Analysis of Dispute Resolution in Territorial Disputes, 1919-1985," *Approaches, Levels and Methods of Analysis in International Politics: Crossing Boundaries*, ed. Harvey Starr, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 13-32.

⁹ Stephen A. Kocs, "Territorial Disputes and Interstate War, 1945-1987," *The Journal of Politics* 57, no. 1 (1995), pp. 159-175; John A. Vasquez, *The War Puzzle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁰ Paul K. Huth, *Standing Your Ground: Territorial Disputes and International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996).

¹¹ Paul F. Diehl, "What Are They Fighting For? The Importance of Issues in International Conflict Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 29, no. 3 (1992), pp. 333-344.

¹² Bernard H. Oxman, "The Territorial Temptation: A Siren Song at Sea," *The American Journal of International Law* 100, no. 4 (2006), pp. 830-851.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 835.

¹⁴ Barry Buzan, *A Sea of Troubles? Sources of Dispute in the New Ocean Regime*, vol. 143, Adelphi Paper (Oxford University Press: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1978), p. 45.

¹⁵ This distinction stems from Paul A. Kowert, "National Identity: Inside and Out," *Security Studies*, 8, no. 2, pp. 1-34.

or otherwise promoting the “mobilization of antagonism”.¹⁶ Elites may use the existence of disputed maritime sovereignty and jurisdiction to legitimize their rule by drawing on historical myths of persecution at the hands of rival claimants.¹⁷ In East Asia, this has given rise to a reciprocal, bottom-up pressure on elites to ensure that they adequately advocate on behalf of the people. This has been most acutely felt in China, where nationalists expect Beijing to defend China’s territorial interests, broadly defined. These two processes also have international consequences. The first is that elite driven mobilization necessarily demands a forceful statement of a state’s claim to a given territory, which in turn requires an admonishment by the rival state. This in turn fuels grass-roots nationalist sentiments in the claimant state and can place pressure on elites to adopt a hard-line stance when they would prefer to pursue other foreign policy prerogatives. Such a climate makes negotiations towards dispute settlement difficult.

Maritime boundary disputes also challenge the external conception of national identity in as much as they can challenge a state’s sense of self and its interpretation of the identity of rival claimants. For instance, it is widely accepted that China is motivated in its territorial disputes by an image of what modern China “looks” like.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the fact that China has taken a loss in many of its territorial settlements implies a willingness to be seen to be a responsible member of the international community.¹⁹ Likewise, many scholars argue that the intractability of East Asian boundary disputes is in part related to the construction of “others” based on the relationships between the disputed territory and historical myths of national persecution.²⁰ In either case, national identity can complicate or undermine efforts at cooperation because these efforts have to satisfy the external identity of what a state is and who it is negotiating with, as well as the internal identity of being seen to act in the interest of the state’s sense of self.

National identity and maritime disputes in East Asia

This problem is well demonstrated by the East Asian response to disputed maritime boundaries. There is a strong relationship between territorial identity and political legitimacy in East Asia. According to Leszek Buszynski, security in East Asia is about protecting threatened identities, which are non-negotiable.²¹ This is an extension of the region’s unsettled historical record and the post-World War Two order, which gave rise to a number of disputes over regional maritime

¹⁶ Thomas Berger, "The Construction of Antagonism: The History Problem in Japan's Foreign Relations," in *Reinventing the Alliance: Us-Japan Security Partnership in an Era of Change*, ed. G. John Ikenberry and Takashi Inoguchi (Basingstroke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p. 65.

¹⁷ Youngshik Daniel Bong, "Flashpoints at Sea? Legitimization Strategy and East Asian Island Disputes" (PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2002); Thomas Berger, "Power and Purpose in East Asia: A Constructivist Interpretation," in G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno eds., *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 387-420.

¹⁸ Chen Jie, "China's Spratly Policy: With Special Reference to the Philippines and Malaysia," *Asian Survey* 34, no. 10 (1994), pp. 893-903.

¹⁹ Allen Carlson, "Constructing the Dragon's Scales: China's Approach to Territorial Sovereignty and Border Relations in the 1980s and 1990s," *The Journal of Contemporary China* 12, no. 37 (2003), pp. 677-98; M. Fravel Taylor, "Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China's Compromises in Territorial Disputes," *International Security* 30, no. 2 (2005), pp. 46-83.

²⁰ Shogo Suzuki, "The Importance of 'Othering' in China's National Identity: Sino-Japanese Relations as a Stage of Identity Conflicts," *The Pacific Review* 20, no. 1 (2007), pp. 23-47; Alexander Buhk, *Japan's National Identity and Foreign Policy: Russia as Japan's 'Other'* (London: Routledge, 2009); Chih-Yu Shih, "Defining Japan: The Nationalist Assumption in China's Foreign Policy," *International Journal* 50, no. 1 (1995), pp. 539-563.

