

Maritime Delimitation and the People's Liberation Army Navy:
Impact in the East China Sea

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Abstract:

Tensions between China and Japan over disputed maritime boundaries in the East China Sea have dramatically escalated in the past decade. This thesis examines how disputed delimitation in the East China Sea has impacted the development, interests, and policies of China's People's Liberation Army Navy. The key questions addressed in this paper are; how is China's interpretation of delimitation in the East China Sea unique? Why is maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, so important to the PLA Navy? And what policies is the PLA Navy promoting in support of China's East China Sea maritime delimitation claims and why? In brief, this paper will demonstrate and conclude that China has made a unique and controversially large maritime territory claim, based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea's 76th article on natural prolongation of a nation's maritime shelf. The PLA Navy views maintaining and securing China's delimited maritime territory as crucial to securing undersea natural resources and vital shipping lanes, thus securing China's economic power. The PLA Navy understands that a strong, blue-water navy is critical to a country's economic success and subsequent presence as an international political power. The key policies being promoted by the navy are the assertion and defense of maritime boundaries, especially rights to offshore resources with China's EEZ; securing sea lanes and freedom of navigation at sea; and being a presence in sovereignty disputes over offshore islands as well as Taiwan. All of these issues are critical to the PLA Navy's goals of preserving China's economic and political power.

Tensions over disputed territorial claims in the East China Sea have escalated significantly in the past two several years – particularly between the nations of China and Japan. In 2014 alone, these two nations have each increasingly demonstrated their willingness, politically and militarily, to reinforce their respective, overlapping maritime claims. The pervasive showing of arms and political threats being exchanged between China and Japan over this issue has consistently gripped world news headlines over the past two years. Articles addressing this conflict have focused on the East China Sea delimitation and how each country has drawn its claim. On the Chinese side of the issue; what has seldom been examined is who, or what force, is driving policy to extend and defend China’s maritime periphery assertions. Through extensive research of both Western and Chinese texts, it becomes apparent that the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy has been the driving force in Chinese policy and strategy regarding the extension and overt defensive of maritime boundaries throughout East Asia. This discovery led to the driving questions of this research paper; how is China’s interpretation of delimitation in the East China Sea unique? Why is maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, so important to the PLA Navy? And what policies, and why, is the PLA Navy promoting in support of China’s East China Sea maritime delimitation claims.

This paper's background chapter will address the question of how China's interpretation of the East China Sea is unique. This chapter examines the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the outlined regulations that have led to the disputed delimitation of the East China Sea. Using laws from the convention, this chapter then inspects how China and Japan have each drawn their boundaries and to what purpose. By examining the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, China's disputed interpretation, and the disputes that have broken out; the background will give light to how and why China is defending its disputed maritime periphery.

The question of why maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, is so important to the PLA Navy will be partially addressed in the theoretical chapter. This chapter utilizes Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory of sea power to determine the rationale behind the importance of maritime sovereignty and uses Imperial Japan as an example of the theory in practice. As a theory of great popularity and importance amongst modern PLA Navy officials, sea power theory frames and supports the question of why maritime sovereignty over disputed delimitation in the East China Sea is of such importance to both China and its navy. This chapter further utilizes security dilemma theory to explore the rationale behind the arms race associated with defending maritime territory. In short, this chapter uses Mahan's power of the sea and security dilemma theories, to examine disputed regional maritime delimitation and the subsequent competitive growth of naval forces in Northeast Asia.

The literature review and methodology chapter will set up the following case study by outlining the research that has led to this paper's research findings. The primary fields utilized in this paper's research were works related to; the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the East China Sea, Alfred Thayer Mahan, security dilemmas, natural resource security, online news reports, Chinese naval power and policy, maritime boundary conflict, and Chinese-Japanese conflict. The methodology behind this paper's research is also included in this chapter.

The case study chapter will continue to address the question of why maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, is so important to the PLA Navy and will answer as to what policies, and why, the PLA Navy is promoting in support of China's East China Sea maritime delimitation claims. This chapter focuses in-depth on the PLA Navy and its interests in the East

China Sea and examines how the PLA Navy's regional policy interests differ from that of the Chinese Communist Party. Disputed maritime boundaries were one of the primary factors in the modernization of China's Navy. In recent times, the PLA Navy has become the main voice in China that is pushing for an increasingly offensive strategy in reinforcing disputed maritime boundaries and accessing undersea natural resources. This chapter will examine why the Chinese navy is so invested in East China Sea boundaries and for what purpose they are protecting them. In the discussion and findings segment of this chapter, I will use my findings to examine the implications of my case study for China and Northeast Asia.

In summation, this research paper will find that China has used the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as justification for extending its maritime periphery in the East China Sea to further secure access to undersea natural resources and vital shipping lanes. The continued defense and ratcheting military buildup over the issue, steeped in history, is being championed by the PLA Navy. Following the teachings of Mahan, the PLA Navy views itself as the protector of China's economy and subsequent presence as an international power. To succeed in this role, the navy is actively pushing policies and naval defense budget increases in the interest of securing China's territorial maritime claims and regional maritime sovereignty.

Chapter 1: The United Nation's Convention on the Law of the Sea and the delimitation of the East China Sea

The dispute between and China and Japan over maritime delimitation in the East China Sea has primarily arisen since the discovery of vast undersea resources in 1968, validated through differing interpretations of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, ratified by both China and Japan in 1996. This chapter will examine the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and use the law to interpret China and Japan's differing interpretations. Context to the dispute will be given through a brief history of China and Japan's historical claims to the East China Sea and by assessing undersea reserves of oil and natural gas that lay under the East China Sea and their impact on the disputed boundaries. Finally, this chapter will look at the potential impact of the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in drawing maritime boundaries. This chapter will ultimately answer the question of how China's interpretation of delimitation in the East China Sea is unique.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

The rights to and claims over open seas have been a challenge to societies for thousands of years. Over centuries, societies have produced common understandings and written agreements to help navigate the claims of liquid boundaries. The earliest maritime laws, the Rhodian Sea Laws, purportedly date back as early as 900 B.C.¹ However, it was the seventeenth century freedom-of-the-seas doctrine – the principle that limited any country’s maritime jurisdiction and rights to a band along its coast, guaranteeing the freedom of the open seas – that took the first tremendous step towards the international maritime laws that are recognized today.² Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), international maritime laws are currently established and better regulated than at any other time in history. However, as new challenges arise, such as rights and claims to undersea oil and gas, and interpretations of laws and maritime boundaries are challenged, maintaining order and peace in the world’s ocean and seas is an ongoing challenge.

Following the establishment of the United Nations in 1945; the international community requested that the United Nations International Law Commission consider codifying existing laws relating to the oceans.³ As a result, starting from 1949, there have been three United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea. The third, and current, convention began in 1973, was concluded on December 10th, 1982, and came into effect on November 16th, 1994.⁴ The convention has since been ratified by 166 nation states⁵ and is observed by others (including the United States), standing as the modern standard in international maritime issues.

The third convention was convened over concerns that the current convention needed to be updated to take into account rapidly changing technologies that were impacting maritime

¹ Haile, Gabriel. "Historical Development of Maritime Law." *Abyssinia Law*. N.p., 20 July 2013. Web. <<http://www.abyssinialaw.com/root/site/article/1072/historical-development-of-maritime-law>>.

² United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: Historical Perspective*. United Nations, n.d. Web. <http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_historical_perspective.htm>.

³ "Continental Shelf Programme." *Background to UNCLOS*. GRID-Arendal, n.d. Web. <<http://www.continentalshelf.org/about/1143.aspx>>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

issues.⁶ As a result, delegations from over 160 countries met to set provisions regarding maritime limits, navigation, exclusive economic zones, continental shelves, deep seabed mining, exploitation by regimes, technological prospects, questions of universal participation in the convention, pioneer investors, protection of marine environments, marine scientific research, and settlement of disputes.⁷

Critically important to the third convention was the issue of sovereignty over sea and ocean beds. With rapid developments in technology, undersea oil and gas deposits were becoming exploitable for the first time. Previous maritime discussions and disputes had been primarily focused on surface issues such as shipping lanes and fishing rights. The potential black gold rush for undersea oil in the 1960s heralded a new age in international maritime disputes. The issue was of such concern that the United Nation's Seabed Committee was created as part of the third convention and it was decided to rewrite international maritime law to take into account that widening diversity of claims on different zones of open waters.⁸ The third convention specifically defined the following maritime zones: the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone, the continental shelf, the high sea, the international sea-bed area and archipelagic waters.⁹

UNCLOS and the definition of maritime boundaries

The redefining of maritime zones under the third convention has created tension around the world as seas and oceans are being demarcated to meet new laws. The policies outlining the perimeters of the territorial sea and contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone, and the continental shelf have been the most important for states in claiming maritime sovereignty. As

⁶ United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: Historical Perspective*. United Nations, n.d. Web.

⁷ United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: Historical Perspective*. United Nations, n.d. Web.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "Continental Shelf Programme." *Background to UNCLOS*. GRID-Arendal, n.d. Web. <<http://www.continentalshelf.org/about/1143.aspx>>.

this paper moves to examine disputed delimitation in the East China Sea, it is important to look at the specific legal text from which countries have based their claimed boundaries.

The measure of a nation state's territorial sea and contiguous zone is defined in the convention under part II, section II, article 3 of the convention as; "Every State has the right to establish the breadth of its territorial sea up to a limit not exceeding 12 nautical miles, measured from baselines determined in accordance with this Convention."¹⁰ Additionally, "this sovereignty extends to the air space over the territorial sea as well as to its bed and subsoil."¹¹ A nation's territorial sea and contiguous zone is where it maintains the greatest control. It is in the adjoining exclusive economic and continental shelf zones that a nation's power is less defined and that boundary contention arises.

According to part V, article 57 of the convention; "The exclusive economic zone shall not extend beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured."¹² According to part V, article 56 *Rights, jurisdiction and duties of the coastal State in the exclusive economic zone:*

1. In the exclusive economic zone, the coastal State has:

- (a) sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources, whether living or non-living, of the waters superjacent to the seabed and of the seabed and its subsoil, and with regard to other activities for the economic exploitation and exploration of the zone, such as the production of energy from the water, currents and winds;
- (b) jurisdiction as provided for in the relevant provisions of this Convention with regard to:

¹⁰ United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. United Nations. Web.

<http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf>.

Part 2, section 2, article 3.

¹¹ Ibid. Part 2, section 1, article 2.2.

¹² Ibid. Part V, article 57.

- (i) the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures;
 - (ii) marine scientific research;
 - (iii) the protection and preservation of the marine environment;
- (c) other rights and duties provided for in this Convention.¹³

Unlike the territorial sea and contiguous zone, ships and planes originating from other nations have the right to navigate a nation state's exclusive economic zone.

Lastly, the boundary of a nation's continental shelf zone is defined in part VI, article 76.1 as "... the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin, or to a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured where the outer edge of the continental margin does not extend up to that distance."¹⁴ This is further outlined in articles 76.5, 76.6 and 76.7.

5. The fixed points comprising the line of the outer limits of the continental shelf on the seabed, drawn in accordance with paragraph 4 (a)(i) and (ii), either shall not exceed 350 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured or shall not exceed 100 nautical miles from the 2,500 metre isobath, which is a line connecting the depth of 2,500 metres.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 5, on submarine ridges, the outer limit of the continental shelf shall not exceed 350 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. This paragraph does not apply to submarine elevations that are natural components of the continental margin, such as its plateaux, rises, caps, banks and spurs.

¹³ Ibid. Part V, article 56.1.

¹⁴ Ibid. Part VI, article 76.1.

7. The coastal State shall delineate the outer limits of its continental shelf, where that shelf extends beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured, by straight lines not exceeding 60 nautical miles in length, connecting fixed points, defined by coordinates of latitude and longitude.¹⁵

UNCLOS and the East China Sea

The East China Sea encompasses an estimated 480,000 square miles and forms coastline on the countries of China, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.¹⁶ Spurred by an extensive and difficult history between Northeast Asian countries, there have long been disputes over the sovereignty of the sea's boundaries and resources. Currently, the greatest rivalry over the East China Sea has been between China and Japan. With a long and troubled past, UNCLOS has become a new ground for these two nations to take opposing sides. UNCLOS's emergence as a formal, diplomatic mechanism has given nations the means to make direct assertions of maritime claim.¹⁷ In bodies of water where claimed boundaries overlap, this has led to diplomatic hotbeds around the world. However, few can compare to the spiraling tensions between China and Japan and their competing claims over the East China Sea.

A brief Chinese history of the East China Sea

The pre-modern Chinese empire once stood at the center of East Asia. The world order of the empire was based on status and stability (mingfen zhixu).¹⁸ Under mingfen zhixu, legitimacy

¹⁵ Ibid. Part VI, article 76.4,.5,.6)

¹⁶ East China Sea. Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs, East China Sea. Sep. 2012 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=ecs>>

¹⁷ Ronald O'Rourke, *Maritime Territorial and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Disputes Involving China: Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 9 August 2013), R42784. Pg 20

¹⁸ Lee, Joyman. "Diaoyu/Senkaku: Islands of Conflict." *History Today* 61.5 (2011): n. pag. History Today. Web. <<http://www.historytoday.com/joyman-lee/senkakudiaoyu-islands-conflict>>.

came from recognizing and serving in the role dictated by that role's status.¹⁹ This philosophy was not limited to individuals; it also extended to China's view of neighboring nations. China viewed itself and its emperor as the center of civility and civilization. As such, neighboring nations took the role of tributaries, not by force, but by accepted extension of the Chinese empire's legitimacy. Tributary trade with China was extremely profitable and provided many goods that could not be easily accessed elsewhere. Gifts and titles from the Chinese emperor allowed rulers to strengthen their own positions vis-à-vis their subjects. Although Japan stayed out of the system during its Tokugawa period (1603-1868) the vast majority of nations in east, inner and south-east Asia, including the Ryukyus (modern-day Okinawa), accepted a tributary relationship with China.²⁰ Dictating regional foreign policy for hundreds of years has impacted modern China's view of its relationship with its former-tributary neighbors in the East China Sea.

