

Book project: “A Regional Power Shift in the Making? The Rise of China and the South China Sea Disputes”

Call for Papers

Editors

Enrico Fels, Center for Global Studies, Bonn University

Truong-Minh Vu, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City

1. Volume’s Rationale

When looking at Asia-Pacific, a regional power shift is taking place. Probably the most notable feature of this is the rise of China as an economic powerhouse, a major military power as well as a proactive player in various multilateral institutions and fora. Multiple authors have rightly described China as one of the most important forces for change both on the regional and global level. China’s rise and the changing regional power balance caused by the middle kingdom’s impressive development have indeed altered the global perceptions of geopolitics and geoeconomics of Asia-Pacific. On the one hand, this is due to a greater role China is now playing beyond its own region (i.e. in Europe, Africa and South America). More importantly, however, this is on the other hand also strongly related to the growing possibility that the US-led regional order in Asia-Pacific may be challenged (and permanently altered) by an increasingly self-confident China. The South China Sea (SCS), which can be seen as China’s front yard, is of particular importance in this regard. Not only does it hold great economic importance (e.g. due to its huge significance for global trade as well as its riches of oil, gas and seafood), but is also important to China’s regional strategies and future regional role. Indeed, the SCS is perhaps the most strategic area for China to transform from a land to a sea power. With regards to the SCS, the clash of visions between Beijing and Washington is (among other things) particularly related to the freedom of maritime navigation and the ambiguous reliability of the U.S. alliance system established after 1945. In other words, how the SCS disputes are settled will strongly determine the further regional security outlook and the role both China and the US are going to play in the region for the decades to come.

In this context, this volume offers the most timely, up-to-date, and comprehensive analysis of China’s rising power and influence in the SCS disputes. Therefore, the editors invite contributors who either have research focus on power and regional power shifts with a special

emphasis on the SCS disputes at a theoretical level, by adapting or improving existing approaches, developing new approaches, or using concepts of power and regional/global power shifts in empirical research or case studies to explore various dimensions of China's rise and its influence in the power game over the SCS. Additionally, contributions are called for which will present policies related to the disputes of involved Southeast Asian nations such as Vietnam, the Philippines or Malaysia. Furthermore, the volume shall encompass analyses of consequences for other regional players such as ASEAN, the United States, Japan, India or Australia. Also alternative models for an evolving SCS order shall be proposed and discussed.

2. Main parts of the book

Conceptual debates and theoretical considerations, for instance:

- Discussion of current theoretical debates and new interdisciplinary perspectives related to power and regional power shifts
- Interplay of economic statecraft and economic approaches to territorial disputes
- Discussion of international law on territorial disputes
- The role of knowledge, technology and epistemic communities in the territorial disputes

China's Evolving South China Sea Strategy

- China's strategic interests in the South China Sea
- Identifying and classifying China's behaviours in the SCS disputes
- China's evolving maritime strategy
- China's South China Sea discourse
- Discussion of China's growing military and economic means amidst the SCS disputes

Comparative perspectives on politics and diplomacy of Southeast Asian states (i.e. Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore & Philippines)

- Regional states' strategic interests in the South China Sea
- Regional states' South China Sea discourse
- Identifying and classifying regional states' strategic responses to China's rise amidst the SCS disputes

Implications for the Asian Pacific Security Order

- The Transformation of the Asian Security Order: Assessing China's new role in the SCS
- Sinking into insignificance? The role of ASEAN in the SCS
- The Accommodation or Counterbalancing of Rising Chinese Power: Japan/India/Australia's response to the rise of China in the SCS
- Still U.S.-led order? The United States in the SCS
- Too far off? A European perspective on the SCS disputes

3. **Organizational schedule**

- Deadline for abstracts October 20th, 2014
- Notification of accepted chapters will be sent out by November 05th, 2014.
- Deadline full paper submission: January 20th, 2013
- Final drafts with revisions: by March 20th, 2015
- Publication date: June 2015
- Possible Publishers: Springer

Contributors are asked to submit their abstracts to: enrico.fels@uni-bonn.de and truongminhhuyvu@gmail.com

The abstract should be not longer than 350 words and should detail your methodology, empirical/conceptual approach, and your main argument.