Water is thicker than Blood

- A structured focused comparison on international relations
in the South China Sea

By Hannes Nilsson

Abstract

The overarching aim of this study is to gain understanding on what major state-centric international relations-theory could best explain certain aspects on modern inter-state maritime disputes. From neorealist and neoliberalist schools of thought an operational schematic was formed as a theoretical ram to break down and explain underlying structures in instances of the empirical data-universe, which consisted of interstate dealings between China, Vietnam and The Philippines regarding the contested territory of The Spratly Islands. The result was then put in comparison to distinguish which, if any conclusions could be drawn. Due to the highly limited scope and material of the study, some of the results could be put under scrutiny for being somewhat sparsely researched, while others could be expected to carry a fairly high validity. Mainly that of the neorealist school of thoughts high impact on state actions in the region. The study shows a staggering majority of neorealist markers in the actions taken by aforementioned actors, thus solidifying neorealism as the major theory.

Keywords: Spratly Islands, Structured Focused Comparison, UNCLOS, Neorealism, Neoliberalism.
Characters: 69 563

Index

1 South China Sea – A contested area

The South China Sea is today a hotbed of interstate activity. Due to its strategic location for shipping lanes, its highly complex stretches of territorial borders, the huge fishing industry in the region and the belief that underneath the seabed there might be uncountable riches in oil and other valuable minerals, several of the states bordering the South China Sea all lay claims to contested islands and the surrounding territorial waters.

The South China Sea consists of an area roughly the size of India, containing more than 250 islands and atolls with several thousand further islets, reefs and shoals, divided into five island-groups or archipelagos with The Spratly Islands and The Parcel Islands being the main ones (CIA 1, 2014). The islands are for the most part uninhabited and in many cases no more than reefs with little significant value of its own. The surrounding waters and the seabed however, is another matter, with potentially huge natural resource deposits. The South China Sea covers what is known as a continental shelf. A continental shelf is the seabed beneath a body of water which is an extension of the continental landmass giving it shallow waters (UN 1, 1982, Art. 76). How to divide this type of maritime territory is statutorily defined in the United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea (UNCLOS). Since this convention serve as a basis for much of the events this study aims to research, and is fairly technical, the paper has opted to include a more extensive section on it farther along in the study.

1.1 Background and brief history

Historically, the territory has seen much dispute, dating back several hundred years, making the disputes of today highly infected with historical prejudice and rich in context. The many islands and their adjacent territorial waters have in different historical times belonged to, or been claimed by; the Republic of China, Vietnam, Germany, France, Spain, the United States of America, and during World War II – Japan (Tønneson, 2002, pp.6).

After the second world war, the South China Sea experienced a power vacuum due in large to the defeat and withdrawal of The Empire of Japan, who in the early 1950's renounced their territorial claims to the area. This led to an increasing power struggle between the states immediately bordering the ocean. China had, with the signing of the peace accord with Japan, seized control over The Parcel and The Spratly Islands and effectively bit off a large chunk of the South China Sea far from traditional Chinese territorial waters, claiming historical ownership and published a map showing what came to be known as the nine-segment line of

the South China Sea. This line would encompass large amounts of the South China Sea with most of the islands and functions as Chinas claim to the area. With the fall of the Republic of China and its subsequent withdrawal to Taiwan, the Philippines stepped up to the plate and laid claim to the Spratly Islands, but was after a few years uprooted by returning Republic of China forces. France withdrew their claims after the expulsion from Vietnam but in its stead South Vietnam took over the claim while North Vietnam supported Chinese claims as part of their allegiance. After the North Vietnam victory in the Vietnam War, they withdrew their support to the Chinese claims and made claims of their own to both archipelagos. During this time the Philippines had once again made a bold move and occupied and laid claims to several Spratly Islands close to their mainland (ibid.). Furthermore Malaysia, Brunei, Taiwan and Indonesia have made various claims to both islands and territorial waters in The South China Sea.

In 2002 the ASEAN-states (Association of SouthEast Asian Nations, with South China Sea members; Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines) signed a code of conduct accord with China regarding state behavior in the South China Sea. In this agreement they affirm their intention to let international law, such as the UNCLOS (see details further down) to serve as a basis for solving disputes and they reiterate that no force or threat of force will be used in maritime disputes (ASEAN 1, 2002). This study aims to examine to what extent this accord has been followed by examining events between certain states in this region.

1.2 Focus of the study – The Spratly Islands

Due to the limited extent of this study I have chosen to focus the scope of my inquiries to only include events regarding the Spratly Islands (picture 1). I chose the Spratly islands mainly because of its highly contested nature and complexity in ownership.

The Spratly islands consists of more than 700 small formations, many which are only coral reefs, and surrounding waters of almost 410 000 km^2 (CIA 1, 2014) In the surrounding seabed estimations of hydrocarbon deposits surpassing 17 billion tons have been

Picture 1

made by Chinese prospectors. The figures might be seen as somewhat optimistic though and western geological experts estimate the number to be significantly less, yet still worth a substantial amount. However, if the Chinese numbers are accurate the Spratly Islands could be the fourth largest known oil-field in the world (EIA 1).

The vast majority of the formations are not inhabited or occupied, but of the larger islands several are occupied by forces from China (PRC), Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and the Republic of China. Vietnam is the state which has the highest number of islands under its control, holding more than half of the total number of occupied islands (CIA 1, 2014). The occupation in most cases does not follow clear borders but is instead often comingled in the sense that states occupy islands on either side of each other; this situation alone creates a sprouting ground for conflict. Add to it the prospect of large deposits of oil, gas and other natural resources in the vicinity of the islands and you get the recipe for a powder keg waiting to either explode or be diffused by multilateral cooperation.

To further limit the scope of the study in this vastly complex environment research will be narrowed further by only examining events taking place between three of the states claiming control of the area, China (PRC), Vietnam and the Philippines. Below follows the reasoning in choosing these three states together with a short state by state comparison table (table 1).

1.2.1 China – An emerging superpower

China is interesting for this study due to it being the major power in this region, both on an economical level as well as on a political and military. China is an authoritarian state with a single-party socialist government. It is the most populous nation in the world with north of 1,35 billion citizens. However, even though being a de-facto communist regime, the nation has adapted a mainly market-based economy, with few enterprises still under state rule. With this blend, the Chinese economy has grown like rocket for almost four decades and is today estimated to be the second largest economy in the world. Furthermore the vast economic growth has made it possible for Chinas leaders to insert a huge amount of dominance in its dealings with other nations in the area and has also let the communist regime to be able to begin a major modernization program of its armed forces. This however, has not come to be without a price. China today is the world's largest energy consumer and the world's largest oil-importer; therefor China might look upon the possibility of rich oil-fields in the South China Sea as a solution to gain energy-independence (CIA 2, 2014).