Following China's defeat by Britain in the Opium Wars and the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, 'Western' powers won the right to impose their own ideals of international law on East Asia – replacing Chinese law.²¹ As China was steadily losing control of its maritime presence, Japan was increasing its own. By the mid-1800s, Japan was becoming a maritime presence in the East China Sea, signing trade agreements with neighboring nations and using the removal of Chinese law to forward its own aspirations to power in the region. Japan, following its defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95, established control of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands and Korea and seized Taiwan.²² Following Japan's defeat in World War II, Taiwan was returned to China and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands became controlled by United States occupation authorities in Okinawa until 1972.²³ Taiwan later claimed independence after a

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Hsiung, James C. *China and Japan at Odds: Deciphering the Perpetual Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print. Pg. 81

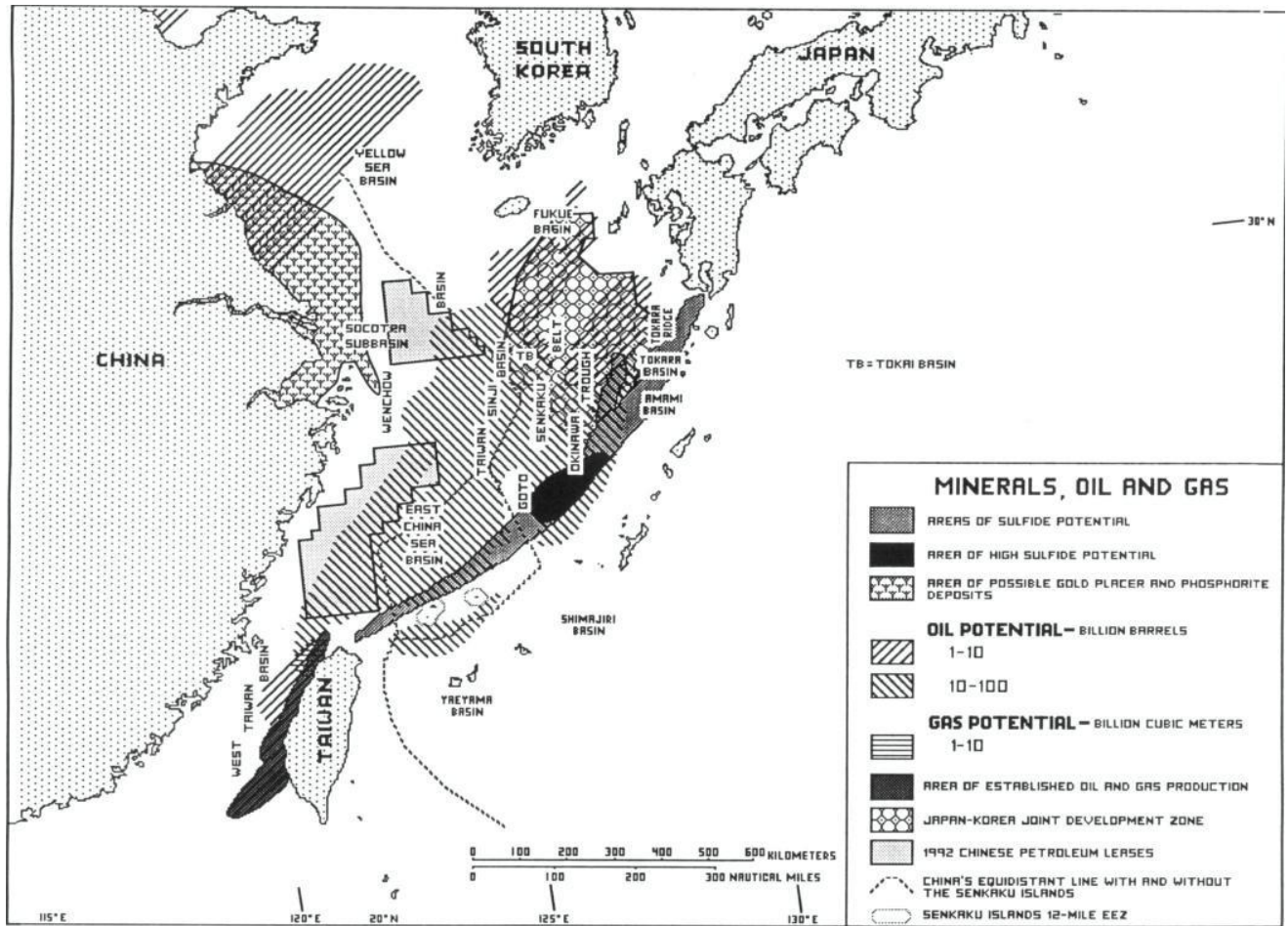
²² Koo, Min Gyo. *Island Disputes and Maritime Regime Building in East Asia: Between a Rock and a Hard Place*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009. Print. Pg. 105.

²³ Ibid.

civil war between China's Communist Party and the Guomindang ended in 1949 and resulted in the Guomindang faction fleeing to the island and instating itself as a new nation.²⁴

East China Sea and the discovery of resources

Map 1. Petroleum and mineral resources in the East China Sea²⁵



Following WWII and leading up to 1968, China was on reasonably neutral terms with neighboring nations over the division of the East China Sea. However, the discovery of vast reserves of oil and gas in the sea in the 1960s would soon cause division. By the mid-1960s, technologies to extract petroleum and natural gas from seabeds had recently been realized and an

²⁴ Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print. Pg. 296.

²⁵ Noel A. Ludwig, Mark J. Valencia. "Oil and mineral resources of the East China Sea: Prospects in relation to maritime boundaries," *GeoJournal*, 1993: Vol. 30, No. 4. 381-387. Pg. 382

industrialization boom in East Asia was increasing the need for natural resources.²⁶ It was under these circumstances that the Committee for Coordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in Asian Offshore Areas (CCOP), under the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), was created in 1966.²⁷

In 1968, CCOP conducted a geological survey of the Yellow and East China Seas.²⁸ The survey concluded that there were vast oil and gas reserves in the East China Sea, particularly along the Xihu/Okinawa Trough and near the Daiyu/Senkaku islands (lying just off of the trough), stating “a high probability exists that the continental shelf between Taiwan and Japan may be one of the most prolific oil reservoirs in the world.”²⁹ Following the findings of this survey, China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea began to make overlying claims on the maritime boundaries of the trough.

As a result, the resource rich Xihu/Okinawa trough is one of the most highly disputed points in the East China Sea. Lying just west of the Japanese Ryukyu island chain, the trough is approximately 900 kilometers in length and 36-150 kilometers in width, covering over 100,000 square kilometers in total.³⁰ A large section of the trough is more than 1000 meters deep with a maximum depth of 2322 meters – the average depth in the East China Sea is only 370 meters.³¹

The EIA estimates that the East China Sea has between 60 and 100 million barrels of oil (mmbbl) in proven and probable reserves, with Chinese sources claiming that undiscovered resources can run as high as 70 to 160 billion barrels of oil - mostly in the Xihu/Okinawa

²⁶ Gao, Zhiguo / Wu, Jilu (2005), “Key issues in the East China Sea: A status report and recommended approaches”, in: Harrison, Selig (ed.), *Seabed petroleum in North East Asia: Conflict or cooperation?*, Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, pp. 32-38.
<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Zhiguo_Gao_and_Jilu_Wu.pdf>

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Emmers, Ralf. *Geopolitics and Maritime Territorial Disputes in East Asia*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print. Pg51.

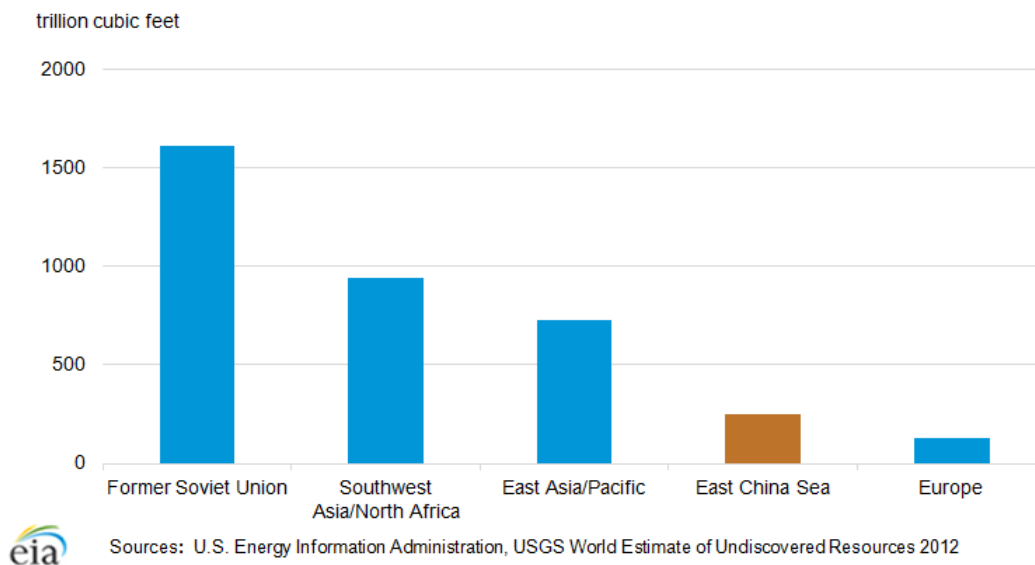
²⁹ Gao, Zhiguo / Wu, Jilu (2005), “Key issues in the East China Sea: A status report and recommended approaches”, in: Harrison, Selig (ed.), *Seabed petroleum in North East Asia: Conflict or cooperation?*, Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, pp. 32-38.
<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Zhiguo_Gao_and_Jilu_Wu.pdf>

³⁰ Gao, Jianjun. "The Okinawa Trough Issue in the Continental Shelf Delimitation Disputes within the East China Sea." *Chinese Journal of International Law* 9.1 (2010): 143-47. *Oxford Journals*. Web.

³¹ Ibid.

trough.³² However, "undiscovered resources do not take into account economic factors relevant to bring them into production, unlike proven and probable reserves."³³

Chart 1. Natural gas, mean undiscovered technically recoverable resources, 2012³⁴



The EIA estimates that the East China Sea has between 1 and 2 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) in proven and probable natural gas reserves. The region may also have significant upside potential in terms of natural gas. Chinese sources point to as much as 250 Tcf in undiscovered gas resources, mostly in the Xihu/Okinawa trough.³⁵ Expansion of offshore exploration has become one of China's top development strategies. According to an industry source, gas from the East China Sea supplied approximately 12 percent of Zhejiang Province natural gas needs in the first half of 2012.³⁶ About 18 percent of overall Chinese oil production is from offshore reserves, and most of China's net oil production growth will likely come from offshore fields.³⁷ According to

³² East China Sea. Energy Information Administration. *Country Analysis Briefs, East China Sea*. Sep. 2012 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=ecs>>

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ East China Sea. Energy Information Administration. *Country Analysis Briefs, East China Sea*. Sep. 2012 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=ecs>>

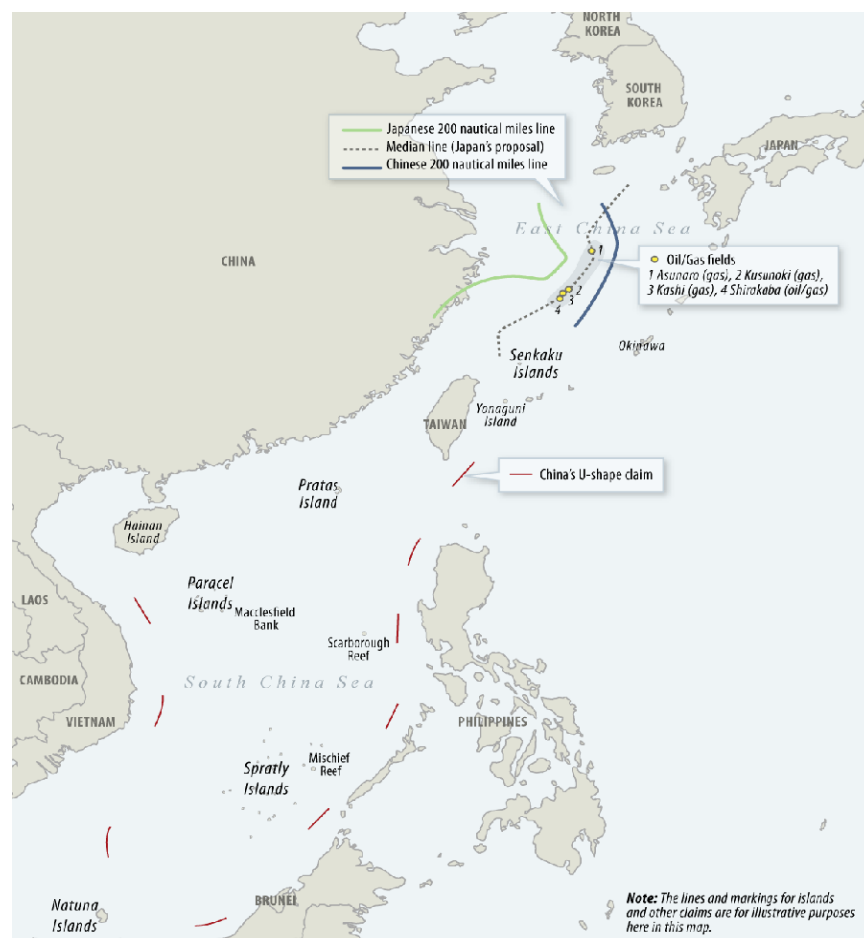
³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "China." *CIA World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, 1 May 2014. Web. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>>.

the International Energy Agency, current offshore production is 680,000 bbl/d, and is expected to rise to 980,000 by the end of 2014.³⁸ It is no coincidence that China measures its maritime boundary over 200 nautical miles to end in the trough. Obtaining and maintaining control of East China Sea resources is vital to China's resource security.

Map 2. China and Japan territorial claims.³⁹



Deferring interpretations of maritime boundaries in the East China Sea

The current dispute between China and Japan over sovereignty in the East China Sea begins with different citations of UNCLOS. UNCLOS was officially ratified by both China and

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ronald O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 10 April 2014), RL33153.

Japan in 1996.⁴⁰ However, each country has self-servingly taken different interpretations of the convention in defining their maritime boundaries. China's boundary claims bring us back to article 76 of the convention 'definition of continental shelf.' Drawing on article 76, China supports application of the principle of "natural prolongation" of the continental shelf, out to 350 nautical miles.⁴¹ Drawing on a map, China counts its continental shelf as extending hundreds of miles, ending in the Xihu/Okinawa trough.⁴² Additionally, due to the depths of parts of the Xihu/Okinawa trough, China claims that its continental shelf ends naturally and therefore, Japan's shelf ends at the same point (well before Japan's 200 nautical miles).⁴³

On the other hand, Japan – as well as all other countries in the region - draws its boundary from the stipulations of article 56 'breadth of the exclusive economic zone,' claiming 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. Japan has loudly purported the UNCLOS principles of "equidistance" and "equitable solution" in determining a median maritime boundary between itself and China.⁴⁴ Essentially, it would equate drawing a median line between the two opposing claims. However, according to Peter Dutton, "UNCLOS provides no guidance as to just what factors constitute an equitable means of dividing between two claimants the seabed with its resources and the water column with its resources. Many international courts and tribunals have reverted to the equidistance standard with corrections for factors such as offshore islands, disparate lengths of opposing coastlines, and economic considerations. Still, because signatories to UNCLOS are bound only to its

⁴⁰ United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: Historical Perspective*. United Nations, n.d. Web. <http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_historical_perspective.htm>.

⁴¹ Bush, Richard C. *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010. Print. Pg. 67.

⁴² 85 Dutton, Peter. "Carving up the East China Sea." *Naval War College Review* 60.2 (2007): 46-68. Web. Pg. 50.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Bush, Richard C. *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010. Print. Pg. 67

⁴⁵ United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. United Nations. Web. <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf>.

provisions and not to the decisions of international tribunals, no unified standard exists to bring stability and predictability to this volatile area of international law.”⁴⁶

Chinese naval officer Luo Qing asserts that because UNCLOS has given coastal nations different rights, UNCLOS has “to a certain extent become an incentive for both contradiction and conflict, and has even become a potential focus for regional maritime wars and military clashes.”⁴⁷

The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands

The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands are easily the most divisive and publicized point in the East China Sea. There are two primary issues concerning the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands: what nation the islands are part of and whether the islands can legally be considered as inhabitable. Though claimed by China, Japan, and Taiwan, it is the competing claims between China and Japan that have raised regional tensions to a boiling point over that past few decades. While a topic of considerable debate, it is in the opinion of this paper that the ambition behind claiming the islands is each country’s desire to declare sovereignty over the waters extending from the islands – thus securing underwater natural resources and shipping lanes.

China’s claim to the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands is largely historical. As condensed by Matsui, Yoshiro, China’s three primary historical claims are;

First, the Ryukyu Kingdom (now Okinawa) had tributary relations with China from the 14th to the mid-19th century, and China sent investiture missions to Ryukyu to legitimize new kings some twenty times during this period. These missions used the Diaoyu Islands as navigational aids and some of their reports referred to the islands by that name;

Secondly, in the mid-16th century the Ming dynasty established a coastal defense

⁴⁶ Dutton, Peter. "Carving up the East China Sea." *Naval War College Review* 60.2 (2007): 46-68. Web. Pg. 47.