²¹ Leszek Buszynski, *Asia Pacific Security- Values and Identity* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

space.²² One side effect has been the emergence of domestic nationalist groups within several states that pressure their leaders when perceived challenges to territorial sovereignty and jurisdiction arise. This in turn has triggered a number of political crises. For instance, in 1996 China and Japan ratified the Third Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS) and outlined their claims to Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and continental shelves, which prompted a Japanese nationalist group to sail to one of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands to assert Japan's claim. This triggered a political crisis through the summer and fall of 1996 as both Beijing and Tokyo vocally supported tit-for-tat landing attempts by nationalist groups. Chinese elites in particular were compelled to balance support for nationalist groups with the management of the Japan relationship, lest they be accused of poorly advancing the nationalist conception of the Chinese interest.²³ This occurred despite the fact that the ratification of UNCLOS was integral to the settlement of East Asia's fisheries disputes and that Chinese and Japanese negotiators had agreed to shelve the issue of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands ahead of time.²⁴

Importantly, this trend seems to be consistent across East Asia regardless of regime type: it is as true in Beijing as it is in Tokyo and Seoul. Tokyo has tacitly supported efforts by Japanese nationalists to land on the Japanese controlled Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, and has conferred official recognition on lighthouses they have constructed, much to Beijing's ire. Beijing by contrast has vocally supported efforts by Chinese nationalists to land on the islands and protested Japan's detention of these activists in 2004. Similarly, over two weekends, Hanoi permitted popular anti-Chinese protests outside the embassy in Hanoi and the consulate in Ho Chi Minh City following China's inclusion of the disputed Paracel islands into its "Sansha" administrative region.²⁵ This populism is not limited to central governments. Shimane prefecture in Japan, which claims Japanese provincial authority over the South Korean occupied Tokdo/Takeshima islets, has declared February 22 "Takeshima Day", a public holiday. South Korea for its part routinely issues stamps depicting the islets and has named its new amphibious warfare vessel the *ROKS Tokdo*. Most curiously, the mayor of Tokyo, outspoken nationalist Shintaro Ishihara has given Okinotorishima, an islet 1740km south of Japan, a Tokyo street address.

While the relationship between national identity and territorial sovereignty is clear, the relationship between national identity and the jurisdictional claims over maritime space is less obvious. An island is clearly part of one's state, but an EEZ is a far more abstract concept of state sovereignty. Nevertheless, following ratification of UNCLOS, maritime jurisdictional disputes between China and Japan became tied up with both states' national identities.²⁶ While nationalist actors, both popular and in government, had always manipulated the sovereignty dispute over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, by the late 1990s these sentiments extended to

²² Kimie Hara, *Cold War Frontiers in the Asia-Pacific: Divided Territories in the San Francisco System*, (London: Routledge, 2007); Unryu Suganuma, *Sovereign Rights and Territorial Space in Sino-Japanese Relations: Irredentism and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000).

²³ Erica S. Downs and Phillip C. Saunders, "Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism: China and the Diaoyu Islands," *International Security* 23, no. 3 (1998/99), pp. 114-46.

²⁴ "Japan, China Make Progress toward New Fishery Accord." *Kyodo News*, April 22 1996.

²⁵ For details see Roger Mitton, "Vietnam, China Clash Again over Spratlys: Chinese Navy Fires at Vietnamese Fishing Boats in Oil-Rich Region," *The Straits Times*, July 19 2007; Ian Storey, "Trouble and Strife in the South China Sea: Vietnam and China," *China Brief*, 8, no. 8 (2008), p. 13

²⁶ James Manicom, "The Interaction of Material and Ideational Factors in the East China Sea Dispute: Impact on Future Dispute Management," *Global Change, Peace and Security* 20, no. 3 (2008), pp. 375-391.

the ocean space both states were claiming jurisdiction over. Nationalist groups in China and Japan vociferously advocate their country's right to exploit resources in the East China Sea, an extension of EEZ jurisdiction. This extension of ideational sentiment to maritime jurisdictional issues can have catastrophic consequences for confidence building measures. This demonstrated by the fate of the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU), signed in March 2005 by Vietnam, China and the Philippines. The agreement called for cooperative resource exploitation between national oil companies from the three countries in a section of the disputed area of the South China Sea.

The JMSU drew criticism in Manila in 2007 after rumours surfaced that it could compromise Philippines' territorial claims and was in breach of domestic laws on foreign partnerships. According to Barry Wain, one sixth of the area is located in waters claimed only by the Philippines that are not contested by Vietnam and China.²⁷ The fact that the Philippines signed a trilateral joint exploration agreement that included its own uncontested territory could be regarded as ceding jurisdictional authority to other countries. According to Ian Storey, opposition politicians seized on Wain's accusations on the grounds they violated the constitution and undermined the Philippines' claims to the Spratly islands. Furthermore, the fact that the boundaries of the agreement included undisputed Philippine waters raised the constitutionality of the agreement due to the 60 percent domestic stake required for development projects occurring in the Philippines. Opposition Senator Antonio Trillanes IV accused President Gloria Arroyo of treason for signing the agreement.²⁸ As a result of this pressure, the JMSU lapsed after July 1 2008. It is commonly accepted that joint development agreements (JDAs) and confidence building measures (CBMs) on issues of 'low politics', such as resource development, are steps forward if boundary delimitation cannot be achieved; these form the basis of regime building efforts.²⁹ JDAs have been integral in moving disputes over the Timor shelf and the Gulf of Thailand towards settlement. However, the case of the JMSU indicates that these pragmatic agreements can fail if they become caught up in the questions of national identity. The following section assesses the role of identity in the dispute over the Arctic continental shelf.