1.2.2 Vietnam – a small state with big ambitions

Vietnam is as its considerable larger neighbor to the north a single party state with a socialist/communist regime. However, it does not hold the same economic or political sway as China, but what makes it interesting is that the state is one of the newcomers on the oil-producing market and an economical rocket in the stages where China was in the mid 1990's. This alone makes them a factor in the region. Furthermore Vietnam is the state who holds the largest number of islands in the South China Sea and does not seem to be as careful of its reputation as other states when dealing with what they view as aggression in the region (CIA 3, 2014)

1.2.3 The Philippines – A corrupt democracy

The Philippines stand out as the largest democracy in the region with its constitutional republic, although a democracy with vast problems. The Philippines is considered a flawed democracy by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU 1, 2010) and according to Transparency International it currently holds 94th place on their corruption perception index (TI 1, 2013), which makes it one of the worst democracies or flawed democracies in the world in that category. Corruption aside though, the Philippines is a state enjoying good relationships with other states around the world, relationships often based on trade. It is one of the founding members of ASEAN, and holds heavy political sway over the policy ASEAN-countries abide by. By this measure the Philippines is viewed by this study as a state with a "cleaner reputation", being a de-facto democracy, making it interesting for scrutiny (CIA 4, 2014).

State	China	Vietnam	The Philippines
Goverment	Single-party socialst	Single-party socialst	Constitutional democracy
Population	1,35+Bn	89+M	99+M
GDP (nominal)	9 182 000Bn	170 020Bn	272 018Bn
Military expenditures	166,107Bn	3,363Bn	2,977Bn
Number of occupied islands	7	26	10

Table 1 – State by state comparison.

## 1.3 U NCLOS – Bringer of peace or steppingstone for power struggles?

The aforementioned countries often cite *international law* and the use of exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) when they defend their reasoning in the dispute of the Spratly Islands. The international law they are referring to is UNCLOS – the United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea (III) established in 1982.

This convention from the United Nations outlines what rights and what responsibilities ratified states have when they make use of the world's oceans. Although the convention outlines a vast number of issues ranging from trade to environmental responsibilities this study will focus on the conventions guidelines regarding the exploitation of natural resources.

The goal of UNCLOS is to help secure peace and cooperation in issues regarding the seas and to help draw maritime territorial borders in border disputes. Border disputes at sea were and are numerous, probably due to the wide range of economic benefits territorial waters might bring to a state. In the treaty it is stated that states have sole claim to, and authority over natural resources found within its territorial waters. This of course makes it imperative to determine what such borders are and how far out from land these borders reach (UN 1, 1982).

To achieve this UNCLOS is fitted with a range of tools to help determine and outline borders between states that have ratified the treaty. However, these tools can be tricky, especially in an area such as the Spratly Islands archipelago with its current unique ownership situation.

Article 76 of UNCLOS is a tool used to define the different types of maritime zones and is used to create a framework for border drawings. To illustrate why this is important for the study and to help the reader understand the mechanics behind the dispute a pictographic representation (picture 2) of the different zones have been used whilst explaining its different parts below.
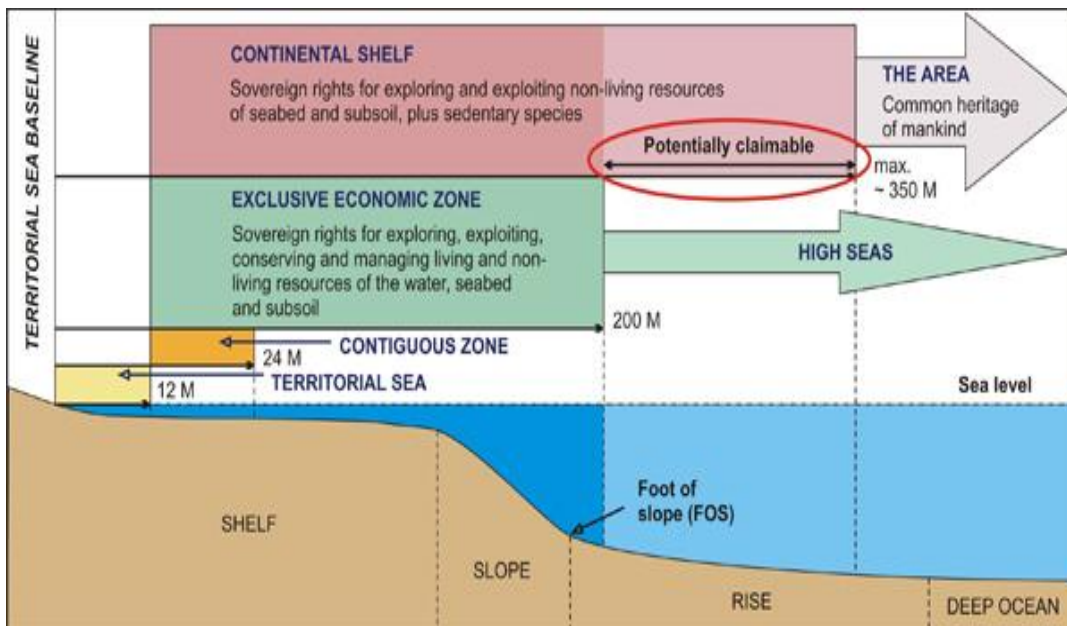
Picture 2

Coastal Baseline: The baseline is considered to be the low-water line along the coast of a landmass, and forms the "founding boundary" from which territorial waters boundaries are drawn. It is measured from the lowest point of visible land during low tide. (UN 1, 1982, Part II)

Territorial Waters: Territorial waters is allowed to extend 22,2km from the baseline out to sea, if two or more states territorial waters is to overlap, the border is drawn from the mean line between the two states (UN 1, 1982, Part II, Section 2).

Contiguous Zone: If uncontested, a state may claim a contiguous territorial zone another 22,2km from the edge of its normal territorial waters. However, there is now mechanism in place to deal with disputes over such contested contiguous zones (UN 1, 1982, Art. 33).

Exclusive Economic Zone: This is where it starts to get hairy, the EZZ is not considered territorial waters, as such; no claim can be made for regular territorial water such as creating and upholding law or taxes, since it is formally international waters. However, the EZZ grants a state exclusive right to what is under the sea level, i.e. natural resources. The EZZ normally ranges up to 370km out from the coastal baseline (UN 1, 1982, Part V).

Continental Shelf: To make matters even more complex, states have rights to make claims to the seabed, and what may be contained under it, of the continental shelf and to the rise and the slope of the continental shelf to a distance of up to 648km from the coastal baseline. These claims however had to be made to the UN by May 2009 (UN 1, 1982, Part VI).

As stated earlier the South China Sea is basically one gigantic continental shelf, thus, if a state were to gain control of the Spratly Islands it would gain hold, not only of the islands and its $410\,000\text{km}^2$ of territorial waters, but also huge domains considered EEZ and even larger areas of seabed due to the continental shelf, possibly containing trillions of dollars' worth of natural resources. This, much more than the mostly uninhabitable rocks and reefs of the Spratly Islands, is what the disputes are all about.

