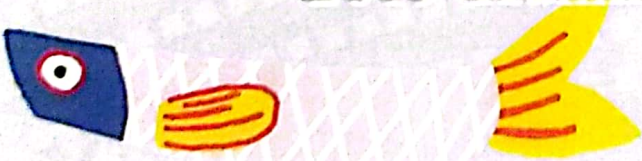




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# Sovereignty Discourse: South China Sea Conflict

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## ABSTRACT

*This article explains the paradox of sovereignty in the South China Sea conflict which has the potential to create open war. Until now, the tension of political sovereignty did not create war between countries. Thus, it becomes interesting to reveal the mystery of the absence of war. This phenomenon will be analyzed using Michel Foucault's genealogy approach, to show the paradox of sovereignty as the grand narrative and Pierre Bourdieu's symbolic power approach, to show the strength of local culture as a minor narrative in the text battle arena. Derrida's deconstruction will also be used to dismantle the logic of sovereignty. The study found that the absence of war in the South China Sea is a result of the symbolic power of Confucianism that greatly influences Chinese foreign policy. It is widely known as a peaceful development.*

*Keywords: Sovereignty, Confucianism, South China Sea*

## 1. Background

This research idea seeks to reveal logocentrism that has become a grand narrative of modernism in the South China Sea (SCS). It is the root of conflict, so it is important to find the origin of the regime. Grand narrative focuses on building on the discourse of domination of modern culture that shapes the behavior of countries to act in constellations of conflict and tension. Beside grand narrative of modernism, this research will also explore minor narratives that cause the absence of open war in the SCS. Grand narrative is a cognitive structure that is considered as absolute historical truth. Foucault calls it regimes of truth. The regime is 'software' in a state institution that is given so that it can manifest state mysticism into reality. It presents in the form of discourse or text that is believed by modern culture as a legitimate principle to regulate the behavior of modern countries to act peacefully. Discourse in each society produces knowledge, power, and truth that develop over a period of time and can completely change or switch stages of the period.

The state acting conflict in the SCS is closely related to the concept of a modern state as formed by Westphalia which is believed to construct various texts of truth as a condition for the establishment of a sovereign state. This implies similarities in state behavior in the SCS to maintain its existence in regional politics. The state's actions are driven by dominant power. The power comes from the text of sovereignty. This bodiless text attempts to occupy the body of state, and it succeeded in the treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

Bourdieu calls it "the power of discourse." It drives countries around the SCS to have endless conflict which potentially creates open war between countries in the SCS.

Conflicting behavior of countries in the SCS is based on political and socio-cultural characters built by the fragmentation of different national identities. It supports an argument which claims that the differences in national identity have the potential to trigger an outbreak of open war on the SCS which had high political tensions related to sea boundaries. Even though, in reality, it does not cause open war in the long and sensitive escalation of conflict. This is an anomalous phenomenon because the paradox of sovereignty and the meaning of sovereignty should have an impact on open war between countries.

Territorial sovereignty is reflected in the imagination of the sea boundary set by UNCLOS 1982. This imagination has an impact on the claims of countries in SCS. China claims Spratly, the Paracel islands, and surrounding waters, while Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia also claim similar waters as part of their country's marine territory. These mutual claims have a significant impact on conflict.<sup>1</sup> Tension in the SCS is something that is difficult to resolve because every country is fragmented in its national identity related to its territory. Military experts argue that tension can lead to open war. The commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, Scott Swift, argues that the SCS dispute has the potential for open war. Therefore, several conflicting countries are increasingly tempted to use military force in resolving territorial sea disputes.<sup>2</sup> Swift's argument is the significance of anxiety from military experts because the SCS situation has the potential to devolve into conflicts that turn into open war.

In addition, we refer to John Mueller's definition of war as "armed conflict between governments in cases of interstate war or between government and at least organized civilian armed groups."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the US Marine Corps' *Warfighting* defines war "as a clash of interests or between organized groups characterized by military power, these groups are traditionally a nation state."<sup>4</sup> Both of these definitions provide an understanding that open war is an event which is a political meaning expressed in an organized manner because of conflicts of interest between countries by using heavily armed military violence on a large scale which aims to achieve political interests.

Based on the definition of Mueller and U.S Marine Corps' *Warfighting*, the phenomena in the SCS are able to lead countries into conflict and open war. The great Chinese military power, the Philippines with the

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<sup>1</sup>L. Buszynski, 'Rising Tensions in the South China Sea: Prospects for a Resolution of the Issue,' *Security Challenges*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2010, pp. 85-104.