²⁷ Barry Wain, "Manila's Bungle in the South China Sea," *Far Eastern Economic Review* 171, no. 1 (2008), p. 48.

²⁸ Michaela P. del Callar, "No Gloria Order to Suspend JMSU: Chinese Ships to Continue Exploration- Diplomat," *The Daily Tribune*, March 18 2008.

²⁹ Mark J. Valencia, *A Maritime Regime for North-East Asia* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1996).

National identity and disputes over Arctic sovereignty and jurisdiction

For much of the Cold War, the Arctic served as a theatre for superpower posturing rather than as an issue of discord between states.³⁰ Following the end of the Cold War multilateral institutions were developed, such as the Arctic Council, that were aimed at common challenges to the Arctic region, such as environmental protection. Since the international law dealing with state jurisdiction over the world's oceans was still evolving, forward thinking states employed a variety of justifications, including sector theory, historic waters or straight baselines, to ensure their claims to the Arctic would be defensible under the new ocean regime.³¹ However, boundary disputes remain outside the purview of the Arctic Council and its component organizations.

Arctic maritime boundary disputes became more pressing after UNCLOS entered into force in 1994. While the EEZ was arguably already customary international law, and Arctic states were well on their way to claiming overlapping EEZs, a less obvious source of discord was the potential for overlapping extended continental shelves. Under Article 76, states are entitled to claim an extended continental shelf, beyond the standard 200nm, up to a distance of 350nm, if the shelf meets certain geological conditions.³² Nevertheless, disputes over claims to this part of the ocean always seemed remote and far off, not least because of the enormous scientific hurdles that needed to be overcome. This delay is compounded by the fact that, unlike East Asian states, the Arctic states were slow to embrace the UNCLOS regime. Denmark ratified the agreement in 2004, Canada in 2003 and the US remains outside the regime. Only Russia and Norway embraced the regime promptly. Consequently Danish and Canadian submissions to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) are not due until 2014 and 2013 respectively.

The rationale for a state to claim an extended continental shelf is identical to that of claiming an EEZ; greater jurisdiction over maritime areas provides economic benefits from the exploitation of natural resources, in this case non-living resources under the seabed.³³ The exploitation of these resources became all the more pressing as the challenge presented by climate change made resource exploitation on the Arctic shelf all the more possible.³⁴ Efforts by Denmark to map its sea floor in preparation for its submission to the CLCS as well as Russian efforts to collect data to correct its 2001 submission heralded a new phase of Arctic geopolitics that focused on extended claims to jurisdiction in context of a "race" for resource rights.³⁵ This race perspective is occasionally fuelled by misinterpreted estimates originating from the US Geological Service;

³⁰ Franklyn Griffiths, ed. *Arctic Alternatives: Civility or Militarism in the Circumpolar North* (Toronto: Science for Peace/Samuel Stevens, 1992).

³¹ Erik Franckx, *Maritime Claims in the Arctic: Canadian and Russian Perspectives* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993); Donat Pharand, *Canada's Arctic Waters in International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

³² These are outlined in Peter J. Cook and Chris M. Carleton, eds. *Continental Shelf Limits: The Scientific and Legal Interface* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

³³ Unlike the EEZ regime, a state's jurisdiction over the extended continental shelf, the shelf located beyond 200nm from a state's baselines, extends only to the seabed and the subsoil. A state does not have rights to living resources in the water column.

³⁴ Scott G. Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Climate Change," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 2 (2008), pp. 63-77.

³⁵ Guy Killaby, "Great Game in a Cold Climate: Canada's Arctic Sovereignty in Question," *Canadian Military Journal* (2005-06), p. 31. Victor Yasman, "Russia: Race to the Pole," *Radio Free Europe*, July 27 2007.

specifically that “the extensive Arctic continental shelves may constitute the geographically largest unexplored prospective area for petroleum remaining on Earth.”³⁶ Despite this “race” perspective however, there is every reason to be optimistic about outcome of disputed Arctic boundaries. As many scholars have pointed out, there is a track record of cooperation over boundary issues between Arctic states, and moreover, there is a set legal process for making claims to extended continental shelves, which by all accounts is being followed.³⁷ Furthermore, the bulk of proven resources in the Arctic are located within the recognized EEZs of all coastal states with the most economically viable sites closest to shore. This situation then begs the question; why do some Arctic states make bellicose claims to “sovereignty” that downplay ongoing cooperative processes and which inflate the urgency of Arctic jurisdictional issues? Rather than being driven exclusively by resource pressures, it appears that policymakers in Arctic states derive a degree of domestic political utility from the issue of disputed boundaries. This utility is derived in part from national identity building projects, which in light of the East Asian experience, risks undermining the cooperative process over the longer term.