⁴⁷ *The People's Liberation Army Navy: A Modern Navy with Chinese Characteristics*. Suitland, MD: Office of Naval Intelligence, 2009. Print. Pg. 60

system against the then active Japanese pirates or smugglers (*wako* in Japanese). The documents and maps concerning this system included the Diaoyu Islands within the coastal defense area of China;

Thirdly, fishermen from China fished in the sea areas surrounding the islands from ancient times and used them for shelter in bad weather; and

Fourthly, Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi issued an Imperial edict in 1893 to award three of the islands to a private person for collecting medical plants there.⁴⁸

Although historical grounds have been used to solve disputed territorial claims in other cases, China suffers in being unable to produce evidence that the country has ever expressed an unambiguous will to possess the islands.⁴⁹

Japan's claims to the islands are more varied. Though Japan also states a historic use of the islands, its larger claims are based on law and precedent. As previously mentioned, Japan appropriated control of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands from China in 1895, at the end of the Sino-Japanese war. Following Japan's defeat in WWII, the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands were placed under the control of US occupation authorities in Okinawa – essentially making the islands a part of the Okinawa prefecture.⁵⁰ In 1972, the United States returned control of Okinawa to Japan.⁵¹ Japan claims – and is supported by other nations, including the United States – that control of the islands was returned with Okinawa.

Unless a claim to territory is corroborated by an act to display the claimant's will to occupy it, it is considered as *terra nullius*, no one's territory. In the understanding of the Japanese Government no such corroboration had been provided by China when it incorporated the Senkaku Islands in the Japanese territory in 1895. The Japanese position

⁴⁸ Seabed petroleum in the ECS pg3 (original MATSUI Yoshiro, "International Law of Territorial Acquisition and the Dispute over the Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands", *The Japanese Annual of International Law*, No. 40 (1997), p. 11.

⁴⁹ http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Miyoshi_Masahiro.pdf

⁵⁰ Lee, Joyman. "Diaoyu/Senkaku: Islands of Conflict." *History Today* 61.5 (2011): n. pag. History Today. Web. <<http://www.historytoday.com/joyman-lee/senkakudiaoyu-islands-conflict>>.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

was strengthened by the lack of protest on the part of China against their incorporation and the subsequent granting of the lease of one of the Islands to a private person who wanted to gather sea-birds' feathers there. Hence the Japanese position that it has had undisputed sovereignty over them, and that there is no territorial dispute over them.⁵²

In 1968, following the discovery of nearby underwater natural resources in the 1960s, the islands that were previously considered unimportant to either nation became incredibly valuable and sparked competing claims. On September 27, 1972 the third summit of the Sino-Japanese diplomatic normalization talks were held in Beijing.⁵³ During the summit, Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei asked “What do you think about the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu Islands in Chinese)? There are people who come to me with various comments about the issue.” Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai answered: “It is not good to discuss this at this time. This has become an issue because of (the discovery of) oil (in the region). Neither Taiwan nor the United States would pay any attention (to the issue) if it were not for oil.”⁵⁴ China and Japan continued to agree to shelve the issue for decades and to this day have intentionally refrained from holding official talks on the issue – preferring to play power games instead.

Even if a claim to the islands was undisputed, it is unclear as to whether the country that held them would be able to use the islands to extend their exclusive economic zone or continental shelf boundary. According to UNCLOS part VIII, article 121, section 2; “Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf.”⁵⁵ Historically, the islands were mostly uninhabited, used as

⁵² Masahiro, Miyoshi. "Seabed Petroleum in the East China Sea: Law of the Sea Issues and the Prospects for Joint Development." Thesis. Faculty of Law: Aichi University, Japan.

⁵³ Zhai, Xin. "Shelving the Diaoyu Islands Dispute: A Tacit Consensus and the Abe Cabinet's Policy Change." China Institute of International Studies, 20 Jan. 2014. Web. <http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2014-01/20/content_6623684.htm>.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ United Nations. Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*. United Nations. Web. <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf>.

navigation points and camping sites for fishermen. The exception being that the Japanese sparsely inhabited the islands from 1895 until immediately before the start of World War II - the population of one of the islands, Uotsuri, topped 200 at one point.⁵⁶

Since World War II, the status of the islands has returned to uninhabited. It is as yet unclear whether or not the islands could be recognized by international law as inhabitable. Although the islands were clearly inhabited at one point in time, it is unclear whether they could be inhabited by modern standards or sustain an ‘economic life of their own.’

Conclusion

The redefining of maritime zones under the third edition of UNCLOS has clearly shaped current maritime delimitation disputes in the East China Sea. The policies outlining the perimeters of the territorial sea and contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone, and the continental shelf have left room for countries to judge their maritime territorial boundaries by different measures. UNCLOS was officially ratified by both China and Japan in 1996. However, each country has self-servingly taken different interpretations of the convention in defining their maritime boundary. Drawing on article 76, China supports application of the principle of “natural prolongation” of the continental shelf, out to 350 nautical miles. China claims that its continental shelf ends in the Xihu/Okinawa trough and that, therefore, Japan’s shelf ends at the same point - well before the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone measured by the Japanese. This 350 nautical mile claim is unique in that the general boundary of a continental shelf is ruled to be no more than 200 nautical miles. China has appealed to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf to have its ‘extended’ continental shelf recognized. However, the commission holds no power to grant exclusive jurisdiction, regardless of their decision as whether China’s self scientifically extends. The decision of the commission is only designed to aid two parties, in this case China and Japan, in resolving their territorial

⁵⁶ Ikeda, Tadashi. "Getting Senkaku History Right." *The Diplomat*, 26 Nov. 2013. Web. <<http://thediplomat.com/2013/11/getting-senkaku-history-right/>>.

dispute. This will only lead to greater contention between the two nations. The debated sovereignty of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, and the tangible economic gains in claiming the island's extending waters, only adds fuel to a raging dispute.

Chapter 2: Mahan and the Northeast Asian security dilemma

United States Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan's theories on sea power have shaped the world's navies for well over 100 years. Imperial Japan's navy, that conquered the seas of East Asia, was built upon Mahan's theory of sea power. Understandably, Mahan's teachings have gained great popularity with the officers and strategists of China's PLA Navy. This chapter utilizes Mahan's theory of sea power to determine the rationale behind the importance of maritime sovereignty, using Imperial Japan as an example of the theory in practice. Further, this chapter will outline security dilemma theory and use it to frame how competition for sea power – or heightened tensions over resources and maritime boundaries – in the East China Sea has manifested into an arms race. This chapter will conclude by examining how competitive influences have impacted the development of China's navy since the 1800s. By applying Mahan's sea power and security dilemma theories, this chapter will partially answer the question of why maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, is so important to China's PLA Navy.

Mahan's theory of sea power

Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, born 1840 - died 1914⁵⁷, was one of the most influential naval strategists of his time and has continued to this day to influence the naval strategies of nations around the world. A graduate of the United States' Naval Academy, Mahan served as an officer in the United States' Navy for 40 years.⁵⁸ During that time, he fought in two wars, commanded numerous vessels, served as President of the United States' Naval War College, served on the United States Board of Naval Strategy, was a member of numerous national committees, served as one of the American delegates at the First Peace Conference at the Hague, The Netherlands, and published twenty books and twenty-three essays on the influence of sea power.⁵⁹

The most famous and influential of Mahan's publications was his first book, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, written in 1890.⁶⁰ In this book, Mahan first presents his theory of sea power. In summary, Mahan's theory of sea power purports that for a nation to become and remain powerful, it must control and maintain maritime and naval supremacy. Due to the influence of his works, Mahan is considered the intellectual father of the modern United States' Navy – the most powerful navy in the world. It is no coincidence that Chinese naval policy makers have taken a keen interest and inspiration from Mahan's theorems. A 2008 Routledge series study contends that "Alfred Thayer Mahan's writings and theories on sea power furnish an indispensable framework for understanding China's emerging maritime strategy."⁶¹

Mahan's theory of sea power centers on the notion that a country's strength and position in the world lies with its economy. The rationale behind a country's maritime strength should be the protection of the country's economic interests. Money is, after all, power. According to Mahan, the "pillars" of sea power were domestic prosperity; robust industrial production,

⁵⁷ Navy, US. "Biography - Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, USN." United States Navy, n.d. Web. <http://www.history.navy.mil/bios/mahan_alfred.htm>.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print. Pg. 5.

colonies and markets overseas, and merchant and military shipping.⁶²⁶³ Operating under the rationale that shipping via the sea will always be a superior means of transporting goods, it is vital – according to Mahan - to a country's economic success to secure its maritime transport routes. "Economics, then, provided the rationale for a powerful navy and overseas expansion."⁶⁴ Therefore, maintaining naval and maritime supremacy over a region equates to preserving economic dominance. Mahan's theory does not, however, promote naval conflict. "Commerce thrives by peace and suffers by war, it follows that peace is the superior interest," he states.⁶⁵ "A navy is simply the logical outgrowth of peaceful maritime commerce."⁶⁶

In his writings, Mahan uses the Dutch and the British Empires – small nations that used economic and maritime dominance to reach great power - as case studies to frame his sea power theory. As Mahan's sea power theory has gained popularity, other cases fitting his theorem have emerged. For instance, Mahan's theories have been credited with providing intellectual and political impetus for the naval armaments race among European powers that contributed, almost a quarter century later, to the outbreak of World War I.⁶⁷ Keeping to the topic of conflict in Northeast Asia, this study will briefly examine the properties of Mahan's theory using the example of the Japanese Empire.

The Japanese Empire, 1868-1947⁶⁸, very successfully utilized Western political, social, and economic institutions to rapidly develop from a feudal society into a full-fledged industrial power in a very short period. Seeking to stand free and independent of other nations, politically and economically, part of the Empire's strategy was to completely rebuild Japan's military – the navy in particular. Following Japan's victory and acquisition of Taiwan in the Sino-Japanese war

⁶² Mahan, A. T. *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1890. Print.

⁶³ Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print. Pg. 11.

⁶⁴ Ibid. pg12

⁶⁵ Mahan, A. T. *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1890. Print.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ King, Bryon. "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan." *Daily Reckoning*, 12 May 2005. Web. <<http://dailyreckoning.com/alfred-thayer-mahan-the-influence-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>>.

⁶⁸ Samuels, Richard J. *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007. Print. Shanghai: Shanghai Ren Min Chu Ban She, 2010. Print. Pg. 13.

in 1895, the Japanese Empire became more focused on the expansion of its naval fleet and on the expansion of the Empire - seeing the two as going hand in hand. It is at this time that Mahan's theory of sea power became highly utilized and embraced by the Empire. Richard Turk states that the Imperial Japanese Navy imbibed Mahanian sea-power theory "in purer form" than did any other navy.⁶⁹ As an island nation, Japan embraced Mahan's theory of superiority at sea marking an empire's power – much as it had for the British Empire.

During his lifetime, Mahan's works were more widely translated into Japanese than any other language.⁷⁰ The Japanese decisively established the maritime supremacy of Northeast Asia after defeating the Russian fleet at Tsushima in 1905.⁷¹ Following that victory, the Japanese Empire continued to amass naval power and expand the empire and the empire's range of maritime might throughout East Asia. Japan flourished during this time, its economy heavily benefiting from the ease of trade guaranteed by open and secure waters. The ultimate downfall of the Japanese Empire came from challenging the world's other naval power, the United States, for territory during World War II. The Empire was eventually defeated and disbanded in 1947, following a sea-based war in which naval power was the deciding factor.

China is currently in a position similar to that of Japan and the United States of one hundred years ago. In a very short period, China has risen to being one of the greatest powers in the world, almost entirely due to its economic might in producing goods for the world. Due to its geographic location, the majority of goods produced in China are exported via ship. It is no wonder that, as it did with Japanese strategists one hundred years ago, Mahan's theory resonates with modern Chinese naval strategists

In Northeast Asia, nearly all commercial goods are imported and exported by sea (save for the miniscule percent of goods that China transports over-land to Russia). Further, the majority of imported natural resources, oil and gas, are also being transported via ship. Such

⁶⁹ Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print. Pg. 19.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ King, Bryon. "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan." *Daily Reckoning*, 12 May 2005. Web. <<http://dailyreckoning.com/alfred-thayer-mahan-the-influence-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>>.

dependence on shipping routes is no doubt what gives the theory of sea power such a foothold in this region. Maintaining shipping freedoms in the comparatively small East China Sea is very important to the economic integrity of China, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea. When you factor in the additional tension over claiming natural resources that lie under already disputed waters, it comes as no surprise that the East China Sea is ripe for conflict. According to George Baer:

Central to the theory of sea power was the expectation of conflict. When a nation's prosperity depends on shipborne commerce, and the amount of trade available is limited, then competition follows, and that leads to a naval contest to protect the trade.⁷²

However, as Mahan once put, naval power often proves "more silent than the clash of arms"—as influential as it is quiet.⁷³ As is with China and Japan in the East China Sea. Each country is currently building its naval power as a means of deterrence versus aiming for a loud clash of forces. That being said, escalating tensions and a continuing arms race could easily ignite a much louder situation in the region.

Security spiral theory

The phenomenon of security spirals are a constant in international relations. Scholars who have focused their studies on this occurrence have developed specific terminologies, such as German scholar John H. Herz and his coinage of the term 'security dilemma' in his 1950 article 'Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma.'⁷⁴

"The heartbreaking plight in which a bipolarized and atom bomb-blessed world finds itself today is but the extreme manifestation of a dilemma with which human societies have had to grapple since the dawn of history... Wherever such anarchic society has existed--and it has existed in most periods of known history on some level--there has

⁷² Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print pg12

⁷³ Cropsey, Seth, and Arthur Milikh. "Mahan's Naval Strategy: China Learned It. Will America Forget It?" *World Affairs* (March/April 2012): n. pag. World Affairs, Mar. 2012. Web. <<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/mahan-2580-2599s-naval-strategy-china-learned-it-will-america-forget-it>>.

⁷⁴ Herz, John H. "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* 2.2 (1950): 157-80. *JSTOR*. Web. 2013.

arisen what may be called the "security dilemma" of men, or groups, or their leaders. Groups or individuals living in such a constellation must be, and usually are, concerned about their security from being attacked, subjected, dominated, or annihilated by other groups and individuals. Striving to attain security from such attack, they are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the power of others. This, in turn, renders the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since none can ever feel entirely secure in such a world of competing units, power competition ensues, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation is on."⁷⁵

Essentially, a security spiral describes the proliferation of arms amongst regions or between adversarial nations. In modern history, the most prolific security spiral was the Cold War, as the United States and Soviet Union spiraled into a race to stockpile arms to both threaten and deter the other nation. While, uncharacteristically, this spiral did not end in any form of open conflict, it did eventually bankrupt the Soviet Union and lead to its ultimate collapse. Due to the strain and damage that has been brought about by security spirals, nuclear arms races in particular, the international community has gone to great lengths to provide a means of de-escalation, as was the case with the Washington Naval Treaty in the 1920s. However, the menace of an escalating security spiral in Northeast Asia is a prominent threat to the region.

Northeast Asia's naval arms race

China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and North Korea are all actively engaged in shoring up their security against different neighbors. To remain focused, this study will concentrate on the security dilemma and resulting spiral between China and Japan – the naval arms race in particular.

As sporadically addressed throughout the paper, modern tensions between China and Japan reach far back into the past. Historical animosities between the two nations have greatly

⁷⁵ Herz, John H. "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* 2.2 (1950): 157-80. *JSTOR*. Web. 2013. Pg157

influenced their modern relations and policies. Moreover, it is their complicated history that has led the two nations to feel the need to secure themselves against one other.