<sup>2</sup>J. Dwidayasa, 'Sengketa Laut China Selatandinilai Picu Perlombaan Senjata,' *Okezone.com*, 15 Desember 2015, <<http://news.okezone.com/read/2015/12/15/18/1268309/sengketa-laut-china-selatan-dinilai-picu-perlombaan-senjata>>, Accessed December 24, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> J. Mueller, 'War Has Almost Ceased to Exist: An Assessment,' *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 124, no. 2, 2009, p. 298.

<sup>4</sup>*U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting*, Cosimo, New York, 2007, p. 3, <<https://books.google.co.id/books?isbn=1602060592>>, Accessed April 15, 2018.

help of the United States, Malaysia with the FPDA alliance, Vietnam with its war experience, can quickly summon the courage to declare open war. Although materially supportive of open warfare, it does not lead to the intention of states to declare conventional warfare. The peace anomaly in the SCS conflict indicates the presence of 'texts or other reproductions of texts' in the battle spaces of discourse so as to balance the dominant modern discourse. It becomes very interesting to examine in order to uncover the textual paradox of sovereignty and reproduction of other knowledge that is able to move the behavior of states in the SCS with a high tendency for conflict, creating negative peace.

## 2. Grand narrative

According to Foucault, there is no single great history, but many historical links that vary in relation to knowledge and power. Genealogy shows a variety of historical lines that still survive and have been closed in influencing the behavior of subjects, objects, actions, and realms of knowledge.<sup>5</sup> Genealogy theory is an anti-essentialist approach, emphasizing that knowledge occurs at a certain place and time and is dominated by a perspective. Science always has conditions as a consequence of maintaining its existence in the realm of combat, so that there is no single "truth," which is only competing perspectives and "truth regimes". The truth regime reveals itself when knowledge and power both survive. The term refers to the discourse that is believed to be truth, in accordance with the rules and criteria that determine the correct proposition of the wrong, thus affecting the formation of practice.<sup>6</sup>

The truth regime does not seek the truth, but contains an internal battle for truth in a realm with one emerging victorious. The winning discourse will affect the practice of the actor in acting. There is fighting between and within the truth regime, where there are building hierarchies so that power influences knowledge claims.<sup>7</sup> Through this framework, the search for the grand narrative will be mapped into three parts: uncovering the concepts of the state which became the idol text of the community; reading the sovereignty text through deconstruction to show the regime of truth; and showing the textual implications of sovereignty in the SCS.

### A. Idol country

Before we continue to examine the paradox of the sovereignty text, first, we will dismantle a text full of mystery contained in the meaning of the state of centrism. This text is inseparable from the meaning of unity which shapes the excessive love of the state of its people. Unity logic as excessive meaning builds

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<sup>5</sup>M. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, edisi Bahasa Indonesia *Wacana Kuasa/Pengetahuan*, diterjemahkan oleh Yudi Santoso, narasi/pustaka promethean, Yogyakarta, 2017, p. 146-147.

<sup>6</sup>M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, edisi Bahasa Indonesia *Arkeologi Pengetahuan*, diterjemahkan oleh Inyik Ridwan Muzir, IRCiSoD, Yogyakarta, 2012, p. 66-67.

<sup>7</sup>Foucault, p. 69.

national identity behavior as we and the other. The phrase "we" forms communal micro-fascists of nation-states to oppose "them" (other countries). It is through this fragmentation of nationality that "intimate relations" are established between the state and its people.

Gramsci called it "statolatry." Etymologically, statolatry is a combination of two concepts namely "state" and "idolatry," state and worship.<sup>8</sup> Historically, this word was first introduced by Gentile in doctrine of fascism in 1931. He described the characteristics of fascism in Italy. But in a deeper understanding, Gramsci called it an effect of hegemonic power. Hegemony is the expansion of the reach of state power in sectors that have not yet been reached. Based on the logic of the state, the conventional reach of the state is the doctrine of unity as an instrument of citizens' compliance with the state. If so, then hegemony extends its reach to non-conventional things, namely culture. The target of hegemony is not repression through weapons of arms and military apparatus, but cultural, intellectual and moral control.<sup>9</sup>

Through cultural hegemony, the state receives the peoples' approval regarding its existence. In Gramsci's language, it is "*able to present itself as an integral 'state,' possessing all intellectual and moral forces is needed to organize a complete and perfect society.*"<sup>10</sup> This explains the state in an effort to expand the range of "fine slavery" to its people. However, the people take it for granted, as if the state is something essential. This hegemony creates an intimate relationship between the state and the people. The state becomes a people's idol; even if the state commits violence or injustice, it remains a "god" for its people. The disease of comfort experienced by citizens is the implementation of cultural, intellectual, even moral hegemony. This voluntary agreement that later becomes the basis of cultural and moral legitimacy, in an unconscious situation given by the people.