Concern over threats to Canadian sovereignty over its Arctic waters rose in parallel to these geopolitical changes. Historically, the most visible challenges to Canadian Arctic claims, the *Manhattan* and *Polar Sea* voyages, have originated from the US. The public reaction from these was so visceral that in both cases Ottawa responded with efforts to reinforce the Canadian presence in the High North, only to cut these projects from the next budget once voter outrage subsided.³⁸ While the Liberal government of Paul Martin engaged with in a diplomatic exchange of fire with Denmark over Hans Island in 2005, the issue remained on the periphery of Canadian politics. The Arctic sovereignty issue has become dramatically more dominant in the Canadian political discourse under Prime Minister Stephen Harper and has played a prominent role in Canadian identity and electoral politics. This is not to dismiss the legitimate urgency of climate change in the Arctic and the associated challenges for Northern communities.³⁹ However, these challenges were amplified and cast in the language of ‘sovereignty’ for political purposes. During the 2006 federal election campaign, then Conservative leader Harper was able to undermine the Liberal charge that the Conservatives were in bed with the United States by amplifying the threat to Canadian Arctic sovereignty of American nuclear submarines passing under thawing Arctic ice.⁴⁰ Taking the issue further, Conservative campaign documents from 2006 indicate a promise to build three Arctic icebreakers and to assert Canada’s Arctic sovereignty.⁴¹ Harper used his first press conference as Prime Minister to reiterate this view,

³⁶ United States Geological Survey, "USGS Arctic Oil and Gas Report: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle." <http://geology.com/usgs/arctic-oil-and-gas-report.shtml>.

³⁷ Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon, "Canada and Arctic Politics: The Continental Shelf Extension," *Ocean Development and International Law* 39, no. 4 (2008), pp. 343-359; Michael Byers, *Who Owns the Arctic? Understanding Sovereignty Disputes in the North* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2009), ch. 5; Ian Townshend-Gault, "Not a Carve-Up: Canada, Sovereignty and the Arctic Ocean," *International Zeitschrift* 1, no. 3 (2007), www.zeitschrift.co.uk/archive/v1n3.html.

³⁸ Elizabeth Elliot-Meisel, "Politics, Pride, and Precedent: The United States and Canada in the Northwest Passage," *Ocean Development and International Law* 40, no. 2 (2009), p. 215.

³⁹ See by Frances Abele, Thomas J. Courchene, F. Leslie Seidle and France St-Hilare, eds. *Northern Exposure: Peoples, Powers and Prospects in Canada's North* (Montreal: The Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2009).

⁴⁰ Tom Flanagan, *Harper's Team: Behind the Scenes in the Conservative Rise to Power*, 2 ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), p. 246.

⁴¹ Jeffrey Simpson, "It's an Arctic Policy worth Building On," *The Globe and Mail*, July 31 2009.

which, combined with developments elsewhere in the far north set the stage for the Arctic issue to be front and centre in Canadian political discourse.

Russia's well publicized mission to plant a flag on the Arctic continental shelf in August 2007 appeared to validate the argument that Canada's sovereignty was under threat. The message from the Prime Minister, who on more than one occasion has stated that Canada needed to 'use' Arctic sovereignty, was that Canadian claims to the Arctic were threatened. This set the stage for a spending spree designed to bolster Canada's claim to the region as well as Harper's leadership credentials. The Throne Speech in October 2007 included pledges not only to increase Canada's military presence in the High North, but also to map the continental shelf margin, which in turn raised the spectre of oil and gas exploitation.⁴² These initiatives built on promises in July 2007 for a naval facility in Nanisivik and the construction of six to eight offshore patrol ships that would enable the Canadian Navy to maintain a physical presence in the Arctic for some portion of the year.

Initially, the Harper government's instrumental use of Arctic sovereignty was been directed at the Northwest Passage (NWP), particularly aimed at concerns that US submarines and vessels would transit the thawing passage without Canadian permission. This was clearly an attempt to tap into Canadian anti-American sentiment that is tied up with sensitivities about the North. According to Michael Byers, the real effect of Harper's grandstanding on the submarine issue in January 2006 was to effectively undermine the Arctic Cooperation Agreement, the agree-to-disagree *modus vivendi* that had governed Canada-US posture towards NWP transits since the mid-1980s.⁴³ However, subsequent developments, such as the prominence of climate change concerns and the emergence of an apparently assertive Russia supported the government's tone. Efforts to map the extended continental shelf in order to access the resources beneath have been cast in terms of sovereignty. Government press releases blur the lines between Arctic sovereignty and jurisdiction over the extended continental shelf. For instance, in announcing Canadian and Danish findings that the Lomonosov Ridge was attached to the North American continent, Minister of National Resources Gary Lunn stated, "the need to demonstrate our sovereignty in the Arctic has never been more important, which is why our government has made this research a top priority."⁴⁴ This creates the false impression that Canada has sovereignty over its extended continental shelf. In light of the fact that Canada's jurisdiction over the extended continental shelf is not the same as "sovereignty", there is a chance that the threatened identity narrative in Harper government policy will harden Canadian popular perceptions of the extended continental shelf issue.

The 2008 Conservative campaign platform promised to defend Canadian Arctic sovereignty, pledged to "assert Canada's rights over our Arctic waters", and characterized the resource wealth of the Arctic as "key strategic assets".⁴⁵ In this narrative, the challenges facing the Canadian Arctic are no longer a simple matter of an institutionalized dispute with a key ally, but are in fact

⁴² Doug Saunders, "Treading on Thin Ice," *The Globe and Mail*, October 20 2007.

⁴³ Byers, *Who Owns the Arctic?*, pp. 57-58.

⁴⁴ National Resources Canada Press Release, "Government of Canada Welcomes New Mapping Data on Canada's North," <http://www.nrcan-rncan.gc.ca/media/newcom/2008/200856-eng.php>. August 8 2008.