Up until the 1800s, China had no outstanding need to secure its self against Japan. Until that time, China had remained the central power of East Asia, and Japan was a feudal society focused internally on maintaining domestic control. It was the influx of Western powers into the region that challenged the status quo. By the 1800s, there was a large demand in Europe and the United States for Chinese goods.⁷⁶ China, however, had very little interest in what western merchants had to trade. Led by Britain, western powers found the answer to this problem in opium, importing, and later smuggling, it into China en mass. It is estimated that by the early to mid-1800s, roughly 10 percent of the Chinese population was smoking opium.⁷⁷ The Daoguang Emperor continually attempted to set policies to abolish the trade and sell of opium and mandated a wave of seizures in 1839 that resulted in the British declaring war.⁷⁸ The resulting Opium War was the beginning of China's 'one hundred years of national humiliation' a period marked by the continual wars, invasions, and conquering of China by Western powers and Japan.⁷⁹

While China was entering into one hundred years of defeat and dwindling status, Japan was entering its Meiji restoration period and transforming into the region's dominant empire. As previously cited, one of the key focuses for Japan during this period was developing a modern naval force. Between 1894 and 1945, Japan instigated two Sino-Japanese wars and numerous incursions, and was victorious in each.⁸⁰ During this time, Japan seized from China the Daiyu/Senkaku islands, Taiwan, trading rights in China, Manchuria, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Beijing.⁸¹ In 1938, Major General Sakai Ryu, chief of staff of the Japanese forces in North China stated "China is a society, but she is not a nation. Or rather, it would be fair to say that China is a

⁷⁶ Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print. Pg51

⁷⁷ Ibid. pg52

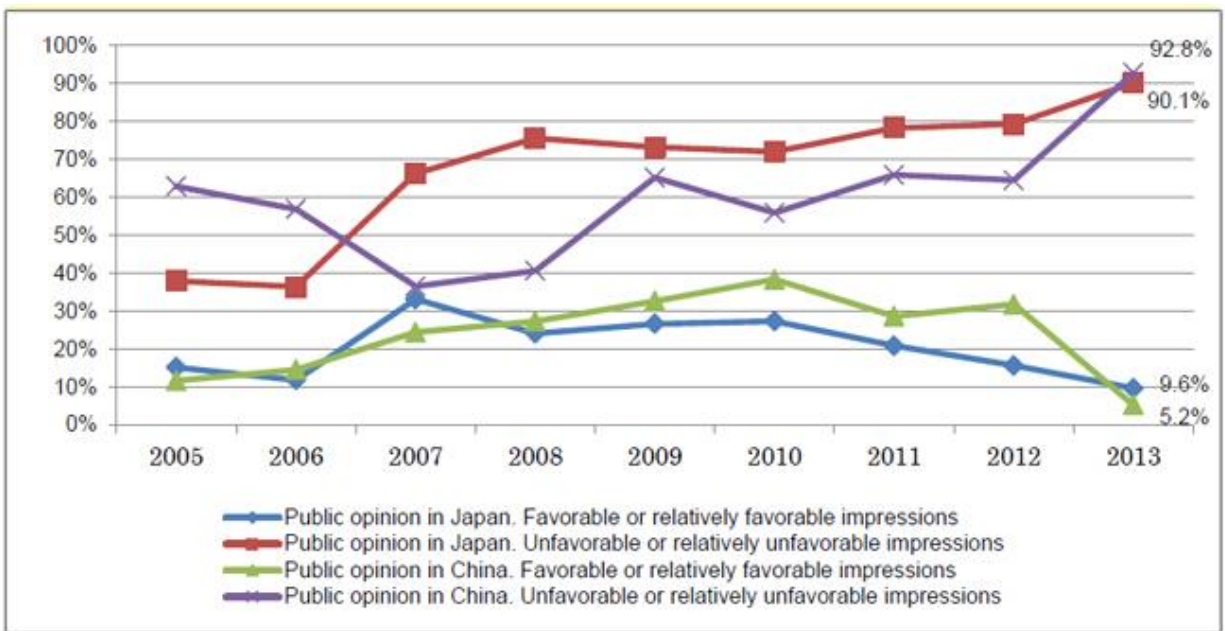
⁷⁸ Ibid. pg53

⁸⁰ Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print. Chapters 13-14.

⁸¹ Ibid.

society of bandits... The Chinese people are bacteria infesting world civilization.”⁸² This statement speaks to the Japanese perception of the Chinese in the first half of the 20th century. Without a doubt, the Chinese held a similar view of the invading Japanese forces. To this day, Chinese and Japanese citizens hold a largely negative opinion of each other, as demonstrated in the following research poll, conducted by Genron NPO, a Japanese non-profit.

Chart 2. Impressions of ones another’s countries⁸³



Following a successful campaign through North and Southeast Asia in the 1940s⁸⁴, the Japanese empire turned its eye to the United States and began to march down the road to its eventual defeat at the end of World War II. Following the end of the war, all of China’s seized territory was returned, and Japan was occupied by the United States, its future ally in the region.

What this says about modern Sino-Japanese relations is that there is a long history of mistrust, abuse, and conflict and a precedent for each country to want to secure itself against the

⁸² Ibid. Pg241

⁸³ "The 9th Japan-China Public Opinion Poll: Analysis Report on the Comparative Data." *The 9th Japan-China Public Opinion Poll*. Genro-NPO, 12 Aug. 2013. Web. <http://www.genron-npo.net/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59:the-9th-japan-china-public-opinion-poll&catid=2:research&Itemid=4#1>.

⁸⁴ Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print. Chapter 14.

other. For China, Japan's history of annexing its territories and slaughtering its people is a firm lesson in the need to maintain a strong military, the navy in particular. The national remembrance of the one hundred years of humiliation is to ensure that China never forgets its time of weakness and never reverts to that state. As for Japan, the era of its empire instilled a notion of regional supremacy within the nation's culture. As China has once again risen to being a world power, the two countries most now struggle for influence and control in Northeast Asia.

Richard C. Bush, director of the Brookings Institution's Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, summarizes several vital identities for China and Japan that reflect on their history of conflict and how each country views its self at present. For China, there are three identities;⁸⁵

- China as the victim of an evil Japan.
- China as judge of Japan's sincerity with respect to atonement.
- China as the frustrated resurgent power.

Japan's four identities are;⁸⁶

- Japan as the World War II aggressor.
- Japan as falsely accused defendant or World War II victim.
- Japan as a civilian or middle power.
- Japan as vulnerable island nation.

These identities showcase the struggle that both nations face in accepting and letting go of their mutual pasts. Most notably are the last identities given to each nation and the impact that it has had on the region's security dilemma. China as a frustrated resurgent power is trying to regain its 'rightful' place as one of the world's super powers. An important part of regaining that place, especially when looking at the perspective of the last 150 years, is building a military force strong enough to back-up the nation's economic might. Japan as a vulnerable island nation has

⁸⁵ Bush, Richard C. *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010. Print. Pg30.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* pg31-32.

an even more precarious identity. With other identities as a volatile neighbor to China, this vulnerable Japan is backed into a corner by China's resurging power. Although Japan has its ally the United States to back it up in the case of all-out war in the region, true security means developing a maritime force that can protect Japan's vulnerable regional interests.

Heightened tensions over resources and maritime boundaries

Beyond a historical legacy, since the end of World War II, the issues that have had the greatest impact on naval development and the subsequent spiraling arms race are those of natural resources and the control of maritime boundaries. All Northeast Asian nations, including China and Japan, are dependent on maritime access. In Mahanian fashion, China and Japan have both diligently developed modern maritime forces to protect their economic and national interests. There are three points to understanding the realist, defense perspective of security dilemma between China and Japan.⁸⁷

1st. Each state is unable to persuade the others of its peaceful intentions and must guard against the possibility of future aggression by another.

2nd. Each state's efforts to prudently prepare to defend itself against aggression by another are likely to include the ability to threaten the other and the other will perceive it as such.

3rd. The other state will acquire military capabilities and alliances as defensive measures and come to see the first state as hostile.⁸⁸

All three of these points can be observed in Sino-Japanese relations in the East China Sea. Although China and Japan have held peace talks and signed mutual agreements, such as UNCLOS, there is still an innate mistrust between the two nations as a result of their troubled history. Each country has built Mahan-inspired maritime forces to protect its regional interests and deter its neighbors from aggression. However, these developments have been viewed with

⁸⁷ Bush, Richard C. *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010. Print. Pg. 24-25.

⁸⁸ Ibid. pg25

mutual suspicion between China and Japan and have only escalated tensions and a continuing security spiral. Lastly, as each state continues to build its defense/ deterrent military forces, tension in the East China Sea has ramped to a point where disagreements over boundaries and resources are increasingly being viewed as acts of hostility.

Buildup of the PLA Navy

The age of China's great navies was far gone by the 1800s. By 1865, China had virtually no form of established navy.⁸⁹ That year, the Chinese established the Jiangnan Arsenal to produce ships and gunboats in addition to guns, ammunition tools, and machinery.⁹⁰ Building the Jiangnan Arsenal, and the Fuzhou Shipyard the year after, was an important step in Chinese ideology.⁹¹ The Chinese Empire recognized that maritime strength was what had given Western powers the ability to take advantage of China. This was China's first step at reforming maritime strategy to include a modern naval force. Unfortunately, the naval force built by the Chinese Empire was decimated in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95.⁹²

Following the fall of the Chinese Empire in 1911, the new Republic of China established the Ministry of the Navy. The Republic of China Navy operated in China until 1949, when the Chinese Nationalist Party fled to Taiwan and the Chinese Communist Party took control. During that period, there was very little naval development and the dated ships that the navy did have, primarily operated up and down China's rivers, offering no real threat or confrontation to the Japanese invasion further north.

The People's Liberation Army Navy is the present naval force of the Chinese Communist Party. Established in 1950, the PLA Navy has developed in leaps and bounds over the last 64 years. The PLA Navy continued to primarily operate a brown-water fleet, a fleet that primarily operated in rivers and tributaries versus open sea, of older ships up until modernization efforts in

⁸⁹ Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print. Pg. 91.

⁹⁰ Ibid. Pg. 91.

⁹¹ Ibid. Pg. 92.

⁹² Hsiung, James C. *China and Japan at Odds: Deciphering the Perpetual Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print. Pg. 81.

the late 1980s.⁹³ Utilizing Mahan and Security Dilemma theories, the motivation to modernize the PLA Navy into a blue-water fleet is clear. Developing a modern, blue-water fleet enabled China to have military options in addressing conflict with Taiwan and the United States over Taiwan's status as part of China. Additionally, the modernization of the PLA Navy came at the same time that the third UNCLOS was coming to a close. The United States' Congressional Research Service lists the following, aside from Taiwan, as China's goals for modernizing the PLA Navy: asserting or defending China's territorial claims in the South China Sea and East China Sea; enforcing China's view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its 200-mile maritime exclusive economic zone; protecting China's sea line of communications, including those running through the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf, on which China relies for much of its energy imports; protecting and evacuating Chinese nationals living and working in foreign countries; displacing U.S. influence in the Pacific; and asserting China's status as a major world power.⁹⁴ The Chinese Communist Party would now have the physical means to assert and defend its maritime interests.

Conclusion

Mahan's theory of sea power furnishes an important theoretical framework for understanding China's emerging maritime strategy. His works have given birth to modern navies around the world and have highly influenced officials and strategists in China's PLA Navy. Following Mahan's teachings, the PLA Navy views maintaining and securing China's delimited maritime territory as crucial to securing undersea natural resources and vital shipping lanes, thus securing China's economic power. To successfully control these peripheries, the PLA Navy must continue to build its fleet and military presence in the region. As framed by security dilemma theory, Chinese naval growth has always been fueled by regional competition. In modern times, the PLA Navy's continued growth to reinforce disputed maritime territories has led to the competitive growth of naval forces throughout Northeast Asia. Tension in the region is

⁹³ Ronald O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 10 April 2014), RL33153. Pg. 3.

⁹⁴ Ibid. Pg. 5-6.

rising. It is clear that future policy instigated by the PLA Navy and the Chinese government will be of critical importance to whether tensions boil over in the East China Sea.

Chapter 3: Literature Review and Methodology

A wide range of resources have been consulted in the research for this paper. To properly explore the topic of maritime delimitation in the East China Sea and China's naval activities and interests therein, literature research for this paper focused on works from seven primary topics: the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, maritime boundary conflict, natural resource security conflict, Chinese-Japanese conflict, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Chinese naval power and policy, and, finally, current news sources.

This chapter will address the relevance of these topics to this paper's research by asking three key questions: "What primary literature sources were consulted in assembling this paper?", "How are these works relevant to their respective fields?", and "How does the research of this paper relate to these other works?" In an effort to gain multiple perspectives on the questions posed in this paper, the nationality of authors within these intersecting fields was carefully varied among China, Japan, and "Western" nations. To further enforce neutrality, selected sources are written in both Chinese and English. This chapter will utilize the literature that was of the most importance to this paper's research to highlight significant works and thoughts presented in each of these seven identified fields. This chapter will conclude by outlining the methodology used in collecting this information.

Works on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

The first step to take in beginning to understand China and Japan's disputes in the East China Sea is to explore the role that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has played in the buildup and continuation of conflict. In researching this topic, it is clear that leading academics, as well as this paper's author, tend to agree that UNCLOS has been habitually detrimental to territorial relations in the East China Sea. This section will briefly explore primary literature within this topic and illuminate the reasoning behind this trending view. The primary literature that this paper consulted in researching UNCLOS falls within two separate categories: works on the formation and intent of UNCLOS and works on UNCLOS and the East China Sea.

In researching literature on the formation and intent of UNCLOS, one of the most pervasively important works reviewed was the actual, ratified, convention. The convention clearly outlines the basis for drawing maritime boundaries and the rights that a nation holds within both its territorial maritime zone and international waters. Since 1994, this document has stipulated international maritime law and is either ratified or recognized by nearly all nations in the world.

The convention clearly outlines the three maritime zones - territorial, continental shelf, and exclusive economic – that have been adapted as international standard and have led to the current political conflict in the East China Sea. While UNCLOS clearly outlines the different parameters by which a nation can establish its maritime periphery, it is rather vague in stipulating how to resolve the division of a maritime zone in which two nations have overlapping claims. Moreover, the body of power associated with enforcing the laws of UNCLOS is left in the hands of individual nation states. This has added additional strife to the maritime disputes between China and Japan.

Along with copies of UNCLOS, the United Nations provided a detailed historical perspective on buildup to and intent of the convention in all three of its forms. In addition to this source, many of the books and articles researched in connection with this paper gave background

to the conception of UNCLOS in its current form. Authors See⁹⁵ and Kawasaki-Urabe and Forbes⁹⁶ were of particular help in identifying the progression of modern, international maritime law and the definition of boundaries as specified in the third UNCLOS. See's 1973 article on international law in the settlement of maritime disputes in the East China Sea provides insight into reasoning behind the creation of the original UNCLOS in 1968. Kawasaki-Urabe and Forbes 1996 article contextualizes the evolution of UNCLOS from its original form into its current third form, as seen through the policy interests and impacts on Japan.