With the UNCLOS convention follows also the creation of ITLOS, International Tribunal for the Law Of the Sea. This tribunal is the main mechanism for resolving disputes arising from the UNCLOS treaty.

All states within the scope of this study have signed and ratified the UNCLOS agreement (UN 1, 1982 , signatories)

1.4   Research question

A world in more dire need of natural resources every day and a harsher political climate with new emerging economic and military powers is what makes this field of study so interesting. As outlined earlier in the above introduction, the potential for economic gains among budding economies can make for great contestation of territorial claims in potentially resource rich areas such as the South China Sea. However, this might also be signs of resurgence towards a kind of disputes not seen in abundance during the last decades.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union much of the peace- and conflict-studies have shifted direction, focusing on modern disputes and modern wars much more heavily focused on an individual dimension, devoid in many cases of interstate dispute and contained within the boundaries of a failing state. Due to this change in international climate a need for new theoretical approaches to peace- and conflict-studies arose leaving old state-centric approaches somewhat in the rear-view mirror.

However, new technology and rising demand for natural resources has made it profitable to exploit areas earlier considered too expensive or unreachable such as the South China Sea, or the Arctic. In these instances a state-centric approach is probably the only way to understand the conflict since only states have the capacity to reach and exploit these areas. Therefor one might wonder, is the oceans the new battlefield in state-centric international conflicts? If so, is the international community with the UN and liberal economic cooperation constructed securely enough to withstand emerging conflicts or will states hunger for power sweep these lofty goals aside? To better understand this phenomena this study will aim to compare three states actions in the South China Sea within the framework of two state-centric approaches.

- *With which of the state-centric peace- and conflict-theories – Neorealism or Neoliberalism – can one best understand China, Vietnam and the Philippines actions in situations regarding inter-state territorial disputes in the South China Sea?*

1.5 Disposition

What you have just read was the introduction, the subject limitations and the main research question of the study, immediately following this a presentation of the research methodology will be made, including a description of how the empirical data was found to make the research cumulative and comparable. With the schematic of the empirical data will also follow a construction of a chronological timeline of empirical events. Continuing, there will be a presentation of the theoretical framework and an operationalization of that framework to narrow down which criteria the empirical data will be subject to, followed by a depiction of all events in the timeline. Towards the end you will find an analytical approach to the events and discussion about the results, rounded off by the conclusions of the study, aiming to answer the original research question.

2 The virtue of a structured focused comparison case study – cumulative and comparable results

The overarching aim of this study was to compare the different mechanics which are at work in the conflicts of the South China Sea and in maritime disputes, while at the same time testing the value of state-centric theories in a new environment.

To make this study as scientifically viable as possible the decision was made to conduct a process tracing case study from a Structured Focused Comparison methodology as explained by Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, rather than a more classic case study based either solely on quantitative measures or qualitative considerations. The case in this study, of course, is that of dispute of the Spratly Islands, but when faced with comparing different actors within the scope of a certain theoretical framework during a set period of time, qualitative case-studies have the tendency to become far to wide-ranging and speculative, which according to George and Bennett limits the scientific value of such a study (2005, p. 67 – 70). The use of such a study will in many cases not produce satisfactory cumulative or comparable results and therefor the decision was made to use a structured focused comparison.

To overcome these potential scientific roadblocks this case is based on a clearly identifiably universe, that of the Spratly Islands, and will identify which instances within this universe it aims to research (ibid.). In this case the instances researched will be all events during a set period of time, containing inter-state actions between Vietnam, China and the Philippines, pertaining to the dispute of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. The instances studied will have to take place between at least two of the actors or by one actor but significantly impacting their relations to one or more of the other parties. The study was formatted this way to try and ensure the possibility of triangulation between the actors and their choices in each instance.

This structured focused comparison aims to direct general questions that reflect the overlying objective of the research to these instances and then compare the results. This way the study ensures cumulative results since the same set of questions could be asked to another set of instances chosen with the same criteria and produce comparable results (George - Bennett, 2005, p. 67)

To narrow and focus the study it is important to acknowledge that the study should only deal with certain aspects of the instances and not the instances in a broader sense. This study will focus on a certain set of neoliberal and neorealist markers and use those to question the instances relation to each theoretical alignment, in some cases the theoretical markers is fairly easy to comprehend and identify within the instances, other are justifiably more complex requiring more of

the researchers interpretation. This of course could impact the reliability of the study due to the difference of interpretations between the researcher and the reader (George – Bennett, 2005, p. 89 – 90). With this in mind the study has aimed to operationalize the theoretical framework to a very small set of variables, attempting to ensure a more comprehensive link between theory and empirical data. It may sound unjustifiably narrow; however, an attempt to broaden the scope of a case-study such as this carries with it an ever ending set of new problems. With every new inquiry, for example non-state actor events in the instances would need its own set of theoretical framework and criteria. Keeping a case-study focused and selective is imperative to be able to test the theories the study is using as its baseline. Furthermore these aspects and these questions need to be applied equally to all of the instances to produce scientifically viable results (George – Bennett, 2005, p. 112).

After testing the aforementioned theoretical markers on the empirical instances considerations will be made weather or not the actors can best be described with either neorealist variables or neoliberal variables thus answering the research question.

This study also aims towards helping to yield useful knowledge of an important field of study within international relations. Hopefully it can be used both as a new way to view the conflict of the Spratly Islands and the field of interstate maritime conflicts as a whole. Furthermore it aims to bring new light to why a state-centric approach to peace-conflict-studies is not out of date.

2.1   Finding empirical data

When finding empirical data for the study several factors came into play. The empirical data had to be found within a limited timeframe, both to limit the shear amount of data but also to keep the data relatively fresh since one of the aims of the study is to show usage of state-centric conflict-theories in *modern* inter-state relations.

Furthermore the data had to be readily available, which proved a significant challenge when dealing with instances where negotiations had been held since very little material from these negotiations have been made available to the public. One must also consider the possibility that much interaction between the actors in all aspects have not caught the public eye and is therefore not identifiable.

To find the data several different methods were used in hopes to find as a complete amount of the significant data as possible. To find information on bi/multi-lateral agreements the United Nations Treaty Collection was used since it contains all agreed to contracts between states and/or organizations. EBSCO databases were used to find scientific journal publications regarding the subject matter and news articles were used to together with UNTC establish instances. Since all these sources except UNTC will be of a secondary nature, they must be made subject to an appropriate amount of source criticism.

Problems did arise though since a significant language barrier exists. The research will have limitations to Swedish and English language material, whilst researching a phenomena in a part of the world where none of these are main languages thus significantly limiting the empirical data. These limitations is not only impacting the amount of data but might also impact validity, since much of the material will be secondary source material from mass-media, sometimes translated from another language. This translation could possibly affect the contents due in large parts to limitations in compatibility between the languages, missing some of the underlying meanings in a translation.