⁴⁵ *The True North Strong and Free: Stephen Harper's Plan for Canadians*, Conservative Party of Canada 2008, pp. 22, 24.

threats to the future prosperity of the country. By mid-2009, Harper's Arctic policy had morphed into a fifty page document that stressed the importance of the Arctic to Canadian national identity, the threat posed by the foreign shipping through a thawing Northwest Passage, the importance of the region's resource wealth as well as the urgency of these challenges in light of growing international interest in the Arctic.⁴⁶ There has clearly been a shift in how Canadian leaders have constructed Canada's Arctic interests under the Harper government, notwithstanding developments outside the domestic political arena. An integral part of this message is the conflation of different 'threats' to Canadian Arctic sovereignty into a threat to the Canadian national identity.

Similar dynamics exist in Russia where leaders have been far more explicit in their attempts to use the Arctic dispute for domestic political purposes. Compared to Canada, the North has a far more established presence in the Russian national identity. There is a dimension of frontier thinking in Russian attitudes towards the North. The notions of being a "resource power" are long standing themes in the Russian identity, as is the desire to protect Arctic beauty.⁴⁷ Russian policy towards the North is by extension couched in the language of national sovereignty, the defence of which is vital. This posture towards the Arctic is an extension of Russia's historical fascination with the North, which preoccupied both Imperial and Stalinist Russia. Driven by the notion of *osvoenie*, the drive to master forbidding places, Stalin's attempt to industrialize and develop the North was a way to gain advantage over the West. This drive to succeed in the North resonates in Russia today. According to Franklyn Griffiths, the Russians are a "northern people" and as such are more inclined to incur the risks and costs associated with Northern development.⁴⁸ According to others, the North is viewed as a safe haven for Russian development efforts as Moscow becomes more cooperative with neighbours on other peripheries.⁴⁹

Russian leaders have nurtured these nationalist myths that surround Russian history in the North. Like China, the declining relevance of Marxist-Leninism as a state ideology has opened the door for nationalism to be used as a nation building tool.⁵⁰ According to Pavel Baev, contemporary Russia's expansive posture towards the Arctic is part of an identity building project designed to renew Russian patriotism. Moscow has renewed this effort following a steady stream of foreign policy failures on Russia's periphery, particularly the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and NATO's expansion eastward.⁵¹ Expanding jurisdiction over the Arctic resonates, therefore, as compensation for lost territories following the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁵² The clearest example of Russian grandstanding on the Arctic issue was its dramatic effort to plant a Russian flag on the Arctic seabed. The effort was led by Artur Chilingarov, deputy speaker of Russia's lower house and a high profile Russian polar scientist and explorer, and was laden with rhetoric

⁴⁶ Government of Canada, *Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future* (Ottawa 2009).

⁴⁷ Franklyn Griffiths, "The Arctic in Russian Identity," in *The Soviet Maritime Arctic*, ed. Lawsib W. Brigham (London: Belhaven Press, 1991), pp. 83-107.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Pavel Baev, "Russian Perspectives on the Barents Region," in *The Barents Region: Cooperation in Arctic Europe*, ed. Olav Schram Stokke and Ola Tunander (London: Sage Publications, 1994), p. 176.

⁵⁰ See Margot Light, "In Search of an Identity: Russian Foreign Policy and the End of Ideology," in *Ideology, National Identity and Post Communist Foreign Policies*, ed. Rick Hawn (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 41-59.

⁵¹ Pavel Baev, "Russia's Race for the Arctic and the New Geopolitics of the North Pole," *Jamestown Occasional Paper* (Washington D.C.2007), p. 10.

⁵² Margaret Blunden, "The New Problem of Arctic Stability," *Survival* 51, no. 5 (2009), p. 125.

aimed at drawing international attention to the Russian legal position. The domestic political salience of Arctic issues in Russia is genuine. Although the voyage did not have sanction from Moscow, Chilingarov was running for political office at the time of his trip to the ocean floor. Likewise, in 2008 the Russian Security Council held a meeting in the Franz Joseph islands to demonstrate their resolve to protect Russian territorial integrity.

Russian leaders have also been unapologetic supporters of resource development in the Arctic; not least because of the role resource exploitation has played in Stalinist myths about the Russian North. Vladimir Putin's devotion to Russia's resurgence, driven by its status as a "resources superpower", could be viewed as the latest instalment in this myth.⁵³ Two recent developments reinforce this perspective. First, Russians anticipate that climate change will make the Arctic more accessible for resource exploitation.⁵⁴ The Arctic shelf is thus viewed as a way to ensure the future viability of the Russian state.⁵⁵ The second is the Russian reaction to the near universal condemnation from other Arctic states, all NATO members, of Russia's first submission to the UN regarding its Arctic claim, as well as in response to Chilingarov's stunt. This speaks to the ingrained Russian suspicion of the West. According to one scholar, Russia's foreign policy has always been determined with reference to its identity vis-à-vis the West.⁵⁶ This suspicion extends to accusations of bias on the part of the CLCS.⁵⁷ Suspicion of NATO's intentions for the Arctic is deeply engrained in Russian security and defence circles.⁵⁸ According one Russian perspective, "what unites all Western Arctic states is their rejection of Russia's intention to extend its economic zone northward by over a million of square kilometres by proving that the Lomonosov and Mendeleev ridges are part of our country's continental shelf."⁵⁹ Given that the bulk of Arctic resources are located beneath uncontested Russian EEZs, the 'threat' posed by other Arctic claimants to Russia's Northern resource base is clearly inflated. This internal dimension of national identity may have external links as, according to analysts at RAND, Russia is pursuing a "prestige seeking" foreign policy.⁶⁰

Is the Arctic dispute heading in the direction of East Asia's disputes?