An extensive collection of sources was reviewed on the topic of UNCLOS and its role in the East China Sea in the researching of this paper. The predominant majority of articles and books cited in this paper's bibliography include a mention or summarization of the impact that UNCLOS has had on the East China Sea's territorial disputes. For example, O'Rourke⁹⁷, in his 2013 report to the United States Congress, and Dutton⁹⁸, in an article for the US Naval War College Review, clearly are of the opinion that China's unique interpretations of UNCLOS has led to escalation of tensions in the East China Sea. Similarly, many Chinese authors, such as Niu⁹⁹, have pointed out that the lack of regulatory enforcement in conjunction with UNCLOS has contributed to the need for nations to buildup maritime forces in order to reinforce contested marine territories. No single piece of literature stood out as an authority on this topic. Rather, it is apparent that UNCLOS's role in the East China Sea is of importance to all of the primary topics that were researched in conjuncture with this paper. Due to the prevalent citing of UNCLOS as one of the primary factors behind both China's maritime delimitation disputes and naval buildup in the East China Sea, this paper supports that application of UNCLOS has been overall

⁹⁵ See, J. "The East China Sea: The Role of International Law in the Settlement of Disputes", 1973 *Duke Law Journal* 823-865 (1973). <<http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/dlj/vol22/iss4/2>>.

⁹⁶ Kawasaki-Urabe, Yutaka; Forbes, Vivian L. "Japan's ratification of UN Law of the Sea Convention and its new legislation on the law of the sea" *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin*; 1996-97(4):4 , p. 92-100

⁹⁷ Ronald O'Rourke, *Maritime Territorial and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Disputes Involving China: Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 9 August 2013), R42784.

⁹⁸ Dutton, Peter. "Carving up the East China Sea." *Naval War College Review* 60.2 (2007): 46-68. Web.

⁹⁹ Niu, Baocheng. "Cong hai quan dao junshi hai quan - jian tan zhongguo haishang junshi liliang fazhan de zhanlue dingwei." *Dangdai haijun* 1st ser. (2000): n. pag. Web.

detrimental to the region.

Works on maritime boundary conflict

While widely believed that UNCLOS is a primary source of political tensions over differing maritime boundaries in the East China Sea, it is not the only cause for regional maritime boundary conflict. Research for this paper looked at articles and books related to maritime boundary conflicts in other parts of the world, factors behind the boundary conflict in the East China Sea, and what disputed boundaries in the East China Sea were of the greatest importance to China. This section will examine these topics and highlight a notion, as expressed by many authors in this field and this research paper, that history and context have played an exceedingly large role in modern East China Sea delimitation disputes.

To contextualize China's maritime boundary disputes in the East China Sea, this paper researched similar disputes in other parts of East Asia. China's disputed maritime boundaries in the South China Sea offer a particularly interesting parallel. Authors Koo¹⁰⁰ and Yahuda¹⁰¹, in particular, delve into China's maritime periphery claims to a large expanse of the South China Sea. Similar to the East China Sea issue, China's claims overlap with those of a number of other nations and are rooted in historical claims and prejudices. Also related to UNCLOS, how conflicts over disputed maritime boundaries in the South China Sea are handled will be important for predicting how China and Japan might settle their boundary disputes in the East China Sea.

As supported by Shambaugh's¹⁰² edited works, a major factor behind China's current maritime boundary claims appear to be rooted in China's desire to return to a state of regional supremacy – lost in the one hundred years of humiliation. As pointed out by several authors,

¹⁰⁰ Koo, Min Gyo. *Island Disputes and Maritime Regime Building in East Asia: Between a Rock and a Hard Place*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009. Print.

¹⁰¹ Yahuda, Michael B. *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific*. Third ed. New York: Routledge, 2011. Print.

¹⁰² Shambaugh, David L., ed. *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*. Berkeley: U of California, 2005. Print.

including Schoppa¹⁰³ and Joyman¹⁰⁴, it was during this period between the mid-1800s and the end of World War II that China as a political and military power was at its weakest and that previously unchallenged maritime holdings, such as the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, were opportunistically challenged and seized by other states. China's revitalization as a regional and international power has been built on moving past the stigma of defeat and lends to the unlikelihood that China will swallow its pride in stepping down from maritime territorial issues that hold a historic context.

China's primary disputed territories in the East China Sea are the Xihu/Okinawa Trough expanse and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Again, due to the importance of these two contested areas, the majority of the article and books researched in connection to this paper deal directly with these issues. Resources primarily dealing with Xihu/Okinawa Trough will be reviewed in the following section on resource security conflict. In connection with understanding China and Japan's dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, Emmers¹⁰⁵ and current news sites were invaluable. Emmers, as well as other authors such as Joyman, critically outline the changing sovereignty of the islands over the past one hundred years – locating China and Japan's distinct historical claims. Emmers and other authors then look at the extended territorial benefits that could potentially be claimed with undisputed sovereignty over the islands. Current news sites such as Reuters and BBC World News have continually been monitored to keep this paper up to date and to follow the developing dispute over the islands. In the summer of 2012 and fall of 2013, tensions and the threat of conflict between China and Japan in the vicinity of the islands ran particularly high.

¹⁰³ Schoppa, R. Keith. *Revolution and Its Past: Identities and Change in Modern Chinese History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print.

¹⁰⁴ Lee, Joyman. "Diaoyu/Senkaku: Islands of Conflict." *History Today* 61.5 (2011): n. pag. History Today. Web. <<http://www.historytoday.com/joyman-lee/senkakudiaoyu-islands-conflict>>.

¹⁰⁵ Emmers, Ralf. *Geopolitics and Maritime Territorial Disputes in East Asia*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.

Works on resource security and conflict

A topic that continually comes up in relation to China and the PLA Navy's interests in the East China Sea are the vast oil and gas reserves located in the disputed territory of the Xihu/Okinawa Trough. China's consumption of natural resources far exceeds its production. East China Sea oil and gas would only marginally reduce China's need to import these resources. However, in a long term-forecast, an undisputed claim to natural resources in the East China Sea could be of great importance to China's natural resource security as global oil production slows in coming years. The United States Central Intelligence Agency's 'World Factbook'¹⁰⁶ and the United States Energy Information Administration¹⁰⁷ both provide clear data supporting this argument. Authors, such as Marketos¹⁰⁸, Kambara and Howe¹⁰⁹, and Ding¹¹⁰, support and testify to the importance of energy security for China and look to the East China Sea as one of the last remaining fields for claiming new natural resource reserves. The majority of authors writing on this topic predict that competition between China and Japan to secure the natural resources within the East China Sea is one of the most likely subjects that could propel the two countries into open conflict.

Works on China-Japan relations and conflict

Broadly speaking, there are two main topics in China-Japan relations – the historical struggle between the two countries, and the modern struggle for regional supremacy in Northeast Asia. The struggle over maritime boundaries is merely a facet in the complexity of issues between China and Japan. Though it has rapidly developed into the most decisive issue in

¹⁰⁶ "China." *CIA World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, 1 May 2014. Web. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>>.

¹⁰⁷ East China Sea. Energy Information Administration. *Country Analysis Briefs, East China Sea*. Sep. 2012 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=ecs>>

¹⁰⁸ Marketos, Thrassy N. *China's Energy Geopolitics: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Central Asia*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009. Print.

¹⁰⁹ Howe, Christopher, and Tatsu Kambara. *China and the Global Energy Crisis: Development and Prospects for China's Oil and Natural Gas*. (Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc., 2007).

¹¹⁰ Ding, Arthur. "China's Energy Security Demands and the East China Sea. A Growing Likelihood of Conflict in East Asia." *THE CHINA AND EURASIA FORUM QUARTERLY* 3.3 (2005): 35-38. Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Roads Study Program, Nov. 2005. Web. <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/CEF/Quarterly/November_2005/Arthur_Ding.pdf>.

relations between the two states, it was important in researching this paper to delve deeper into this economically hot but politically cold relationship. Through a great deal of research on the subject, it is the conclusion of this paper and supporting literature that China and Japan, in the past and present, are locked in a struggle for regional supremacy. The modern impact of this struggle has been escalating tensions over disputed maritime boundaries and the birth of a regional arms race.

In the attempt to gain a balanced opinion on the past and present struggles between China and Japan, this paper researched literature that had been written from each nation's perspective. Japan's repeated invasions of China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have in many ways framed China's modern policies regarding Japan. Fravel¹¹¹ provides an excellent example of how China's historical insecurities have led to its current national policies regarding retaining strong borders and maintaining a strong military force. These policies are highlighted amongst many authors as being primarily aimed at defense against the Japanese and their ally the United States. In relation to Japan's perspective on how history has shaped modern policy, Samuels¹¹² was an invaluable source. Samuels clearly supports that Japan's historical antagonizing of China was based on policies to strengthen the Japanese economy. Then, as now, Japanese ideology maintained that securing power in the region would elevate the nation to greater wealth and international status.

In modern times China has adapted the same ideology as Japan in building its regional strategy. With competing regional ambitions, tensions between the two nations have continually ratcheted upwards over the past twenty years. Further propelled by a history of aggression, modern Chinese-Japanese relations have continually cooled – even as their economic ties grow continually tighter. As observed by Bush¹¹³ and Hsiung¹¹⁴, both nations are establishing policies

¹¹¹ Fravel, M. Taylor. *Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2008. Print.

¹¹² Samuels, Richard J. *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2007. Print. Shanghai: Shanghai Ren Min Chu Ban She, 2010. Print.

¹¹³ Bush, Richard C. *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2010. Print.

and building militaries with the intent of building their regional presence. The East China Sea is a place where China's and Japan's struggle for regional supremacy clashes.

Works on Chinese naval power and policy

Literature concerning China's PLA Navy is the backbone of this research paper. The primary goal of this paper is to discover why maritime delimitation in the East China Sea is important to the PLA Navy and what policies the navy is actively pursuing to preserve China's maritime peripheries in the sea. Rather than thematically, the literature researched in this topic is best divided by whether it was written by a Chinese or non-Chinese author. However, works by both groups of authors trend towards the opinion that the PLA Navy has interests independent of the Chinese Communist Party and is gaining a voice within CCP policy decision-making.

The Chinese articles most important to this paper's research findings predominantly came from various editions of the journals *Dangdai Haijun* [Modern Navy] and *Guofang* [National Defense]. These two journals are the primary venues in which PLA Navy officers and strategists submit works and opinion pieces related to PLA Naval strategy, policy interests, and ambitions. It was through these journals that this paper identified the key policy issues for the PLA Navy that are addressed in the next chapter. Further, researching articles from these journals was paramount to answering the key research questions of "Why is maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, so important to the PLA Navy?" and "What policies is the PLA Navy promoting in support of China's maritime delimitation claims and why?". In addition to *Dangdai Haijun* and *Guofang*, numerous other journals and articles contributed to deciphering domestic views and motivations for both the modernization and policy motivations of the PLA Navy. For example, author Fang¹¹⁵ provides an analysis of China's geographic characteristics and their impact on the development of the PLA Navy. The authors of these articles, by and

¹¹⁴ Hsiung, James C. *China and Japan at Odds: Deciphering the Perpetual Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.

¹¹⁵ Fang, Kun. "Zhanlue diyuan yu zhongguo haijun jianshe." *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* 8 (2004): 43-48. *China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House*. Web. 2013.

large, support this paper's findings that the PLA Navy is developing its own policy interests and motives and is using tension over maritime disputes in the East China Sea to gain increasing influence within the CCP – furthering policy goals and promoting an increased naval budget.

The literature from Chinese authors mostly focuses on PLA Navy strategy and development in view of how it affects China and China's interests. Many of the non-Chinese authors writing on this topic examined it in the broader context of how the development and strategies of the PLA Navy would affect regional and international relations. The three primary pieces of non-Chinese literature that this paper utilized in researching this topic were those of Saunders, Yung, Swaine, and Yang¹¹⁶, Holmes and Yoshihara¹¹⁷, and Cole¹¹⁸. These authors supported and reiterated that the PLA Navy is a force growing in size, scope, and power – both domestic and international.

Works on Mahan's theory of sea power

Mahan's theory of sea power has appeared in the writings of Chinese naval officers and strategists with increasing frequency over the past fifteen to twenty years. China and its navy are in a similar position to that of the United States and Japan of one hundred years past – the same time in which Mahan's works were published. Mahan's theories on sea power helped to develop both of those navies into global maritime powers. It is not surprising that China's PLA Navy has now turned to Mahan as well. The literature on this topic that was researched in the creation of this paper falls into two primary categories: Mahan's theory and its historical and contemporary applications, and Mahan's theory and China's adaptation.

The literature researched in regards to Mahan's sea power theory and its historical and contemporary applications was primarily focused on what, exactly, Mahan's theory stipulates.

¹¹⁶ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print.

¹¹⁷ Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print.

¹¹⁸ Cole, Bernard D. *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy in the Twenty-first Century*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 2010. Print.

For the most concise answer, this paper cited directly from Mahan¹¹⁹ himself. Mahan purports that securing regional seas is critical to the continued economic and political success of a nation. Holmes and Yoshihara¹²⁰ and King¹²¹, amongst others, help support the similarity between Imperial Japan and modern day China, in relation to their economic positions and the philosophy that has driven the buildup of the two nation's navies. A great deal of the literature on this topic serves to warn modern China away from the path taken by Imperial Japan.

To understand modern PLA Naval policy interests, a great deal of literature on China's adaptation of Mahan's theory was researched. Authors Holmes and Yoshihara¹²², Wang and Wan¹²³, Cropsey and Milikh¹²⁴, and Saunders, Yung, Swaine, and Yang¹²⁵ all provided key insights into how Mahan is influencing the policy interests and philosophy of the PLA Navy. Unanimously, these authors agreed, as does this paper, that the PLA Navy is pushing a policy in support of regional maritime control, acting in accordance with Mahan's sea power theory. Key shipping lanes and undersea natural resource reserves in the disputed East China Sea territory are important to this aim and to successfully applying Mahanian principles. Adopting Mahan's theories have only encouraged the justification for the PLA Navy to increase its presence across the region.

¹¹⁹ Mahan, A. T. *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1890. Print.

¹²⁰ Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print.

¹²¹ King, Bryon. "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan." *Daily Reckoning*, 12 May 2005. Web. <<http://dailyreckoning.com/alfred-thayer-mahan-the-influence-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>>.

¹²² Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print.

¹²³ Wang, Yimin, and Nianging Wan. "'Ling yun' you xu fu yu quan wei shi kuang you yun ying si nao tian tu man." *Xuchang xueyuan xuebao* 25.3 (2006): 113-15. *China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House*. Web. 2013.

¹²⁴ Cropsey, Seth, and Arthur Milikh. "Mahan's Naval Strategy: China Learned It. Will America Forget It?" *World Affairs* (March/April 2012): n. pag. *World Affairs*, Mar. 2012. Web. <<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/mahan-2580-2599s-naval-strategy-china-learned-it-will-america-forget-it>>.

¹²⁵ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print.

Current news articles

Lastly, the use of current news sites, such as Reuters, BBC World News, and The Economist, have been instrumental in conducting research for this paper. In researching this topic over the past two years, these and other current news sites have been accessed every day to stay up to the minute on developing situations related to the East China Sea dispute between China and Japan. Conflict between these two nations is continually on the rise and as a result, there have been hundreds of new articles published in relation to this conflict over the past two years alone.

Research methodology

All of the data and information utilized in this thesis was collected from printed and online publications. In conducting research for this paper, two weeks were spent as a visiting scholar at the Nordic Institute for Asian Studies in Copenhagen, Denmark. During that time, the institute's librarians assisted in locating articles from the Chinese journals *Dangdai Haijun* [Modern Navy] and *Guofang* [National Defense]. Because these are current Chinese military journals, finding access to recent articles was challenging and took a great deal of patience and persistence. Issues relating to the East China Sea delimitation disputes between China and Japan are constantly evolving. As such, current world news was monitored throughout the research process to guarantee that the information in cited literature was still up to date.