2.1.1 The creation of a timeline

To create the timeline of instances and limit the amount of data the study had to process, several different sources were utilized. General searches over longer time-periods were made in databases such as; UNTC, EBSCO, and mass media to find events transpiring between the actors. By combining the searches and filtering out all material not pertinent to the scope of the study a total number of events could be identified. Search parameters were then slowly narrowed until a manageable number of results were found. The search parameters were all narrowed in the same way and with the same timeframe as to not create a statistical bias and observational errors in what material should be chosen.

2.2 Weighing the events

After examining the instance and identifying what theoretical variables best suited for the situation there is another matter which needs to be taken into consideration – weighing the result. Since actions taken by the principle parties in one of the instances will to a varying degree be sorted under neorealism or neoliberalism considerations has to be made to how much of gravity that particular event is worth to the theoretical alignment. For example, a pure military engagement between two parties shelling each other with cannons should obviously carry a heavier alignment towards neorealist theory, than issuing a threat of military force.

Due to the very limited scope of this study and the short time-frame in which the research is made the initial considerations of weighing the data had to be altered. At first the intention was to add a codified set of alphanumerical values ranging from 1 − 10 and then assign each instance a value for neorealism and one for liberalism. These alphanumerical values would then be put into a matrix, allowing the reader o in a structured way to follow patterns and easily summarizing the results to a mean value.

This however would prove too daunting for a study this size and even though it might somewhat negatively impact the study's cumulativity the weighing will instead be done directly in the analysis by the researcher. This also presents

challenges to avoid preconceptions on the researchers' part when weighing the evidentiary material since political bias could impact the analysis (George – Bennett, 2005, pp. 102). Hopes are that with this clear in mind the analysis will be done as unbiased as possible.

3   A state-centric theoretical framework

Due to this study's basis in inter-state rather than intra-state disputes, considerations were made to solidify the research in state-centric approaches. The foundation of the theoretical framework will be built upon two major peace- and conflict-studies theories; the neorealist school of thought sprouting from mainly Kenneth Waltz, and the neoliberalist school of thought popularized by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye.

Both schools keep the focus on the anarchic state order but takes different approaches to how states act within this order and what mechanisms drive them to do so. To operationalize the theories several key-elements of each theory, relating to dealings between state actors in dispute situations will be identified and used as variables when further examining the instances of the study-universe.

In an effort to keep this study as modern and scientifically viable as possible, the theoretical framework variables has not solely been adapted from the founders of each genre, but also from its progression amongst more modern scholars who has continuously developed the theories.

3.1   Neorealism

The first theoretical framework chosen for this study is that of neorealism. Neorealism must be said to be a deductive theory based on drawing logical conclusions. The basis for this theoretical framework in this study will mainly derive from the Kenneth Waltz school of thought.

As stated above both the theory is based upon states as the principle actors and the belief that states exist in an anarchic organizational principle, devoid of overstate powers or global governance (Waltz, 1979, 88-89). Being a state in this anarchic world order you act after certain variables and the main purpose in this chapter is to identify what this variables are.

Neorealists believe that in an anarchic society, each actor (state) has no other choice but than to look after themselves since other states are seen as competitors and therefore *cannot be trusted* (Waltz, 1979, p. 105). The overarching goal of each state is as Mercheimer describes it, at least to *survive* and at most to achieve hegemony. To achieve its goals state actors look to state capabilities.

State capabilities are based on five considerations. (Mearshiemer, 2001, 72 – 73)

- Access to natural resources – a dependence on other states for natural resources will put military power at risk.
- Economic Strength – money is power.

- Demographic numbers - the larger populous the easier to build and maintain armed forces.
- Technological advancements – High achievements in technology will increase the relative power of each military unit.
- Military strength – The bigger the stick the more others will fear you.

Of course this chart of capabilities will have different values in each state, which will create what neorealists call, a relative capability of each state. The difference in relative capability is closely tied to what is known as the security dilemma.

The security dilemma is understood as when one actor gains a higher relative capability; the other actors fear this development and seek to further their own capability in order to assure survival. This in turn would again force the first party to *strengthen their capabilities* and so on and so forth in a never-ending spiral. However, there is some discrepancy here depending on which neorealist you ask. A defensive structure realist such as Waltz, would argue that there is a way to escape the security dilemma, since each state is seeking security, rather than power; there is an opening for states to seek alliances with stronger states and in this way ensuring its security (1979, pp. 126). Offensive realists such as Mearshiemer however, believe that states does not seek security but are inherently aggressive and seek power and hegemony thus eliminating any other chance of escaping the security dilemma. Therefor the study will only categorize this as strengthening capabilities. (2001, ch. 2)

The neorealist way of *seeking relative gains* can be described as a zero-sum game i.e. if one actor gains something the other actor/actors loses the same amount thus keeping the sum of the game at a constant zero (Waltz, 1979, p 70). This might be one of the least complex marker of identifying neorealist action; if a military force from state A lands on an island claimed by both A and state B, state B is put in a losing position. State B loses the island, state A gains the island. Furthermore if state B is in a position of power, outweighing the relative capabilities of state A, state B might be able to regain the island with the threat of annihilating state A forces, if state A sees this as a possibility it might withdraw its forces without bloodshed. Therefor both *military action* and *threat of military action* must be seen as key variables to the neorealist framework.

3.2   Neoliberalism

Just like with neorealism, neoliberal theory has its starting point in a state-centric anarchic world structure and can be seen as both deductive and positivistic in nature (Nye, 1988, p. 238). However, where neorealists see competition the neoliberalists see cooperation. Subsequently, the neoliberalist theory will have diametrical point of considerations from the neorealist. Therefore this study aims to distinguish the key variables in neoliberalist theory to use as the second theoretical framework for the empirical studies. Neorealism has its basis in

economical political theory but it has been adapted by most notably Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye to suit the international relations theory.

The neoliberalist theory approaches the idea of anarchic world order as a catalyst for cooperation between states. State-actors are in neoliberalist ideas seeking rational choice rather than relative gains (Keohane, 1989, p. 39) in what could best be described as a positive-sum seeking game theory

In a *positive-sum* game actors chose middle grounds to further all of the actors rather than to be on a standstill. The approach must be seen as rather altruistic to some extent since the gains for actor A could be significantly higher than the gains for actor B without there being any problems as long as there are gains for both. This sort of behavior is most easily accessible in bi-lateral or multi-lateral agreements on *relying efficiency of institutions* and cooperation to seek security (Kay, 2006, 74). Furthermore cooperation brings with it not only wealth but a more tightly knit bond between the actors. A tighter bond means greater risk for loss if engaged in aggressive behavior which to a rational actor would mean that *bi-lateral agreements* strengthen peace.