This paper has illustrated how identity politics has undermined cooperation on East Asia's disputed maritime boundaries. This has perpetuated these disputes and has led to a number of political crises. While the delimitation dispute over the extended continental shelf between Canada and Russia remains hypothetical, it remains pertinent to ask whether Arctic states are following a similar path. While coastal states have the legitimate right to pursue material policy objectives in the Arctic region, the discussion above reveals that Canada and Russia are casting

⁵³ Ariel Cohen, "Russia's Race for the Arctic," Heritage Foundation, *Web Memo* #1542, 2007, www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/wm1582.cfm.

⁵⁴ Barry S. Zellen, "Cold Front Rising: As Climate Change Thins Polar Ice, a New Race for Arctic Resources Begins," *Strategic Insights* 7, no. 1 (2008), <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2008/Feb/zellenFeb08.asp>.

⁵⁵ Vladimir Folov, "The Coming Conflict in the Arctic: Russia and US to Square Off over Arctic Energy Resources," July 17 2007, www.globalresearch.ca.

⁵⁶ Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity* (Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield, 2006).

⁵⁷ Vladimir Kuzar, "A Pole of Pretension - the Arctic," *Krasnaya Zvezda* October 20 2008.

⁵⁸ Aleksandr Bartosh, "The Arctic in NATO's Sights" North Atlantic Alliance Reviewing Coalition Strategy," *Voyenno-Promyshlenny Kuryer*, February 27 2009.

⁵⁹ "Battle for the Arctic Continues," *Krestyanskaya Rus*, October 9 2008.

⁶⁰ Olga Oliker et al., *Russian Foreign Policy: Sources and Implications* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp., 2009), p. 87.

these interests in terms of national identity. The effect has been the conflation of many aspects of Arctic issues under the rubric of interests deemed 'vital' to the national interest. The East Asian experience indicates that this is a risky venture. This section weighs the track record of Arctic states against five indicators of the impact of national identity on maritime boundary disputes.

According to Jean-Marc Blanchard, national identity can have five effects on maritime boundary disputes.⁶¹ First, the marriage of national identity to a given maritime boundary issue makes it more likely that a state will act to defend that boundary. In this case "defend" implies the entire spectrum of efforts designed to assert one's position on national sovereignty. In the case of Hans Island for instance, Danish and Canadian military officials have visited the island, planted a flag and claimed the island for themselves. This marks the lowest end of this spectrum, while open warfare marks the highest. Unlike the East Asian experience, there have been no reports of low level military posturing such as exchanges of fire or 'strafing' between Russian and Canadian forces. Russian aerial patrols can be viewed as an attempt to assert its great power status.⁶² The planes in question followed normal procedure and made no effort to violate Canadian airspace. There has however, been a resurgence of military activity on both sides. In the Canadian case this has followed decades of underinvestment in Arctic military capabilities, which has led to concerns that Canada lacks the capability to police its Northern waters.⁶³ Likewise, Russia's Northern fleet has become more active, although it has not acquired significant new hardware.⁶⁴ Neither state however, is currently capable of operating surface maritime forces in the area of potential overlap. The growing salience of the Arctic issue has coincided with a rise in military activity by both states.

Secondly, according to Blanchard, states are less likely to compromise in disputes where national identity is at stake. While there has been no effort thus far to enter into formal delimitation negotiations over potential overlaps, officials from all three states have met and discussed the basis of their claims. Furthermore, there is evidence of joint research efforts between Canada and Denmark, as well as rumours of a trilateral submission to the CLCS with Russia. This is a significant departure from past public statements from both parties. Paradoxically, these cooperative trends have progressed as the domestic salience of the Arctic issue to political leaders has increased. The Ilulissat Declaration, signed by all five Arctic coastal states in May 2008, reiterates their commitment to employing the tools afforded to states by UNCLOS to delimit boundaries.⁶⁵ This commitment was reiterated at the recent meeting in Chelsea, Quebec.⁶⁶ While there is no overlapping extended continental shelf boundary between the three

⁶¹ Jean-Marc F. Blanchard, "Maritime Issues in Asia: The Problem of Adolescence," in *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford Ca.: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 430.

⁶² For details see Allan Woods, "Russian Bombers Intercepted on Eve of Obama Visit," *The Toronto Star*, February 27 2009.

⁶³ Rob Huebert, "The Shipping News Part II: How Canada's Sovereignty Is on Thinning Ice," *International Journal* 58, no. 3 (2003), pp. 295-308.

⁶⁴ I thank Katarzyna Zysk for this point.

⁶⁵ "Ilulissat Declaration, Arctic Ocean Conference," May 28 2009, http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Ilulissat_Declaration.pdf.

⁶⁶ Chair's Summary, Arctic Ocean Foreign Ministers Meeting, March 29 2010, Chelsea, Quebec. www.international.gc.ca/polar-polaire/arctic-meeting_reunion-arctique-2010_summary_sommaire.aspx?lang=eng.

in the absence of Canada and Danish submissions, these talks indicate that national identity politics has not limited to the appeal of cooperation.