The data and information compiled in conducting research for this thesis was analyzed through the theories of Mahan's sea power and security dilemma. The application of these two theories in analyzing literature helped to highlight 1) how texts related to shoring up of China's economic security and 2) how texts might outline a situation that would further escalate tensions in Northeast Asia. Cited Chinese literature was translated by the author of this paper.

Chapter 4: Maritime delimitation and the People's Liberation Army Navy, impact in the East China Sea

China's modernized PLA Navy stands as one of the most powerful naval forces in the world. Not just powerful abroad, the PLA Navy has increasingly had a strong voice in domestic politics, pushing for an increasingly offensive strategy in reinforcing disputed maritime boundaries and accessing undersea natural resources. This chapter first looks at the Chinese Communist Party's interests in Northeast Asia and then focuses in-depth on the PLA Navy and its interests in the East China Sea, examining how the PLA Navy's regional policy interests differ from that of the Chinese Communist Party. This chapter will examine why the Chinese navy is so invested in East China Sea boundaries and for what purpose they are protecting them. In the discussion and findings segment of this chapter, this paper's findings will be used to examine the implications of this case study for China and Northeast Asia. This chapter will continue to address the question of why maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, is so important to the PLA Navy and will answer as to what policies, and why, is the PLA Navy promoting in support of China's East China Sea maritime delimitation claims.

A look at the Chinese Communist Party's policy interests and strategies in Northeast Asia

The Chinese Communist Party's regional strategy

For China's Communist Party, the Northeast Asian region represents the country's stepping-stone in a path leading to international society, in addition to the area in which China's economic, political, and security interests are heavily concentrated.¹²⁶ Following the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-98, Chinese policy makers recognized that China's economy and security depended heavily on its interaction with the world – particularly its neighbors in Northeast Asia.¹²⁷ Under a grand foreign policy strategy of a 'harmonious world', China's current East Asian regional strategy can be broken into three components; economic cooperation, bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, and regional security. Judging the results of this strategy can be difficult. In many ways, China's regional strategy has been successful in easing tensions amongst its neighbors. However, there are potential risks for the strategy in coming years. China's regional strategy has to date been highly successful, but will encounter setbacks in the coming decade if policy makers fail to prepare for changing dynamics in the region.

The development of China's modern regional strategy in Northeast Asia has been fairly consistent and coherent.¹²⁸ In April 2005, Chinese President Hu Jintao first unveiled to the world China's diplomatic strategy of 'harmonious world' (Hexie Shijie).¹²⁹ As stated by Wang Gonglong, the harmonious world strategy focuses on economic co-prosperity, security

¹²⁶ Hwang, Jaeho. "Session I: China's Asia Strategy." *China's Asia Strategy*. Proc. of 3rd Berlin Conference on Asian Security (BCAS). Berlin, 2008. Pg. 6

¹²⁷ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China's Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 49.

¹²⁸ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China's Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 48

¹²⁹ Hwang, Jaeho. "Session I: China's Asia Strategy." *China's Asia Strategy*. Proc. of 3rd Berlin Conference on Asian Security (BCAS). Berlin, 2008. Pg. 2

cooperation, and cultural coexistence.¹³⁰ Utilizing trade, bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, and culture, harmonious world is a soft power strategy. In prior years, China had pursued a strategy of ‘hiding one’s capacity while biding one’s time’ (Taoguang Yanghui).¹³¹ However, China gradually came to see regional cooperation and the utilization of soft power as a useful diplomatic method to promote its own foreign policy goals.¹³² The Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-98 is a key example. The crisis, as a shared experience among Northeast Asian states, helped China and its neighbors to realize that they were interdependent on each other as a region. By opening itself economically to the region, China also managed to gain a diplomatic foothold that it had previously lacked.

Under the grand ‘harmonious world’ policy, the primary goal of China’s regional strategy is to maintain at least a workable relationship with all of the major powers in the region.¹³³ In the context of Northeast Asia, China is balancing the harmonious world strategy of maintaining diplomatic relationships with its ambition to become the leading power in the region. To execute this, China’s regional strategy proceeds along three tracks: increased economic cooperation to make neighbors prosperous, bilateral multilateral relations to coexist peacefully with neighbors, and regional security to both reassure neighbors and remind them of China’s strength.¹³⁴

China’s soft power in Northeast Asia has been carefully built through bilateral and multilateral, slowly showing its neighbors that not only can the state be trusted as a regional power, it can even become a role model – particularly in its economic success. The economic component of China’s regional strategy has arguably been the most successful. China’s economic strategy is to make itself into a conduit for regional financial growth by serving as a

¹³⁰ Wang Gonglong, “The Harmonious World: A New Idea for World Order,,” Xiandai Guoji Guanxi, 2007, pp.56-62.

¹³¹ Hwang, Jaeho. "Session I: China's Asia Strategy." *China's Asia Strategy*. Proc. of 3rd Berlin Conference on Asian Security (BCAS). Berlin, 2008. Pg 3

¹³² Liu, Qianqian. "China's Rise and Regional Strategy: Power, Interdependence and Identity." *Journal of Cambridge Studies* 5.4 (2010): 76-92.

¹³³ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China’s Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 51

¹³⁴ Hwang, Jaeho. "Session I: China's Asia Strategy." *China's Asia Strategy*. Proc. of 3rd Berlin Conference on Asian Security (BCAS). Berlin, 2008. Pg. 4

market for regional states and a provider of investment for the region.¹³⁵ The manner in which China has carefully implemented the economic aspect of its regional strategy is a softer approach that fosters interdependence. Economic interdependence is important to this strategy. “By opening up its own market and letting regional states establish a commercial presence in China, Beijing also hopes that regional states will be more receptive to China’s economic growth and consider it a greater opportunity than a threat.”¹³⁶ However, economic interdependence alone cannot always lead to the improvement of political relations.

The primary goal of China’s regional security strategy is to maintain at least a workable relationship with all of the major powers in the region.¹³⁷ China recognizes that it must strengthen relations with all of its neighbors in order to solidify its status as a power in the region. In addition to building stronger bilateral relations, predominantly through trade, China has also worked to facilitate multilateral relations in the region. Beginning in 2003, the Six Party Talks on dissolving the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s (DPRK) nuclear program is a prime example of China reaching out to other regional states to settle a dispute in a multilateral forum. However, even with progress, Acharya argues that Beijing is not always willing (or able) to diffuse tensions with its neighbors, especially when history is at stake.¹³⁸ This leads to China’s need of self-strengthen to ensure regional security.

China’s role and influence in Northeast Asia is part of both the problem and the solution to major issues in regional security.¹³⁹ On the one hand, China has made strenuous efforts to improve its relationships with its neighboring countries, sometimes by making significant

¹³⁵ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China’s Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 51

¹³⁶ Ibid. Pg. 53

¹³⁷ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China’s Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 51

¹³⁸ Acharya, Amitav, and Mingjiang Li. "Conclusion: Living with China, but Loving It?" *Living with China: Regional States and China through Crises and Turning Points*. Ed. Amitav Acharya and Shiping Tang. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Pg. 253

¹³⁹ Ibid. Pg. 249

concessions despite strong domestic opposition.¹⁴⁰ Chinese policy makers have been realistic in adopting defensive, as opposed to aggressive, regional policies in an effort to deter neighboring nations from adopting a harder containment approach to China.¹⁴¹ However, as pointed out in the previous section, Beijing is not always willing or able to diffuse tensions with its neighbors. Perhaps the most notable example is China's reluctance to settle maritime territorial disputes with Japan in the East China Sea. Though China has shown margins of restraint in this disputed territory, it has been reluctant to compromise over its maritime claims (claims that are based on history, rather than the law of the sea) – sometimes even demonstrating cautionary, aggressive displays.¹⁴² Such displays will continue to put the region on edge, potentially pushing regional actors (particularly the Republic of Korea and Taiwan) closer to the United States.

China's primary concerns for regional security include; terrorism, pirate activities, refugees and illegal immigration (particularly into China), crime and drug trafficking across borders, the North-Korean nuclear issue, and the encroachment of the United States.¹⁴³¹⁴⁴ In acting towards these concerns, China has made strenuous efforts to improve its relationships with its neighboring countries - sometimes by making significant concessions despite strong domestic opposition.¹⁴⁵ China's regional security objective has been to build a new regional structure in which China can "win(ning) without fighting".¹⁴⁶ This follows China's current convention of always acting to defend its territorial integrity and core interests, but never to further its

¹⁴⁰ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China's Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 50

¹⁴¹ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China's Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 50

¹⁴² Acharya, Amitav, and Mingjiang Li. "Conclusion: Living with China, but Loving It?" *Living with China: Regional States and China through Crises and Turning Points*. Ed. Amitav Acharya and Shiping Tang. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Pg. 253

¹⁴³ Wang, Jisi. *China's Changing Role in Asia*. Publication. Washington, DC: Atlantic Council of the United States: Asia Programs, 2004. Pg. 9

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Pg.8

¹⁴⁵ Zhang, Yunling, AND Tang Shiping. (2005) China's Regional Strategy. In *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, edited by David Shambaugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pg. 50

¹⁴⁶ Yannakogeorgos, Panayotis A., and Adam Lowther. "Think Like a Dragon: The Global Lessons of China's Nuclear Program." *The Atlantic* Mar. 2012: n. pag. Web. 14 June 2012.

interests.¹⁴⁷ Chinese scholars and policy makers envisage that a successful East Asian integration will substantially enhance the possibility of a multipolar world,¹⁴⁸ leading to the establishment of a Chinese-led anti-hegemonic order in the region.¹⁴⁹ However, the US has been on high vigilance against East Asian integration that in its eyes could lead to its exclusion from the region's affairs.¹⁵⁰ The United States' increasing presence in East Asia is a major concern for China. This year, the US secretary of defense announced that, by 2020, 60 percent of America's warships, including six aircraft-carrier groups, would be stationed in the Asia-Pacific theatre.¹⁵¹ Though worried by the implications of these actions, the CCP claims that it wants to stay on a path to regional peace. China has even gone as far to agree to enhance military-to-military cooperation with the US in Southeast Asia.¹⁵² However, as previously pointed out, Beijing is not always willing or able to diffuse tensions with its neighbors. Perhaps the most notable example is China's reluctance to settle maritime territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas. Though China has shown restraint in these two disputed territories, it has been reluctant to fully compromise over its maritime claims – sometimes even demonstrating cautionary aggressive displays.¹⁵³ This reluctance has given the PLA Navy a foothold in furthering its own policy interests.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Cheng-Chwee, Kuik. "Multilateralism in China's ASEAN Policy: Its Evolution, Characteristics, and Aspiration." *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* 27.1 (2005): Pg. 118

¹⁴⁹ Foot, Rosemary. "Chinese Strategies in a US-hegemonic Global Order: Accommodating and Hedging." *International Affairs* 82.1 (2006): 77-94. Pg. 82

¹⁵⁰ Economy, Elizabeth. "China Pushes Back Against Growing U.S. Influence in East Asia." *The Atlantic* Nov. 2011: n. pag. Web. 14 June 2012.

¹⁵¹ "Military Strategy: The China Syndrome." *The Economist (US)* 9 June 2012: n. pag. Web. 13 June 2012.

¹⁵² Neisloss, Liz. "U.S. Defense Secretary Strategy with Asia." *CNN U.S. Cable News Network*, 02 June 2012. Web. 02 June 2012.

¹⁵³ Acharya, Amitav, and Mingjiang Li. "Conclusion: Living with China, but Loving It?" *Living with China: Regional States and China through Crises and Turning Points*. Ed. Amitav Acharya and Shiping Tang. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Pg. 253

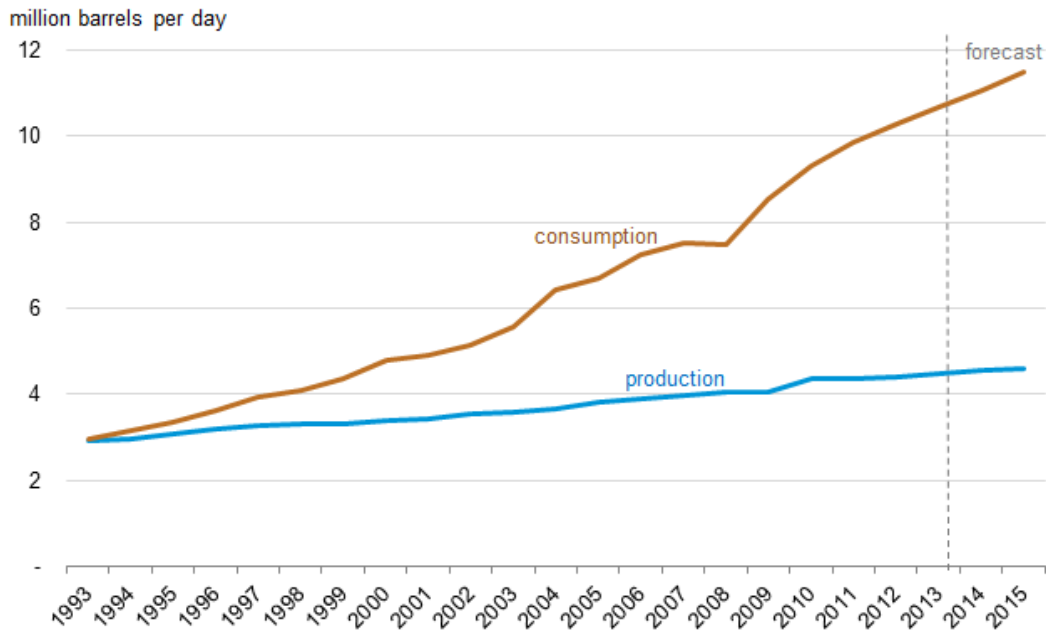
China's resource needs

China is currently the second largest consumer of oil in the world, behind only the United States, and the largest consumer of total global energy.¹⁵⁴ In 2013, China consumed an estimated 10.7 million bbl/d (barrels per day) of oil, up 380 thousand bbl/d, or almost 4%, from 2012, and up from only 2 million bbl/d in 1985.¹⁵⁵ China as had to reevaluate and change energy policies to keep up with the nation's oil demands. As China' oil and gas needs continue to increase and production levels continue to go down, the disputed oil and gas reserves in the East China Sea will become increasing important.

¹⁵⁴ China. Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil. May. 2014
<<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

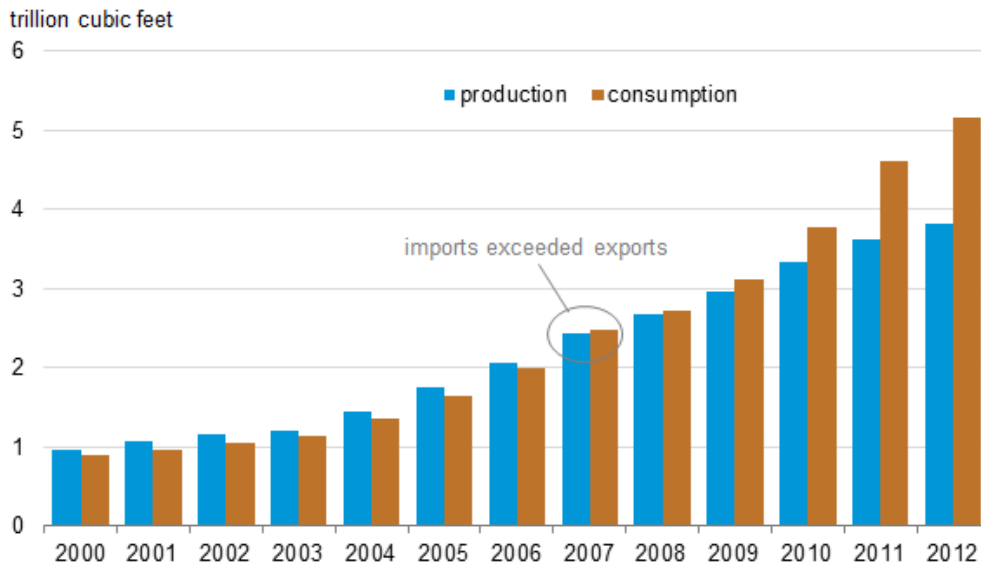
¹⁵⁵ China. Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil. May. 2014
<<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

Chart 3. China's oil production and consumption, 1993-2015¹⁵⁶



Source: EIA International Energy Statistics and Short-Term Energy Outlook, January 2014.