Another pillar of neoliberalist theory is that of the democratic peace. The concept of democratic peace is that since no two actors that have been full-fledged democracy has ever been at war with each other; democracy can serve as a cornerstone for peace. Therefore neoliberal theory has taken to *promote democracy* and democratic reforms as a way to ensure peace, security and cooperation (Keohane, 1989, p. 15 – 24). With this in mind, the instances regarding the Philippines in this study will be highly interesting since it may give clue weather or not a flawed democracy will act as a propellant for peace or not. Furthermore, neoliberals as mentioned earlier have their basis in an economical political theory, and as such they draws a clear correlation between a wealthier middle-class of a state's populous with the increased chance for a democratic government. To further this extent, neoliberalism can also be seen *promoting economic reform.*

3.3   Operational framework

Neorealism	Neoliberalism
Mistrust in other states	Positive-sum seeking
Seeking relative gains and thus by assuring long-term survival	Tying together states through bi/multilateral agreements to increase cost of aggression
Military posturing (threats and unexplained claims)	Promoting economic reform
Use of military force	Seeking institutional efficiency through cooperation
Strengthening capabilities due to perceived security dilemma	Promoting democratic peace

Table 2

14

Above has been mentioned and explained several of the key-mechanics in each theory. To make the variables more comprehensible, the theoretical framework will operate from this schematic:

These variables will be used as questions to each instance in the timeline and then considerations will be made on each instance to try and determine the different actors' theoretical alignment in each instance.

4   A half-decade of blossoming disputes

As mentioned several times in the study the scope of the research is by necessity very limited, therefore so is the number of instances the study will be able to examine. The limitations on instances was after careful consideration set on fifteen as to not gain to much empirical data since this would severely impact the depth of analysis possible for each instance. However, reducing the timeframe drastically revealed a total of thirteen instances in for the 5 year timeline between 01-05-2009 and 01-05-2014. Thirteen is close enough to the fifteen mark and hopes are that fewer instances will gain more qualitative results even though it might be lacking in ability to form patterns on how the actors have progressed over time.

During the time-period all events not linked to state-centric actors such as military, diplomatic or governmental has been sorted out, this since the study only covers state centric theoretical framework. For example such events as civil protests against embassies etc. will not be covered by the study, neither will any action not taking place within the boundaries of the Spratly Islands or directly relating to dispute of the Spratly Islands.

4.1   Timeline

The timeline was constructed by first searching the UNTC, with 1994 and forward as a baseline, all treaties submitted by either three states or by ASEAN. Further research was then conducted in 'Google news search' to find material of interest. Search was constructed on the same basis as in UNTC with all news articles from 1994 and forthwith containing any combination of the words Spratly Islands, South China Sea, Vietnam, China, Philippines and ASEAN. The search was also filtered to what must be considered reputable news-sources. First searches was made on a dozen English-speaking newspapers in the South China Sea region, however the results were far too numerous with many containing only bits and pieces of information regarding actual events taking place. Therefore changes were made to five larger news-publications in English but not only in the region, hoping these would only contain actual events, BBC, CNN, The New York Times, Washington Post, Bangkok Times, The Japan Times and the Vietnamese info.vn. A manageable number of articles were found, screened and sorted. Still the timeline was far too wide-ranging and limitations in time were made to five years instead of twenty. Doing this reduced the number of articles by

more than two thirds and after sorting out the 'doublets' a total of thirteen individual events were left and thus formed the basis of the following instances timeline.

Date	Actors	Event Description
8/05/2009	V + (C)	Vietnam makes claims on parts of the Spratly Island five days before deadline-day for UN considerations of extended EEZ's. China calls the claim illegal and invalid.
25/02/2011	C + P	Chinese Navy frigate opens fires on Philippine fishing boats.
29/03/2011 – 23/05/2011	P + C	A Philippine oil-exploration vessel is harassed by Chinese naval forces in march, in may the Philippines lodges a formal protest to ITLOS.
26/05/2011	V + C	A Vietnamese oil-exploration ship gets its survey-cables cut by Chinese patrol vessels.
09/06/2011	V + C	Same MO – Vietnamese spokesperson makes harsh statement about China.
11/10/2011	V + C	Vietnam and China agrees to a new set of principles when settling maritime disputes.
21/06/2012	V	Vietnam passes a law that asserts the claims to The Spratly Islands.
13/07/2012	C	China makes an announcement stating willingness to reopen discussion on code of conduct in the South China Sea.
22/07/2012	C + V + P	China establish a formal garrison on an island in the South China Sea and gives it administrative control over the Spratly Islands.
05/09/2012	P	The Philippines signed a decree renaming the area around The Spratly Islands The West Philippine Sea.
22/01/2013	P + C	Philippines submit a new case to ITLOS seeking clarification on the Chinese nine-segment line on the South china Sea validity.
10/01/2014	C	China imposes new rules on fishing permits in the South China Sea.

11/03/2014	C + P	Chinese naval vessels forces two Philippine re-supply ships to turn around in the Spratly Islands.

4.2 Description of empirical instances

Below will follow a more detail description of each instance in the timeline. Analysis will follow in the next chapter and hold the same outline as the descriptive part. This separation has been made to make it easier for the reader to distinguish between empirical data and research analysis. The instances will be referred to by their date in the following descriptive section and further down in the analysis.

8/05/2009 – 13th of May, 2009 was the last day for states to submit their extended EEZ claims to the UNCLOS Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). Malaysia and Vietnam co-submitted during this time a claim of areas in the South China Sea in the archipelago that is The Spratly Islands. Even though the submittal was done bi-lateral with Malaysia the claims were separate and this study will treat this instance only to Vietnam instance. The Vietnam delegation stated during the verbal presentation to the commission that the areas they were claiming were also claimed by other nation and that Chinas claim over the area did not carry any legal, historical or factual basis. (CLCS64, 2009, p. 19-20). The commission stated that considerations to the claim would be made, and that further developments in the area would be taken into consideration if such were to occur (ibid.).

Chinese reaction to this claim was livid and a spokesman for the Chines Foreign Ministry stated that China had sole sovereignty over the disputed area and urged the CLCS to ignore the Vietnamese claim which he called illegal and invalid (BBC 1, 2009).

25/02/2011 – Philippine officials claimed that three Philippine fishing boats in Spratly Island waters had been fired upon by Chinese maritime forces. The Chinese frigate Dongguan was said to be the perpetrator (Washington Times 1). It is also claimed that the Philippine fishing boats were warned to leave Chinese territorial waters before being fired upon (Thayer, 2011, p. 5 - 6).

--/03/2011 – 23/05/2011 – Philippine president Aquino stated that an arms race in the South China Sea was a real possibility due to the many clashes between South China Sea states vessels and he warned Chinese officials that with continuation of harassment that such an arms race would certainly heighten the potential of an armed conflict. The statement came two months after a Philippine oil-exploration vessel was harassed by Chinese forces in Spratly Island waters. Subsequently The Philippines also issued a formal protest with the ITLOS although not a case-submission (Bangkok Post 1, 2012).

26/05/2011 – Vietnam also had a dispute regarding oil-exploration ships with China at the same time. Vietnam accused China for deliberately cutting the

exploration-ship's survey cables by running them over with a patrol boat in high speed when the cables were still close to the surface (BBC 2, 2011).