In statolatry, the state becomes something normal, so it is impossible to live outside the country. This confirms that there is no normal life outside the state. Civil society will feel comfortable living in a state without discovering the other side of the state. Finally, this voluntary servitude makes the state something ahistorical, meaning something natural or given. Various types of faces are used by the state to realize statolatry, for example nationalism and citizenship. Through nationalism, the state builds knowledge to its people to love their country and put the interests of the country above personal or group interests. In addition, citizenship identifies its people to be involved in political affairs.<sup>11</sup>

Historically the state was a representation of the king, while the king was a representation of God. Carl Schmitt said this is "the all-important concept of modern theory of the state of secularized theological concepts." This shows that all modern state concepts or theories come from theology. However, the theological concept is manifested or secularized in an absolute monarchical government, as in the term

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<sup>8</sup>A. Gramsci (Eds), *Selection from the Prison Notebooks*, International Publishers, New York, 1971, p. 268.

<sup>9</sup> H. Y. Polimpung, *Asal Usul Kedaulatan*, Kepik, Depok, 2014, p. 84-85.

<sup>10</sup>Gramsci, p. 271

<sup>11</sup> Polimpung, p. 723.

"mortal god" by Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan*. Likewise the prophet of modern philosophy Rene Descartes mentions a god who created laws in nature, as the king created them in the kingdom.<sup>12</sup>

The above view can be confirmed back on the thoughts of Nicollo Machiavelli in the ideas of *fortune* and *legibus solutus* from Jean Bodin. Through the above thinkers, Schmitt has a solid argument with which to prove that the concept of the state has the theological roots of the concept that is secularized. Thus the state is in various forms of theology: "mortal god," *fortuna*, and *solutus* are historical imaginations enshrined in civil society as if they were ahistorical.<sup>13</sup> These various frameworks revive discussions about nationalism and citizenship as instruments to achieve statolatry imagination. Benedict Anderson calls nationalism a community imagination limited by the concept of state sovereignty.<sup>14</sup>

This paper is in line with Schmitt and Polimpung's thinking in psychogenealogy, which is to uncover the paradox of sovereignty in the state's body so that it affects countries behaving in conflict in SCS. *Fortuna* is like what lives in the country so that it becomes a regime of truth. The faith between state power and mortal god knowledge is the focus of revealing the mystery hidden in the body of the state. This is in line with the classic story of "the fruit of the tree of good and evil knowledge" in the Garden of Eden which inhabits Eve and Adam's body so that they behave naked. Again, as Polimpung said, Jesus needed the womb of Mary and the sheepfold for his birth, in this case the tree of knowledge yielded sovereignty that inhabited the womb of the state resulting in conflicting behavior in the South China Sea.

Doxa or the schemes of individual thinking which became universal truths reveal complex problems. This is the origin of state micro-fascists. Through the doxa built by *Leviathan* Hobesian, it has a significant impact on interstate relations in SCS. Doxa creates totalitarianism of state leaders by presenting mortal gods in the womb of the state and doing the truth of wolves for each other in SCS. Therefore, deconstruction is needed to dismantle the cruelty of the text of state sovereignty.

## **B. Sovereignty deconstruction**

The mystery of the state's sovereignty spirit as the dominant text that moves the behavior of the state to conflict in SCS will be shown paradoxically. Sovereignty is the truth regime of modern people which is produced into universal knowledge of the nation state. It is certain that all countries have sovereignty regimes, so sovereignty becomes an absolute condition driving state behavior. The regime can survive as the dominant knowledge of each country. Foucault says that power is specialized through science. He calls it the rule of immanence. Thus power is decentralized and pluralized.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>T. Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common wealth Ecclesiastical and Civil*, Thomas Hobbes, Malbesbury, 1651, p.106.