Thirdly, Blanchard observes that states become more restrictive of navigational rights when national identity is at stake. With reference to the Arctic, the restriction of navigational rights is not relevant to the extended continental shelf as states do not have jurisdiction over the water column or surface. Elsewhere in the North, Canada has reinforced its position on the NWP by extending the Arctic Water Pollution Prevention Act (AWPP) to 200nm and requesting that all vessels inform Canadian authorities when they enter the area. While some states dispute Canada's posture towards the NWP, this act merely brings the AWPP in line with UNCLOS and notification remains optional. However, there have also been efforts to symbolically claim Canadian sovereignty over the NWP which are less constructive. In December 2009, the Canadian parliament passed a bill renaming the NWP, the "Canadian Northwest Passage", with almost unanimous support. There are obvious parallels here with the Japanese-South Korean imbroglio over the name of the waters between them; 'Sea of Japan' versus the 'East Sea'.⁶⁷ This effort to restrict navigational rights by symbolically reinforcing the Canadian position on the NWP is further evidence of an effort by policymakers to instrumentally use the Arctic issue for domestic political purposes. Russia by contrast is somewhat more accommodating to international shipping through the Northeast Passage, although it insists on granting permission, and commercial vessels pay for their escort by Russian icebreakers. These attempts to restrict navigational rights are products of perceived challenges to the Russian and Canadian legal position on their internal Arctic waters from the outside. They do not emanate from the other.

Fourthly, the marriage of national identity to a maritime dispute increases the number of naval patrols in the region. As noted above, strengthening Canada's military capability in the North has been a cornerstone of Harper government policy. The Canadian Forces now hold annual "sovereignty" exercises in the North. Importantly, Canada's investment in its military presence in Arctic waters was were interpreted by some circles in Russia as an assertive turn in Canadian policy designed to militarize the Arctic.⁶⁸ This is striking because these efforts are arguably aimed at policing Canadian waters within its Arctic baselines. For its part Russia has resumed Cold War style patrols of Arctic airspace using its TU-95 Bear strategic bombers. While these were routine during the Cold War and consistent with international law, they have domestic political salience in both states. In the Russian mindset they are consistent with Russia's posture as a great power, while in Canada they have been received with irritation and hostility by elected officials. According to Defence Minister Peter Mackay: "When we see a Russian bear approaching Canadian air space, we meet them with an F-18. We remind them...that this is Canadian sovereign air space, and they turn back. And we are going to continue to do that, to demonstrate that we are watching closely their activities here."⁶⁹ While surface naval patrols are currently impossible over the extended continental shelf, the reaction and overreaction to the militarization of other areas in the North is disconcerting. This overreaction by policy elites is indicative of the top-down identity building process noted above.

⁶⁷ James Manicom, "Northwest Passage Name Game Just Spells Trouble for Canada," *The Toronto Star*, November 16 2009.

⁶⁸ See for instance Aleksandr Chuykov, "The Frozen Arctic Strategy (Opening)," *Argumenty Nedeli*, April 23 2009.

⁶⁹ Peter MacKay quoted in "Canada to keep watch on Russia's Arctic activities," *Canwest News Service*, August 19 2008.

Finally, according to Blanchard, joint development become harder to accept when national identity is at stake. While the resources of the extended continental shelf area are currently out of reach for all parties, states have resisted cooperative resource development in disputed areas closer to shore. Canada and the US have thus far resisted joint development efforts in their overlapping claim to the Beaufort Sea, despite the proven existence of commercial oil reserves and interest from international oil companies.⁷⁰ Russia's oil and gas industry is typically reluctant to take on foreign partners for fear of losing controlling interest in exploitation projects.⁷¹ Despite this reluctance to enter into JDAs however, it is not apparent that this is due to resistance from domestic political constituencies concerned about national sovereignty, as has been the case in East Asia. The area of potential overlap on the continental shelf is geographically remote and remains an abstract political issue, even with the current focus on Arctic politics. Joint development in the area of overlap may never be technically possible. Russia and Norway have a track record of cooperation on fisheries and recently concluded a delimitation agreement in the long disputed Barents Sea.⁷²

Implications and Conclusion

Have national identity politics reduced the cooperative space in the Arctic dispute? The discussion above reveals a mixed record, but on balance indicates embryonic trends towards a hardening of state policy. The paper found evidence of a top-down identity building process in both Moscow and Ottawa. In Canada it appears that elected officials are prepared to inflate threats and conflate distinct Arctic issues when the opportunity arises. Furthermore, they also seem content to downplay the degree of cooperation between Canada and Russia on seabed mapping. During his recent tour of northern settlements Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon chose not to dwell on reports that Canada and Russia had met annually since 2007 to discuss cooperation on seabed mapping.⁷³ Instead he opted to condemn reports that Russian paratroopers planned to land on the North Pole, arguing the move did not affect Canada's sovereignty.⁷⁴ Likewise, Russia's high profile efforts demonstrate its status as the leading Arctic state are aimed at domestic audiences, but also reinforce the political currency of Arctic issues in Canada.