A spokesperson for the Vietnam foreign minister later stated that Vietnam would do everything in its power to protect territorial rights and the sovereignty of Vietnam, stating that the Vietnamese navy would be tasked with the job. Chinese officials from the foreign ministry responded by blaming Vietnam, and claiming infringement on China's interests and lawful right to its resources by prospecting for oil and gas in the region (ibid.).

09/06/2011 – Only weeks after the previous incident regarding a Vietnamese oil-exploration vessel another ship was exposed to the same treatment. The same method of running the cable was used but this time under pretense that they got caught in the cables while fishing and had to cut the cables. Vietnamese officials reacted strongly to this, and accused China for trying to turn undisputed Vietnamese territory to disputed claims (info.vn, 2011).

11/10/2011 – This instance is a treaty between Vietnam and China. The agreement outlines new basic principles to guide the settlement of maritime issues between the two socialist states (Boundary news 1, 2011).

The treaty outlines that satisfactory and peaceful settlement of maritime issues between the two states is in both countries best interest, and should be based on; a mutual stability and stride towards peace, cooperation and development. Furthermore the treaty states that the two countries should build resolve their issues with future-oriented relations in mind and build up a good neighborly partnership. It further reads that periodic meetings between the heads of government in the two states shall be held on a regular basis for border negotiations and that cooperation also shall be promoted in less disputed fields such as science and natural disaster relief (UNTC I-49625).

21/06/2012 - Just over half a year after the declaration of territorial border resolution between China and Vietnam, the later passes a law outright claiming possession over the Spratly and the Parcel islands. This had a strongly negative ring to it when listening with Chinese ears. The Chinese Foreign Ministry summoned the Vietnamese ambassador in Beijing and protested the law followed by harsh condemnations to the media by a ministry spokesperson (New York Times 1, 2012).

13/07/2012 – China states that it wishes for new multilateral agreements between the ASEAN countries and China on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, hoping to formalize an agreement before November and the yearly ASEAN summit (Reuters 1). They also calls for all the nations in the region to exercise self-restraint to not escalate the tense situation (China Daily 1, 2012).

22/07/2012 – China follows its wish for a code of conduct by formalizing the administrative jurisdiction of its possessions in the South China Sea by formally establishing a garrison in the region and giving it city status. China stated that the move was made to support local emergency and disaster relief as well as carrying out military mission (Reuters 2. 2012). This move was highly criticized as a way to raise tensions in the region even higher by both Vietnam and The Philippines. Vietnam called it a serious violation of their sovereignty and the president of the

Philippines later went so far as to say that his country would never back down from a territorial dispute with China (Global Security 1, 2012).

Furthermore the president made this statement during an address to the nation and followed it by announcing the procurement of over 40 military aircrafts with delivery dates over the following two years to strengthen the Philippine defense (ibid.).

05/09/2012 – A presidential decree is made from Philippine president Aquino proclaiming that the EEZ belonging to the Philippines and incorporating Philippine claims of the Spratly Islands to no longer be called South China Sea but rather The West Philippine Sea. By doing so he effectively shown that the Philippines consider this territory to be within their full legal jurisdiction (Philippine Gov. Ad/29 s2012).

22/01/2013 – Philippines elevate the dispute over the Spratly Islands to the UN level by filing an official case with the ITLOS over the contested area. The main objective is to get the tribunal to declare the Chinese nine-segment line on the South China Sea as invalid. The Philippine notification states that the Chinese claim is as far as 1600km from the nearest Chinese coast making their claim invalid in accordance with the 1982 UNCLOS agreement. Furthermore The Philippines wishes for the tribunal to clearly acknowledge the full jurisdiction of the Philippines to their claims in the Spratly Islands as well as acknowledge China's unlawful actions in establishing a provincial government in an area not recognized by international law as sovereign Chinese territories and their subsequent expulsion of maritime vessels on wrongful grounds (Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs No. 13-0211).

10/01/2014 – The provincial government in the South China Sea established in 2012 takes new fishery laws in to affect in the South China Sea. The new laws that are Chinese national laws as of 2004, strongly limits the fishery industry without permits from the Chinese government. It also states that foreign vessels needs to be issued permits by the appropriate Chinese authorities to be allowed to exercise large scale fishing in provincial waters (PRC 2004). Since the Chinese government treat everything within their nine- segment line as provincial waters it gives itself the right to expel any foreign fishing vessel who enters the areas around the Spratly Islands. However, even though the new laws severely limits foreign involvement it also sets limitations on the entire fishing industry. These limitations can be said to be in accordance with other provisions in the UNCLOS treaty on preserving ocean environment (Fravel, 2014).

11/03/2014 – China expelled two Philippine ships on their way to re-provision a Philippine warship grounded on a reef within the Spratly Islands in 1999. Chinese officials commented on the expulsion with a statement that China had full rights over its sovereign territory of the Spratly Islands (Global Times 1, 2014).

5 Analyzing the data within the theoretical framework

Analysis the empirical data will be done in a two-step process, firstly the data will be tested towards the theoretical framework outlined earlier in the study and each instance will be judge on the theoretical variables and finally classified as to what if any theoretical alignment it holds. These results will then be listed compared and discussed.

5.1 Chronological instance-analysis

The instance-analysis will be made with the same structure as the instance-descriptions above. This time descriptions will not be made about the event but rather a straight interpretation of the events in relation to the theoretical questions found at chapter 3.3, and an attempt to decipher each instances theoretical alignment.

13/05/2009 – In this instance much of the theoretical markers of Neoliberalism could be found at a first glance, but underneath the surface a more complex situation emerges. Vietnam uses a multi-lateral agreement (UNCLOS) to take its claims and doing so bi-laterally, possibly seeking strength in numbers to overcome Chinese dominance and possibly to have an economic partner when taking control over the resource rich area. These are all factors of Neoliberalist theory. However, Vietnam uses harsh language and the fact that they accepted the partnership of Malaysia could be seen as strengthening military capabilities in a perceived security dilemma.

China postures wildly in this instance using master suppression techniques in dismissing the Vietnam claim. Both nations show great mistrust in each other. Although factors weighing in on both alignments for Vietnam this instance must be seen as slightly more neoliberal from their side while China take a slight neorealist standpoint.

25/02/2011 – This instance hold clear-cut neorealist alignment for China since they took to the use of military force. The Philippines condemned the attack but cannot be judged to hold any theoretical alignment.

29/03/2011 – 23/05/2011 – The Philippines takes to warning the Chinese, clearly taking on a threatening posture even though the rhetoric can be seen as an open hand to cooperation in deescalating tensions and merely a warning that a security dilemma might arise. Furthermore the Philippines turn to a multi-lateral

agreement to resolve the dispute by issuing a protest to ITLOS. These combined efforts of peaceful de-escalation should be seen as neoliberal from their side.

Chinese involvement in this instance is clearly neorealist with military posturing to the extent of driving off a perceived enemy.