Chart 4. China's natural gas production and consumption, 2000-2012¹⁵⁷



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, International Energy Statistics.

¹⁵⁶ China. Energy Information Administration. *Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil*. May. 2014 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

¹⁵⁷ China. Energy Information Administration. *Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil*. May. 2014 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

Today, China is the fourth largest producer of oil in the world, with the fourteenth largest proven oil reserves.¹⁵⁸ China produces substantial amounts of oil, the problem is that the quickly growing nation is consuming even more. As of 2013, while consuming more than 4.5 million bbl/d, China held an estimated 24.4 billion barrels of proven oil reserves.¹⁵⁹

China is pressing its domestic oil basins. For example, every day China is producing more oil than Venezuela, the nation with the world's greatest proven oil reserves.¹⁶⁰ China's domestic strategy for its oil companies is to 'stabilize the eastern fields, develop the western fields, lay equal emphasis on oil and gas, and further open up the industry.'¹⁶¹ The Chinese government is draining the nation's oil basins in an effort to meet raising consumption demands. The heavily exploited reservoirs in the northeast are declining in output every year. There is potential for increased production of off-shore oil fields as well as hope for future discoveries in the oil rich, far western region of Xinjiang. However, no potential discovery or increase in production would ever be sufficient in meeting an increasing domestic demand.

Of China's 9.6 million kilometers of land mass and 1 million kilometers of seas, 4.33 million kilometers hold an estimated 30 individual oil and gas basins.¹⁶² Expansion of offshore exploration has become one of China's top development strategies. About 19 percent of overall Chinese oil production is from offshore reserves, and most of China's net oil production growth will likely come from offshore fields.¹⁶³ These volumes are needed to offset some of the declines from the more mature onshore fields in eastern China.

¹⁵⁸ "China." *CIA World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, 1 May 2014. Web. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>>.

¹⁵⁹ China. Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil. May. 2014 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

¹⁶⁰ "China." *CIA World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, 1 May 2014. Web. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>>.

¹⁶¹ Davis, Elizabeth Van Wie and Rouben Azizian. Islam, Oil and Geopolitics: Central Asia after September 11. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., c2007 pg. 131

¹⁶² Howe, Christopher, and Tatsu Kambara. China and the Global Energy Crisis: Development and Prospects for China's Oil and Natural Gas. (Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc., 2007) 35.

¹⁶³ China. Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil. May. 2014 <<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

It is clear that China as a nation lost all ability to be self-reliant for oil from 1993 onwards. National consumption demands are skyrocketing and domestic production levels are plateauing with a projected decrease in the immanent future. While China is naturally rich in coal deposits, the country's proven oil reserves are a mere 1.2 percent of the world's total (EIA).¹⁶⁴ Like many countries, China's inability to supply its growing oil demands has left it no choice but to look abroad for their needs. To meet current domestic demand, China has increasingly become reliant on oil imports. As a result, energy security is a key strategic issue for the CCP. Securing natural resources in the East China Sea would be a substantial boost for China's energy security.

Chinese naval policy interests

Chinese military authors see UNCLOS as having increased the scope of China's sovereignty, and thus the maritime area to be administered and secured from external threats. UNCLOS laid down the laws; the PLA Navy's philosophy is that it is then responsible for enforcing that law within its maritime territories. In 1996, Liu Zhenhuan, then head of the China Naval Research Institute, analyzed the effect of UNCLOS on China's maritime interests. "UNCLOS had notable positives effects, it increased the amount of territory under China's jurisdiction and thereby provided much space for development; it provided a legal basis for China's exploitation of deep sea mining; it also provided for free navigation of the Tumen River; and finally, it provided military and civilian vessels free access through crucial straits and international waters."¹⁶⁵ For Liu, this means that UNCLOS increased the PLA Navy's responsibilities. More importantly, this means (in Liu's eyes) that China must stop thinking of its navy as a military force that spends most of its time preparing for conflict, but only a short time actually fighting and instead think of it as a force that is not only being built and improved every

¹⁶⁴ China. Energy Information Administration. Country Analysis Briefs, China – Oil. May. 2014
<<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=ch>>

¹⁶⁵ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 58.

day, but is actually in constant use in both wartime and peacetime.¹⁶⁶ This study has evaluated the strategies and policy interests of the PLA Navy and divided them into three categories; assertion and defense of maritime boundaries, securing sea lanes and natural resources, and sovereignty disputes over Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands as well as Taiwan.

Assertion and defense of maritime boundaries

Delivering his keynote policy speech at the 18th party congress held in 2012, former Chinese President Hu Jintao for the first time declared China's ambition to "build itself into a maritime power."¹⁶⁷ Following the teachings of Mahan, the PLA Navy and the CCP believe that it is China's time to evolve from solely being a continental power, to being a power that exerts control via sea and land – expanding the nation's sphere of influence in East Asia. Further taking off from Mahan, the PLA Navy has much larger regional maritime ambitions than those necessarily held by the CCP.

In regional maritime concerns, the CCP currently gives greatest emphasis to the security of its immediate territory. PLA Navy officials and related military researchers believe that China's maritime regional focus should be much wider and more assertive. In 2000, Liu Xuxian, a researcher at the academy of military sciences and vice chair of the arms military science research guidance department, wrote a policy paper arguing that the PLA Navy must modernize its regional strategy, stating "The most important elements of shifting strategy are: the navy's activities and war-planning areas should move from the coast towards nearby seas; our main tasks in warfare are shifting from protecting the country's landmass toward protecting maritime territory, from defeating an enemy attacking in nearby water towards protecting our country's rights and interest at sea."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Huang, Cary. "As China's Navy Grows, End of Deng's Dictum of Keeping a Low Profile?" South China Morning Post, 4 Jan. 2013. Web. <<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1119363/chinas-navy-grows-end-dengs-dictum-keeping-low-profile>>.

¹⁶⁸ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 57

In a paper from China's Naval Command Academy, Quan Jinfu identifies four strategic regional tasks for the PLA Navy: "protecting national "territorial sovereignty" and "safeguarding" its "water rights"; "ensuring the unification of the motherland and protecting social stability"; diplomatic activities; and providing security for national development.¹⁶⁹ Leading US naval consultant Bernard D. Cole translates these regional tasks as "...preventing Taiwan's independence, enforcing Beijing's claims in the East and South China seas, presence on the global scene, and defending China's economic interests."¹⁷⁰

What these authors make clear is that it is critical to the PLA Navy's regional strategy to assert claimed maritime boundaries. The PLA Navy perceives UNCLOS as having increased and justified its claims of regional maritime zones and therefore sees the need to protect these interests. From reviewing numerous Chinese naval policy articles, it is the finding of this study that the PLA Navy is the force that is driving CCP policy decisions in more actively enforcing regional maritime delimitation claims. Map 3 displays China's claimed maritime boundary, extending down from the East China Sea into the South China Sea.

¹⁶⁹ Cole, Bernard D. *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy in the Twenty-first Century*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 2010. Print. Pg. 169

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. Pg. 169.

Map 3. Disputed maritime boundaries in East Asia¹⁷¹



The breadth of China's claimed territorial waters alone would give China (if uncontested) maritime supremacy throughout East Asia. In accordance with sea power theory, superior rights to and control of the seas in East Asia would secure China's economic, political, development, societal confidence, and national security interests.

Economically; the majority of China's imports and exports are dependent on shipping through the East and South China Seas. Utilizing sea power theory, policy papers from China's *Modern Navy* military journal suggest that the PLA Navy has set itself as the protector of China's economic interests – protecting these interests by securing maritime shipping routes. Politically, regional maritime dominance would forward China's political influence with neighbors. This goes together with securing China's national security interests. Both North and Southeast Asia are made up of sea-dependent nations. Maritime supremacy over the extending seas would give China a political and military advantage over the region while effectively safeguarding its coastline. Developmentally, securing the East and South China seas would

¹⁷¹ 108 "Troubled Waters." *The Economist*. The Economist Newspaper, 06 Aug. 2012. Web. <<http://www.economist.com/blogs/analects/2012/08/south-china-sea#sthash.Nhv7zwxu.dpbs>>.

China's claims to underwater natural resources – crucial to continued economic and national development. All these securities would combine to increase societal confidence in and stability for the CCP. The PLA Navy perceives itself as the arm of the CCP that can secure these interests and solidify China's regional dominance.

Securing sea lanes and natural resources

In 2007, two star Admiral Yao Wenhui, vice-head of the PLA Navy political department, wrote;

“The heart of our country's economy is more and more concentrated in coastal areas; if the coastal areas are not safe, then we can't even begin to talk about the safety of our economy; maritime shipping and energy and resource SLOCS [Sea Lines of Communication] have already become the vital vein of our economy and societal development, especially oil and other important imported materials; our dependence on maritime shipping is big, and so protecting our country's SLOCs is extremely important.”

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As Admiral Yao points out, shipping routes and undersea natural resources are of critical importance to China's continued strength as a nation. The PLA Navy is the only branch of the military capable of protecting China's developed eastern coast and its sea lanes and preventing the exploitation of China's maritime resources. China claims approximately 3 million square kilometers of maritime territory under its legal jurisdiction.¹⁷³ Approximately 1.5 million square kilometers of that territory is in dispute or already controlled by other nations.¹⁷⁴ Protecting shipping and resources interests by securing China's maritime territory is a crucial aspect of the PLA Navy's strategy.

¹⁷² Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 75.

¹⁷³ Ibid. pg86

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. pg86

Natural resources

In 1994, Senior Captain Luo Xialin stated that “protecting and developing the ocean’s resources is a historic responsibility that our navy cannot shirk.”¹⁷⁵ This line of thought has been emphasized by numerous Chinese naval authors in following years and highlights an ideology within the PLA Navy of a responsibility for protecting undersea resources in China’s maritime territories – as is the case in the Xihu Trough. Reasons for controlling and exploring maritime resources, outlined by naval authors, are population growth and the need for natural resources to support a growing country and resulting growing economy in a modern world. “Land resources are gradually being exhausted.”¹⁷⁶ 71% of the world’s surface is ocean and minimal effort has been made to exploit ocean resources.¹⁷⁷ Technology has made it possible to access maritime resources in a way previously not possible and exploiting the ocean is an ideal way to improve China’s resource security. As pointed out by researcher Fravel and Liebman; “in order to get at maritime resources, china’s territory and EEZ must be protected from other countries who want to take those resources.”¹⁷⁸

The PLA Navy recognizes that securing undersea natural resources will require expanding China’s established concept of maritime defense. In 2000, Lie Zhenhuan, Senior Captain at the China Naval Research Institute wrote that “the PLA Navy must make itself capable of “protecting china’s ‘maritime territory’ and the development of its resources...the scope of china’s maritime defense must be enlarged to include the entirety of the waters under China’s jurisdiction, including the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf.”¹⁷⁹ Zhang Shiping, a research in the campaign and tactics department of the Chinese Academy of Military Sciences, defines naval strength not only in terms of the PLA Navy’s ability to defeat foreign navies, but in terms of the navy’s ability to protect the exploitation of undersea natural resources

¹⁷⁵ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg 57

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Liu Zhenhuan et al., “Zoujin haiyang shiji qiangda Zhongguo haijun”, *Dangdai Haijun*, no. 1 (2000), 4.

by Chinese vessels.¹⁸⁰ He defines naval strength in economic as much as in military terms is stating that "protecting the development of natural resources from being stolen or ruined is one of the base tasks of our navy."¹⁸¹

Shipping lanes

Maritime shipping lanes are crucial for all East Asian nations. In Northeast Asia, key regional shipping lanes are located in the East China Sea. Though relatively dependent on maritime trade, China does not border any oceans, only seas. Due to its geographic position, China's maritime trade is highly reliant on the shipping lanes in the East China Sea that connect vessels to the rest of the world. Arguably for the first time in China's history, continued economic growth is dependent on maritime access and security.¹⁸²

In 2013, China exported an estimated \$2.12 trillion US dollars, ranking it the largest exporting economy in the world.¹⁸³ In the same year, China imported an estimated \$1.95 trillion US dollars, making it the 2nd largest consumer economy in the world.¹⁸⁴ With so much at stake, protection of sea lanes is a key focus of PLA Navy policy makers. As China's energy needs and volume of trade continue to expand, Chinese naval analysts have increasingly come to view securing access to shipping lanes as a necessity for sustained development and growth.¹⁸⁵

One of the important aspects of the PLA Navy's push for sea lane security is that the PLA Navy is the only government faction actively pursuing the issue. Authors Fravel and Liebman tracked the usage of 'sea lanes' in CCP journals versus PLA Navy journals and discovered a relatively unchanging and minute use of the term in CCP articles and a large, upwards trend in the use of the term within PLA Navy related articles.¹⁸⁶ The authors resultantly

¹⁸⁰ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 58

¹⁸¹ Ibid. Pg. 58.

¹⁸² Ibid. Pg. 81.

¹⁸³ "China." *CIA World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, 1 May 2014. Web. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>>.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 85.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. Pg. 63.

speculated that sea lane security may become an issue where the PLA Navy exerts “special influence”.¹⁸⁷

In a 2004 *Modern Navy* article, it was justified that further building the PLA Navy will allow China to “stabilize the supply chain.”¹⁸⁸ A strong navy is conducive to a strong maritime based economy. As stated by Wang Shumei et al;

“The strength of rights and interest at sea and a country’s rise and fall are correlated phenomena...if the navy does not have great strength, then it may be a burden on the country, becoming merely a consumer; but if the navy is a strong force, then it can create a positive effect, and create a virtuous cycle with promoting overall development. Naval power is directly proportional to the development of a country’s maritime interests.”¹⁸⁹

The overlying theme of the PLA Navy’s policy push is that the PLA Navy is and will be the protector of China’s economy. As stated by Rear Admiral Yao Wenhai, “China’s fate lies with the sea.”¹⁹⁰

Sovereignty disputes over offshore islands as well as Taiwan

Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands

The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands are of economic, territorial, political, historical, and symbolic importance to both China and Japan. As noted by Bernard D. Cole, as a result of the “one hundred years of humiliation”, “Chinese civilian and military officials remain extremely sensitive to sovereignty claims, no matter how contested or tenuous under international law.”¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. Pg. 63.

¹⁸⁸ Qiao Lin, “Haishang maoyizhan bainian sikao”, *Dangdai Haijun*, no. 4 (1999).

¹⁸⁹ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 76.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. Pg. 85.

¹⁹¹ Cole, Bernard D. *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy in the Twenty-first Century*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 2010. Print. Pg. 19

For the PLA Navy, the economic and territorial aspects of the disputed islands are of the greatest importance. At stake are fishing resources, undersea oil and natural gas deposits, and an extended maritime boundary that encompasses important shipping lanes – all issues paramount to PLA Naval policy interests.

The CCP and the PLA Navy share two key strategies in dealing with the contention of the islands' sovereignty. As suggested by Fravel and Liebman¹⁹², these two strategies are;

1. Minimizing public discussion of the conflict, but demonstrating China's "resolute" stance on the question of sovereignty when the Japanese government is viewed as challenging China's claim.
2. Restraining expectations among the public regarding China's ability to make progress in the dispute. Internationally, the islands are widely regarded as being held by Japan and the United States has made it clear that defense of the islands is included in the U.S.-Japan alliance.

