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Explaining Sino-Vietnamese Territorial Disputes on
South China Sea: Conflict or Cooperation?

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Abstract

In recent years, with the ensuing pattern of the world's big change, the relationships of China and its neighboring countries have the corresponding subtle change particularly in term of territorial maritime disputes. Since Vietnam Philippines and Japan provoked the conflicts successively, China, which has long-running territorial sea feuds with its neighbors, has raised widespread concerns in the world. Among these maritime conflicts that both sides contest the sovereignty of the disputed islands in addition to maritime rights in the sea area, neither side had indeed used force except the group of China and Vietnam, and the two nations even had fought twice in history. Although the battles temporarily resolved conflicts, the territorial maritime dispute has seen increasing regional tensions at present. In fact, Vietnam take a course of action to magnify, internationalize and complicate the South China Sea dispute. Under the stern situation, the research of the South China Sea dispute of China and Vietnam has important practical significance.

To begin with, the first part describes historical evolution and current situation of the South China Sea dispute of China and Vietnam especially the two particular battles in 1974 and 1988. The second part explains the causes of two armed conflicts from the aspects of military hardware source, national interest and China's policy. Then it examines four factors that could explain the delay strategy in the third part, which are big power's intervention, international organization, national conditions as well as the expenditure. The last part is to analyze the dispute management methods in terms of effectiveness and ineffectiveness so as to emphasize that we should reconsider profoundly, summarize the experiences, and develop a long-term and stable relationship.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	I
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	III
LIST OF TABLES.....	V
LIST OF FIGURES.....	VI
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
RESEARCH QUESTION.....	4
LAYOUT.....	5
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
CHAPTER III: AN OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	15
REALISM.....	15
DOMESTIC POLITICS APPROACH.....	17
NATIONALISM.....	18
METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS OF RESEARCH.....	19
CHAPTER IV: TERRITORIAL MARITIME DISPUTE IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.....	21
BACKGROUND.....	21
<i>The Battle of Parcels Islands, January 1974.....</i>	23
<i>Johnson South Reef Skirmish, March 1988.....</i>	28
CURRENT COOPERATION ALONG WITH CONFRONTATION.....	33
CHAPTER V: EXPLAINING THE ARMED CONFLICT.....	37
HARDWARE LEFT BY US AND MILITARY SUPPORT FROM USSR.....	39
POTENTIAL BENEFITS THAT FIRST COME, FIRST OWNED.....	41
CHINA'S PASSIVE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE.....	44
CHAPTER VI: EXPLAINING THE DELAY STRATEGY.....	45
BIG POWERS' INTERVENTION.....	45
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION.....	52
LIMITS OF NATIONAL CONDITIONS.....	56
CONSIDERING COSTS OF ISLANDS CONSTRUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION.....	61
CHAPTER VII: ANALYZING THE DISPUTE MANAGEMENT METHODS.....	65
DISPUTE MANAGEMENT IN HISTORY.....	65
EFFECTIVENESS AND INEFFECTIVENESS OF USING ARMED FORCE AND DELAYING STRATEGY.....	69

FEASIBILITY OF EXISTING DISPUTE MANAGEMENT METHODS..... 71

CHAPTER VIII: CONSLUSION..... 74

SUMMARY..... 74

FURTHER DIRECTION AND RECOMMENDATION..... 76

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 78



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