26/05/2011 – The first of Vietnam's oil-exploration vessels twin encounter with Chinese maritime forces also holds more neorealist variables mainly due to strong military posturing after the incidents by Vietnamese officials but also to a certain extent of trying to strengthen its capabilities by gaining economic and natural resource benefits. China also holds neorealist sway in this instance, both by using a form of force when cutting the cables and also by clearly playing a zero-sum game when acting to increase relative gains (less Vietnamese oil-exploitation would mean more Chinese).

09/06/2011 – The second instance of this twin-event cannot in any way have an altered theoretical alignment. Same attempts to strengthen capabilities and seeking relative gains. Neorealist – neorealist.

11/10/2011 – A treaty based instance such as this holds many neoliberal values. The treaty agreed to by China and Vietnam holds almost all of the neoliberal markers. It is an attempt to tie together the states closer to each other, increasing the cost of aggression; it seeks economic cooperation and economic reform due to its basis in economic benefits for the populace of both nations. Clearly this is a positive-sum seeking agreement and as such a clear neoliberal theoretical alignment for both nations.

21/06/2012 – Vietnam passing this law should probably be considered a neorealist posture. However, the Chinese response is a bit trickier. China denounces the neorealist posture by diplomatic means instead of making a posture of its own. This action is, if not neoliberalist according to the study's operational framework, at least negatively devoid of neorealist mechanics. Therefor China in this instance will be considered neutral.

13/07/2012 – Another instance where China calls for multi-lateral cooperation and interstate instances for solving disputes. This has to be considered neoliberalist in the scope of this study. Even though China might have had underlying motives for their reasoning no neorealist markers can be applied to the event therefore China remains squarely in the neoliberal alignment in this instance.

22/07/2012 – Strong military posturing, seeking relative gains and strengthening its capabilities to act in the region China is with the establishment of a garrison and administrative center in the area clearly aligned in the neorealist corner within the framework of this study. It is also strengthening its military capabilities be advancing its positions, shortening the distance between the disputed area and its military. Philippines can also be seen as slightly on the neorealist scales with threatening military retaliation between the lines and severely mistrusting the other nation. Small concessions is made on Chinas part to seem less threatening by claiming it is a move towards tying the region together increasing efficiency in disaster relief operations benefiting the entire region.

05/09/2012 – The Philippines shows in this instance a clear mistrust in the other states when trying to solidify their grasp on the claim. They are also

posturing and showing that they will hold their own. Furthermore it is clearly strengthening its capabilities with the announcement of modernizing parts of the military. Clearly they act in a zero-sum seeking and neorealist manner.

22/01/2013 – This instance is once again showing The Philippines desire to solve this matter on a level that lay beyond inter-state actions. They try to seek solutions through multilateral-agreements both they and China have signed and ratified. This action should be seen as neoliberal. However, they have a clear mistrust in China and one could also argue that they seek to strengthen their own capabilities by trying to convince the tribunal to rule the ownership of The Spratly Islands in their favor. These underlying causes forces The Philippines further to the middle between the two theoretical alignments and all in all they should in this instance be viewed as neutral to slightly neoliberalist.

10/01/2014 – The Chinese fishery laws are in clear violation of the UNCLOS treaty and can only be seen as a way to seek relative gains by China. Squarely putting the region under Chinese law is also increasing Chinese capabilities and therefor no other conclusion can be drawn other than that China is acting in accordance with the neorealist framework of this study.

11/03/2014 – The subsequent expulsion of Philippines vessels and the military posturing that followed must again put China in the neorealist corner. The Philippines will in this instance join them in that corner since the ships expelled were on their way to resupply a military vessel in the disputed waters.

5.2   Discussing and weighing the data

To be able to more easily comprehend the analysis above the following table will show each instance and each actor's theoretical alignment in that instance. The weighing as stated earlier has been made solely by the researcher limiting the cumulativity of the study but also narrowing the time and space needed for analysis.

Instance	China	Vietnam	The Philippines
08/05/2009	Neorealist	Neoliberal	-
25/02/2011	Neorealist	-	Neutral
29/03/2011 – 23/05/2011	Neorealist	-	Neoliberal
26/05/2011	Neorealist	Neorealist	-
09/06/2011	Neorealist	Neorealist	-
11/10/2011	Neoliberal	Neoliberal	-
21/06/2012	Neutral	Neorealist	-
13/07/2012	Neoliberal	-	-
22/07/2012	Neorealist	-	Neorealist

05/09/2012	Neorealist		Neorealist
22/01/2013	-	-	Neutral – Neoliberal
10/01/2014	Neorealist	-	-
11/03/2014	Neorealist	-	Neorealist

Table 4

This table exposes some rather interesting points, firstly it shows that China was an active participation in almost all of the instances while Vietnam and The Philippines had active roles in roughly half of the instances. This could be interpreted as a sign that China plays a larger and more active role in the region which would be in line with the background of China as an emerging superpower.

Furthermore the analysis points toward a staggering overrepresentation of neorealist markers over the last five years. In the case of China neorealist alignment was shown in 8 out of 13 instances where the Chinese played an active role, that is a neorealist representation in 72% of the cases, while Vietnam shows a neorealist alignment in 60% of their cases and The Philippine equivalent is 50%. Arguments can be made both for this being a result of governments, with the democracy in the bunch showing neorealist alignment in a lesser extent then the two one-party regimes, or in terms of military expenditure where the state who has the lowest military expenditures also have the lowest number of instances with neorealist alignment and vice versa.

A more interesting revelation is that of the actor with the most occupied islands in the Spratly archipelago, Vietnam, is the state who plays a role in the least amount of instances during the examined time period. The same can be said for the other way round since China is the state with least amount of occupied islands but the actor who takes okays the largest role during the period.

When examining the neoliberal alignments one might be shocked by the very abysmal role they seem to have played in the region during the five-year period. Not only in the sense that very few of the instances has had actors with neoliberal alignments but also since the weight of these alignments has not been nearly as heavily gravitated towards its alignment as most of the neorealist alignments.

However, it should be kept in mind that many of the more significant multi-lateral agreements such as the UNCLOS and the ASEAN used as cornerstones of the study and were signed before the scope in which this study operates.

Moreover the UNCLOS agreement can after considering the basis of dispute in most of the instances be called into question as a positive neoliberal agreement for peace and cooperation since much of the disputes stem from its rules regarding EEZ and continental shelves.

6   Conclusions

Even with the limited amount of instances in this structured focused comparison, clear representations of what international relations theoretical alignments were most readily present in the inter-state relations of The Spratly Islands could be seen. Although the scope of the enquiry could have been far wider in a larger study, presenting more decisive and cumulative results the staggering overrepresentation of neorealist alignment from the examined actors in the region cannot be seen as an illusion create by limited data.

The limited scope of this study might have contributed to the lopsided result, but clashes over South China Sea riches continues all over the region, between all actors, most recently in huge water fights between Vietnamese and Chinese naval vessels, tells the same story – interstate territorial disputes in this region is not yet resolved by multi-lateral agreements such as UNCLOS.