Unlike their East Asian counterparts, there is as yet no overt effort on the part of any Arctic state to demonize the others, or to anyway suggest that conflict over the Arctic is inevitable. Moscow has been most assertive in its rhetoric on the North. Russia's National Security Strategy, published in May 2009, argued that conflict over natural resources was a source of potential conflict in the future. It also noted several regions, including the Barents Sea and parts of the Arctic, as well as the Caspian Sea, where regional rivalries over natural resources could

⁷⁰ For background see Byers, *Who Owns the Arctic?* pp. 98-105.

⁷¹ Elana Wilson Rowe, "Policy Aims and Political Realities in the Russian North," in *Russia and the North*, ed. Elana Wilson Rowe (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2009), p. 9.

⁷² International Boundaries Research Unit, "Maritime Jurisdiction and Boundaries in the Arctic Region," (University of Durham, 2008). For further discussion of all Arctic maritime boundary disputes see Alex G. Oude Elferink, "Arctic Maritime Delimitations: The Preponderance of Similarities with Other Regions," in *The Law of the Sea and Polar Maritime Delimitation and Jurisdiction*, ed. Alex G. Oude Elferink and Donald R. Rothwell (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2001), pp. 179-200.

⁷³ Reported in Mike Blanchfield, "Cannon Launches PR Tour to Highlight Canada's Arctic Claims," *The Canadian Press*, April 8 2010.

⁷⁴ Bill Curry, "The Race to Define 'Last Border of Canada'", *The Globe and Mail*, April 8 2010.

increase.⁷⁵ While international media focused on the more hawkish aspects of the strategy, the official press release drew attention to passages that explicitly denied a Russian interest in militarising the Arctic.⁷⁶ Furthermore there is evidence that the Russian media and the leadership view cooperation as the road forward in the region. One newspaper editorial for instance criticized the decision to hold a Security Council meeting in Franz Joseph land as a publicity stunt, and pointed out the softer aspects of Canadian policy.⁷⁷

Despite the top-down instrumental use of identity politics, there is no evidence in either Russia or Canada of grassroots nationalist activism calling for an assertive Arctic policy aimed at the other. This is possibly because in Russia this position is subsumed within a larger narrative of Russian great power identity, and these sentiments are directed at Western states as a whole; the United States and NATO in particular. In Canada it is unclear whether the political currency of the Arctic issue will endure. It remains to be seen whether the language of Northern sovereignty resonates in the Canadian popular discourse. In an era of minority government the issue will resonate as the Conservative Party seeks to redefine Canadian national identity away from traditional Liberal values.⁷⁸ The Arctic issue may serve this purpose. However, Canada's national identity is pluralistic, yet fragmented, which may reduce the domestic political salience of 'threats' to the Arctic. As two prominent Canadian historians point out there is "no single or static twentieth-century Canadian nationalist ideology."⁷⁹ This may serve as a constraint on elite efforts to mobilize the populace on Arctic sovereignty issues.

While policymakers have clearly used Arctic sovereignty disputes for instrumental purposes, this has not been to the exclusion of cooperative rhetoric or practices. There has been considerable progress on bilateral cooperation, most notably joint survey efforts. Cooperation in this context is partly driven by simple costs and benefits; it is expensive to conduct continental shelf mapping. Moreover, since it is the fringes of the shelf that are being examined, the missions are by definition of interest to more than one Arctic state. Canadian officials have recently appeared more sanguine about the prospects of cooperation with Russia, even as they continue to criticize its posture towards Arctic issues. The paper's conclusion remains pessimistic however, on the grounds that policymakers have not advertised this more cooperative climate, preferring instead to perpetuate an identity building project which may exacerbate tensions in the longer term.

This article has argued that domestic politics and national identity issues can complicate otherwise orderly boundary delimitation. This has certainly been the case in East Asia. Threats to perceived territorial integrity, whether over the continental North, or the extended continental shelf, attract an immediate domestic political salience. This seems most acute in Russia, where the external dimension of its "Great Power" identity makes it sensitive to perceived encroachments. Efforts by Canadian leaders to use the identity dimension of the Arctic dispute

⁷⁵ I am indebted to Katarzyna Zyrsk for this interpretation of the strategy.

⁷⁶ Luke Harding, "Energy Conflicts Could Bring Military Clashes, Russians Security Strategy Warns," *The Guardian*, May 13 2009; "Security Council Press Release on RF Policy in Arctic up to 2020," (Moscow: Russian Federation Security Council, 2009).

⁷⁷ "How Can We Grow Using the Arctic?," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, September 29 2008.

⁷⁸ Andrew Coyne, "Harper's Patriot Games." *Maclean's*, 121, no. 35-36 (2008).

⁷⁹ Norman Hillmer and Adam Chapnick, "An Abundance of Nationalisms," in *Canadas of the Mind: The Making and Unmaking of Canadian Nationalisms in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Norman Hillmer and Adam Chapnick, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), p. 5.

are likely to continue as long as the country is governed by minority governments. However, as noted above, the resonance of this language with Canadians may be limited. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that the domestic political salience of territorial and identity issues is on the rise in Canada and Russia and thus the current trajectory of the Arctic dispute reflects that of East Asian states. As a policy recommendation therefore, if Arctic states seek to avoid the level of tension witnessed in East Asian maritime disputes, a decoupling of Arctic boundary issues from national identity is in order.