China has typically employed naval force over issues of sovereignty concerning specific islands and provinces."¹⁹³ However, engaging in open naval conflict to settle the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute would be disastrous for the PLA Navy, whose forces are no match for the combined forces of Japan and the United States.

In current PLA Naval publications, authors have made clear that Japan having uncontested sovereignty over the island could also be disastrous of China and Chinese maritime interests. A 2006 article in *National Defense* cites that unopposed Japanese sovereignty over the Senkaku/ Diaoyu islands would allow Japan to exploit natural resources in 200,000 square kilometers of Chinese national territory.¹⁹⁴ A 2003 article in *Modern Navy* contends that "the islands could extend Japan's defensive range more than 300 nautical miles to the west from Okinawa, threatening China's coastal regions and Taiwan through the placement of radar or

¹⁹² Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 53.

¹⁹³ Cole, Bernard D. *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy in the Twenty-first Century*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 2010. Print. Pg. 18.

¹⁹⁴ Gao Xinsheng, "Daoyu yu xin shiji zhongguo haifan jianshe", *Guofang*, no.11 (2006), 46.

missile systems.”¹⁹⁵ According to Jin Yinan, professor of strategy at the PLA’s National Defense University, the military importance of the islands is to serve as a “protective screen” for the East China Sea.¹⁹⁶ Thus, the PLA Navy and the CCP are in agreement to maintain a non-forceful claim on the islands, while focusing on deterring Japan’s claim.

Taiwan

In recent years, the PLA Navy has shifted its policy approach to Taiwan. Before, the PLA Navy’s policy had mirrored the CCP’s in focusing on unification. Now, the PLA Navy’s policy interests are on incorporating Taiwan in order to create a territorial platform from which to defend China’s exclusive economic zone, contested islands, and vital sea lanes - all of which protect China’s economy.¹⁹⁷

While there are many benefits to reincorporating Taiwan, there are even greater disadvantages if Taiwan were to increasingly stand in opposition to Chinese maritime interests. The geographic location of Taiwan squarely sits it as a land blockade opposite a predominate expanse of China’s coastline – restraining China’s options is maritime routes. Chinese author Li Yaqiang asserts that;

“The island of Taiwan holds the most crucial “central position” on the Chinese coast, as well as the “central position” in the first island chain from the Bering Strait and the Aleutian Islands to Jiayi, Longmu, and the Xunta Strait, guarding the Bashi, Balintang, and Taiwan Strait, and controlling the throat to the shipping lane from the Malacca Strait north through the South China Sea, which gives it a very advantageous geographic location of great strategic value.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Du Chaoping, “Meiguo miaozhun diaoyudao” *Dangdai Haijun*. No.7 (2003), 36.

¹⁹⁶ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Print. Pg. 54.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* Pg. 76.

¹⁹⁸ Holmes, James R., and Toshi Yoshihara. *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print. Pg. 54.

Taiwan's geographic location could cause a great deal of trouble to the PLA Navy's ambitions. Chinese authors Hou Songling and Chi Diantang observe China's geographic predicament in the following terms;

“Although China's geographic position causes China to face the sea, it does not border the ocean. Between the nearby seas and the greater ocean is an island chain composed of the Japanese archipelago, the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, and numerous Southeast Asian archipelagos. This is the first island chain. To pass through the nearby seas and enter the larger ocean, China must pass through this island chain. The northern part of this island chain is currently controlled by the US-Japan alliance. These areas can easily be blockaded during times of war since they are isolated frontally by Taiwan, which has still not been reunified with the motherland.”¹⁹⁹

Both the territorial advantages to reincorporating Taiwan and the geographic and political dangers of a Taiwan in direct opposition to Chinese interests are cited by Chinese naval authors as critical reasons for the CCP to increase the PLA Navy's budget. Taiwan will continue to be a central aspect of the PLA Navy's East China Sea strategy for as long as there is tension between the two nations. As stated by Jian Zhijun, head of the China Naval Research Institute, “as long as the Taiwan issue isn't resolved, we [the PLA Navy] will always be hindered in our capacity to defend our nation's maritime regions.”²⁰⁰

Naval buildup and implications for the region

Chinese navy's impact on China as an increasingly militarized state

According to a report, compiled by the US Congressional Research Service, China's naval modernization effort encompasses a broad array of weapon acquisition programs, including anti-ship ballistic missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, submarines, surface ships, aircraft,

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. Pg. 57.

²⁰⁰ Saunders, Phillip C., Christopher Yung, Michael Swaine, and Andrew Nien-Dzu Yang, eds. *The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 2011. Pg. 48.

and supporting C4ISR (command and control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) systems.²⁰¹ Furthering China's naval modernization efforts also includes reforms and improvements in maintenance and logistics, naval doctrine, personnel quality, education and training, and exercises.²⁰² The report concludes that the PLA Navy wants to be capable of acting as an anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) force—a force that can deter U.S. intervention, or delay the arrival or reduce the effectiveness of intervening in a conflict between China and any regional US allies over territorial claims in the East China Sea.²⁰³

Deterrence is a key aspect to evaluating China's naval buildup. China is engaging to build and strengthen its naval force in order to reinforce to the world that China has power if it chooses to use it.²⁰⁴ James Holmes, a professor at the US Naval War College, stated that because "China is "Mahanian" doesn't mean Beijing plans to build a fleet of armored dreadnoughts to fulfil its maritime destiny. What it does mean is that China has imported some of Mahan's ideas that fit with its unique needs and circumstances, and fused them into its strategy."²⁰⁵ Indeed, Mahan's theory of sea power encourages the building of deterrent forces, stating that naval power often proves "more silent than the clash of arms" – as influential as it is quiet.²⁰⁶ James Holmes regards China's current maritime strategy as being just that, one of minimal force "deployed by naval or nonnaval platforms as the situation and the naval balance warrant."²⁰⁷ He expounds on this notion, stating "It [China] has kept its inventory of small craft strong and numerous, furthering both commercial and military purposes, even as it fills out the upper end of

²⁰¹ Ronald O'Rourke, *China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 10 April 2014), RL33153. Pg 1.

²⁰² Ibid. Pg. 1.

²⁰³ Ibid. Pg. 1.

²⁰⁴ Wen, Yong . "Yingdui xin tiaozhan jie jue xin wenti - lun dang di haiyang haifang haijun jianshe sixiang" *maozedong dengxiaoping lilun yanjiu* 6 (2013): 33-37. *China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House*. Web. 2013.

²⁰⁵ Huang, Cary. "As China's Navy Grows, End of Deng's Dictum of Keeping a Low Profile?" *South China Morning Post*, 4 Jan. 2013. Web. <<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1119363/chinas-navy-grows-end-dengs-dictum-keeping-low-profile>>.

²⁰⁶ Cropsey, Seth, and Arthur Milikh. "Mahan's Naval Strategy: China Learned It. Will America Forget It?" *World Affairs* (March/April 2012): n. pag. *World Affairs*, Mar. 2012. Web. <<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/mahan%25E2%2580%2599s-naval-strategy-china-learned-it-will-america-forget-it>>.

²⁰⁷ Holmes, James. "Red Tide: Just How Strong Is China's Navy, Really?" *Foreign Policy*, 12 Aug. 2013. Web. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/08/12/red_tide_how_strong_is_the_chinese_navy>.

an oceangoing fleet with glitzy platforms like aircraft carriers and new destroyers. This continuum – spanning from lowly fishing boats and patrol craft able to face off against weak Asian navies (like the Philippine Navy) to blue-water combatants able to duel with peer navies (like the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force) on equal footing – is deeply embedded in China’s maritime culture.”²⁰⁸

How policy shifts connected with a strengthening Chinese navy will affect Northeast Asia

According to John Lee, a professor at the University of Sydney’s Centre for International Security Studies, “China has been a continental power for several centuries. The shift from continental to maritime power and in military doctrine is inherently unsettling for all Asia states, especially given the increased assertiveness of Beijing over territorial disputes.”²⁰⁹ China’s regional emergence as a maritime power has significantly impacted Northeast Asian relations. China’s political and territorial interests stand juxtaposed to those of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan – all allies of the United States. This division has caused a regional rift among nations, leaving all sides nervous and looking to shore-up their own interests. It is the conclusion of this paper that as China expands its naval capabilities, it will further perpetuate the regional security spiral, set itself against Japan in competition for a Mahanian regional maritime supremacy, and ultimately further draw the United States navy into the region.

The intention of international regimes is to create laws and agreements that ultimately lead to less fighting and a decrease in regional arms buildups – security spirals. Due to China’s interpretation of UNCLOS, the convention has led to an opposite outcome in the region – an increased security spiral and increased political tension. China has asserted a right to the majority of the East China Sea and has been diligently building a maritime force to back its claim. As China’s year over year naval budget has increased, so too have the naval budgets of Japan and South Korea. Due to the high volume of trade that each of these nations conducts with China,

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Huang, Cary. "As China's Navy Grows, End of Deng's Dictum of Keeping a Low Profile?" South China Morning Post, 4 Jan. 2013. Web. <<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1119363/chinas-navy-grows-end-dengs-dictum-keeping-low-profile>>.

flat-out aggression is not a viable option in the foreseeable future. Instead, these three nations have entered into a form of hedging in which they maintain strong trade relations with China while simultaneously building a defense scheme on the chance that China takes a more aggressive stance to regional disputes. In China –Japan relations, this situation is commonly referred to as ‘hot economics, cold politics.’ Though not in outright hostility, "as long as a negative spiral of assertive nationalism amplifies over territorial issues, China, Japan, and North and South Korea are likely to engage in a conventional arms race."²¹⁰

According to Professor John Lee, “stability in the post-second world war order has depended on two factors; uncontested American maritime power and access, and a stable balance of power between the maritime muscle of Asian countries.”²¹¹ In Northeast Asia, the current balance between regional powers China and Japan is at risk. Both nations have naval forces that have modeled policy interests on the teachings of Mahan and the theory of sea power. However, Mahan’s theory stipulates that for a nation to retain power, it must control its regional and territorial seas. This alone automatically puts the PLA Navy and Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force in direct opposition. For both forces, there are both tangible and non-tangible incentives to control the East China Sea. The contention for regional maritime supremacy will continue to increasingly put the PLA Navy and the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force in scenarios of direct and indirect conflict.

In 2011, United States President Barack Obama announced that US foreign policy would make a ‘strategic pivot’ to the Asia-Pacific and pledged that by 2020, 60 percent of US naval vessels would be based in the region.²¹² The United States has strong policy interests in East Asia, including Northeast Asia and the East China Sea. Most importantly, the United States has sought to build relations and alliances with regional nations – Japan, South Korea, Taiwan – in

²¹⁰ "Northeast Asian States Seen Facing Arms Race | GSN | NTI." *Global Security Newswire*. Nuclear Threat Initiative, 5 Feb. 2013. Web. <<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/northeast-asian-states-seen-engaging-arms-race/>>.

²¹¹ Huang, Cary. "As China's Navy Grows, End of Deng's Dictum of Keeping a Low Profile?" *South China Morning Post*, 4 Jan. 2013. Web. <<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1119363/chinas-navy-grows-end-dengs-dictum-keeping-low-profile>>.

²¹² "Daily News from Korea - Northeast Asia Is Turning into a Powder Keg." *The Chosun Ilbo (English Edition)*, 6 Mar. 2014. Web. <http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2014/03/06/2014030602077.html>.

an effort to contain Chinese influence and suppress any Chinese hegemony ambitions. It is the speculation of this paper and other authors that the continued growth and influence of the PLA Navy will further heighten the United States' fears of Chinese regional dominance and will increasingly draw the United States into Northeast Asian affairs – including the disputed territories between China and the US-allied Japan in the East China Sea. This will escalate the risk of naval confrontation between the US and China. Authors Seth Cropsey and Arthur Milikh speculate that Mahan would have recognized that as balance of regional naval influence shift between the US and China, “international conflicts between the two powers will increase.”²¹³

Conclusion

The Chinese Communist Party and the PLA Navy have differing notions in how to deal with Northeast Asian neighbors, but they agree on the importance of the East China Sea. Due to the importance of the sea, the CCP has given greater power and an increasing budget to the PLA Navy to protect its interests. The PLA Navy has used ratcheting tension over the disputed maritime territory to further its own policy agenda on how to best protect and project China's strength as a nation. Through the teachings of Mahan, the PLA Navy understands that a strong, blue-water navy is critical to a country's economic success and subsequent presence as an international political power. The key policies being forwarded by the navy - assertion and defense of maritime boundaries, especially rights to offshore resources with China's EEZ; the security of sea lanes and freedom of navigation on the high seas; and sovereignty disputes over offshore islands as well as Taiwan – are all critical to preserving China's power status. The PLA Navy's pursuit of maritime control in the East China Sea will continue to spur the regional security dilemma and raise tension between China and other nation states, particularly with Japan and its ally the United States. The rise of the Chinese navy might very well bring about an

²¹³ Cropsey, Seth, and Arthur Milikh. "Mahan's Naval Strategy: China Learned It. Will America Forget It?" *World Affairs* (March/April 2012): n. pag. World Affairs, Mar. 2012. Web. <<http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/mahan-2580-2599s-naval-strategy-china-learned-it-will-america-forget-it>>.

inevitable confrontation of naval power between China and Japan or China and the United States.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has addressed three key questions about disputed delimitation in the East China Sea and the role that China's People's Liberation Army Navy plays.

In answer to the question 'how is China's interpretation of delimitation in the East China Sea unique?'; China has made a unique and controversially large maritime territory claim, based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea's 76th article on natural prolongation of a nation's maritime shelf. China claims a shelf extension of over 350 nautical miles, 150 nautical miles more than the stipulated 200 nautical miles of recognized extension. China is appealing to have the extra 150 nautical miles recognized by the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. However, a positive ruling would not give China jurisdiction over the disputed territory and would only lead to further conflict between China and Japan. The sovereignty issue of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands further jeopardizes the security of both nations. In this issue, again, China has taken a contentious stance of territorial claim. China has little documented right to the islands and is not supported in its claim of them after the 1800s. However, the extended maritime zone that the islands would potentially provide to its sovereign state are great and hold the largest portion of the East China Sea's oil and natural gas reserves in addition to encompassing some of the seas most vital shipping lanes. The East China Sea delimitation issue is the greatest hotspot in relations between China and Japan and threatens to further involve the United States if China were to militarily engage Japan over the issue.

In answer to the second question 'why is maritime delimitation, particularly in the East China Sea, so important to the PLA Navy?'; the PLA Navy views maintaining and securing China's delimited maritime territory as crucial to securing undersea natural resources and vital shipping lanes, thus securing China's economic power. The PLA Navy understands that a strong, blue-water navy is critical to a country's economic success and subsequent presence as an international political power. Further disputed delimitation in the East China Sea has been the driving issue that has resulted in the Chinese Communist Party allowing PLA Navy officials and strategists to have a greater input on national policy and the subsequent increase in the navy's

share of the defense budget. The PLA Navy views protecting the nation's power status and economy as its primary objective. Preserving China's maritime delimitation claims and extending the nation's maritime influence and control is how the navy achieves this goal.

In answer to the last question 'what policies is the PLA Navy promoting in support of China's maritime delimitation claims and why?'; The key policies being promoted by the navy are the assertion and defense of maritime boundaries, especially rights to offshore resources within China's EEZ; securing sea lanes and freedom of navigation at sea; and being a presence in sovereignty disputes over offshore islands as well as Taiwan. All of these issues are critical to the PLA Navy's goals of preserving China's economic and political power.

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