Moreover the UNCLOS treaty could be seen, not as the bringer of order it was meant to be but rather a catalyst for inter-state territorial squabbles, made possible by a loosely defined judicial framework in the treaty. There is of course the possibility that the problems arising because of the treaty could be seen only as childhood diseases and will be resolved by themselves before very long. However, there is the much more frightening possibility of this only being the beginning of a decades long struggle between expansionistic states which won't be resolved until every little island, islet, reef and shoal on the planet is submitted to the ITLOS and tried judicially.

To conclude, a wider and more far-reaching study conducted in this manner would most certainly carry with it more scientifically valuable results. However, the study should still be considered fairly cumulative in the way that if someone wanted to redo this study using the same means the results would probably be within the margin of errors. A more substantial system for weighing the impact of the theoretical framework on the empirical data would most certainly have contributed to cumulativity.

In essence, the general research objective was reached and the research question could be answered with: The neorealist theory should be considered as the peace- and conflict-theory that one should use to better understand state-actors actions in inter-state territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

7 References

ASEAN 1, = Association of SouthEast Asian Nations, "Declaration on the conduct of parties in the South China Sea". Signatory date. 2002-11-04

Bangkok Post 1. 2011. "Philippines warns of arms race in South China Sea". Newsarticle. 20011-05-25. [Electronic]. http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/238723/philippines-warns-of-arms-race-in-south-china-sea. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-16

BBC 1, 2009. "China asserts sea border claims". Newsarticle. 2009-05-13. [Electronic]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8047206.stm. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-16

BBC 2, 2011. "Vitnam accuses China in seas dispute". Newsarticle. 2011-05-30. [Electronic]. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13592508. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-16

Boundary News 1 = Durham University: International Research Unit, 2011, "China and Vietnam agree principles for resolving maritime disputes". [Electronic]. https://www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/news/boundary_news/?itemno=12969. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-20

China Daily 1, 2012. "China open to discussion on South China Sea code". Newsarticle. 2012-07-13. [Electronic] http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-07/13/content_15579101.htm. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-25.

CIA 1 – CIA World Fact Book, 2014. Last updated 2014-03-27 [Electronic] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pg.html. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-08

CIA 2 – CIA World Fact Book, 2014. Last updated 2014-05-01 [Electronic] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-08

CIA 3 – CIA World Fact Book, 2014. Last updated 2014-04-15 [Electronic] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-08

CIA 4 – CIA World Fact Book, 2014. Last updated 2014-04-14 [Electronic] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rp.html. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-08

CLCS64 = Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, 2009. "Twenty-fourth session". New York: United Nations [Electronic]. http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/536/21/PDF/N0953621.pdf?OpenElement/. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-14

EIA1 – U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2013 "South China Sea" [Electronic] http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=scs. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-16

EIU 1 – Economist Intelligence Unit. 2010. "Democracy Index" [Electronic] http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy_Index_2010_web.pdf. Retrivaldate: 2013-05-27

Fravel, Taylor, 2014. "Hainan's New Fishing Rules: A Preliminary Analysis". The Diplomat Magazine. [Electronic]. http://thediplomat.com/2014/01/hainans-new-fishing-rules-a-preliminary-analysis/. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-26

George, Alexander L – Bennett, Andrew, 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press

Global Security, 2012. "Philippines Slams China's Establishment of Sansha City in South China Sea". Newsarticle. 2012-07-23. [Electronic] http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2012/07/mil-120723-voa06.htm. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-23.

Global Times 1, 2014. "China expels Philippine ships from Ren'ai Reef". Newsarticle. 2014-03-11. [Electronic] http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/847524.shtml. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-26.

Info.vn 1, 2011. "What China says about the East Sea incident". Newsarticle. 2011-06-10. [Elektronisk] http://news.com.vn/explore-vietnam/destination/28327.html. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-18.

Kay, Sean, 2006. "Neoliberalism: Institutions at war" pp. 62-74. In Sterling-Folker, Jennifer, [ed.] *Making Sense of International Relations Theory*. London: Lynne Rienner

Keohane, Robert, 1989. *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory*. Boulder: Westview

Mearsheimer, John J, 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc.

New York Times 1, 2012. "Vietnam Law on Contested Islands Draws China's Ire". Newsarticle. 2012-06-21. [Electronic] http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/world/asia/china-criticizes-vietnam-in-dispute-over-islands.html?_r=1&. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-23.

Nye, Joseph. 1988. "Neorealism and Neoliberalism". pp. 235 – 251. *World Politics*. 40/2 1988.

Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs 13-0211 = Philippines Department on Foreign Affairs, 2013. "Notification and Statement of Claim on the West Philippine Sea". [Electronic]. http://www.scribd.com/doc/121585323/Notification-and-Statement-of-Claim-on-the-West-Philippine-Sea. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-26

Philippine Gov. Ad/29 s2012 = Philippine Government, 2012. "Administrative Order No. 29, s. 2012" [Electronic]. http://www.gov.ph/2012/09/05/administrative-order-no-29-s-2012/. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-25

PRC 1 = People's Republic of China web, Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China. [Electronic]. http://www.china.org.cn/china/LegislationsForm2001-2010/2011-02/14/content_21917138.htm. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-26

Reuters 1, 2012. ""ASEAN Way" founders in South China Sea storm". Newsarticle.. 2012-07-17. [Electronic] http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/17/us-asean-china-idUSBRE86G09N20120717. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-25.

Reuters 2, 2012. "China to formally garrison disputed South China Sea". Newsarticle. 2012-07-22. [Electronic] http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/22/us-china-sea-idUSBRE86L08B20120722. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-25.

Thayer, Carlayle A, 2011. "China's New Wave of Aggressive Asssertivenessin the South China Sea", [Electronic] http://csis.org/files/publication/110629_Thayer_South_China_Sea.pdf. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-15

TI 1 – Transparncy International. 2013. "Corruption Perception Index" [Electronic] http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2013/results/. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-27

Tønnesson, Stein. 2002. "The History of the Dispute" pp. 6 – 23, in Tivo Kivimäki [edi], 2002. *War or Peace in the South China Sea*, Copenhagen: NIAS Press

UN 1 = United Nations, 1982. "United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea." [Electronic]. http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf . Retrivaldate: 2014-05-08

UNTC I-49625 = United Nations Treaty Council, 2011, "Viet Nam and China" [Electronic] https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/No%20Volume/49625/Part/I-49625-080000028032be5c.pdf. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-20

Waltz, Kenneth N, 1979, *Theory of International Politics*. Michigan: McGraw-Hill Inc.

Washington Times, 2012. "Inside the Ring: China warship grounded". Newsarticle. 2012-08-08. [Electronic] http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/aug/8/inside-the-ring-china-warship-grounded/?page=all. Retrivaldate: 2014-05-25.

7.1 Captions:

Picture 1: http://www.asianweek.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Map-of-Spratly-Islands.gif

Picture 2: http://www.bgr.bund.de/EN/Themen/Zusammenarbeit/TechnZusammenarb/Bilder/tzp_seerechtskonventionen_k_en.jpg?__blob=normal&v=2