<sup>13</sup>Polimpung, p. 90

<sup>15</sup>Burchil & Linklater, p. 248

The sovereignty text has a strong relation in the cognitive structural of civil society and political society. The root is knowledge that idolizes the state. It is almost certain that the imposition of sovereign state knowledge in paternalistic identity becomes universal. Laclau calls it discursive hegemony. In the SCS conflict stated earlier, sovereignty is a real reason. He became the dominant knowledge in the SCS conflict, so that the knowledge of the local community was buried (not yet dead). China and Southeast Asia countries, through the sovereignty of the sea, are in conflict, defending the desires of respective countries.

Discussing sovereignty is inseparable from the medieval thinker Thomas Hobbes. He is the originator of the sovereignty theory. According to him, humans act like wolves to each other. This is an interesting way to construct the discourse so that the flow of positivism believes that sovereignty is something that is a given because it comes from the human nature of the wolf. *Homo homini lupus*' condition is that humans are always haunted by fear of threats coming from other humans. This precondition is what Hobbes called a natural condition. The Hobbes dictum which was then quoted by Foucault was "*all war against war or bellum omnium contra omnes*."<sup>16</sup>Based on this natural condition, the werewolves forced the birth of the Leviathan to guard and reduce the human nature of wolves to other humans.

The Leviathan represents a condition depressed by lupus by the desire to be safe. So then, the Leviathan is called from lupus, by lupus, and for lupus. Then, why did Hobbes say that the Leviathan's sovereignty is a mortal god or comes from god?<sup>17</sup> Historically, this has been used as the truth of the kings with various kinds of doctrines, for example the state is king, and a king is a representation of god, the doctrine of two bodies, even the doctrine of two swords. For example, King Henri VIII regarded himself as the "messenger of Jesus Christ" to become the king who ruled his royal body. In addition, King Charles I believed that his kingdom was given by God.

Furthermore, humans are wolves for each other creating shared commodities to create security. Foucault calls it micro-power. Power produces the subject through discourse and then controls it. The lupus created insecurity in him so he pressed Leviathan to rule over him for security. This encourages the subject to give everything he has to the wolves to keep it from other wolves. Finally, it gave rise to individualistic human nature, creating concepts of Leviathan sovereignty such as nationalism and citizenship. The surrender of security to a mortal god provides an opportunity for sovereignty to occupy the body of the state with the reproduction of insecurity. The discourse of nationalism and discourse on citizenship became the dominant discourse in maintaining the existence of Leviathan sovereignty by mastering the subject while thinking of needing Leviathan.

To trace the mystery of the sovereignty of Westphalia as a power of discourse, the Leviathan sovereignty discursive hegemony born of the antagonism of lupus must be seen as a universal discourse.

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<sup>16</sup>M. Foucault, *Il Faut Défendre La Société*, English Edition *Society Must be Defended*, translate by David Macey, Picador, New York, 1975-76, p. 112.

<sup>17</sup>Hobbes, p.275.



This search is limited to thirty years of war. The era before the thirty-year war will be discussed on another occasion. Westphalia is a set of principles, rules, and norms that produce various kinds of knowledge, which later became the basis of modern philosophy. One of the software agreed upon in the Westphalia agreement is the sovereignty regime. *Regimes are defined as sets of implicit explicit principles, norms, rules, and decisions making procedures around which actors expect converge in a given area.*<sup>18</sup> Thus, Westphalia can be claimed as a regime because it produces principles, norms, rules, decisions to make procedures for sovereignty. So sovereignty is a process of historical knowledge formed by actors in the Westphalia treaty, not a Leviathan naturally-given.

The Leviathan's knowledge, which is considered natural and maintained by realists like Joseph Grieco, claims that the international regime as a basis for cooperation in neoliberalism too-underestimated the international system of anarchy. Every country cannot be trusted to engage in cooperation, because possibly one of the countries is incarcerating cooperation agreements in a regime because of an anarchic system. The relative and absolute advantages of neoliberalism will shape the behavior of the state to cheat and withdraw. In seeking profit in global politics, the state is more of a wolf to each other because each country is basically a Leviathan.

According to Polimpung, Grieco's view was because he only saw one eye towards the prisoner's dilemma game model. This game brings the actors to a big loss if they withdraw from cooperation. Therefore, it is not possible for one party to take the risk of something that has a big impact. In this case, institutional neoliberalism understands anarchy more than realism.<sup>19</sup>

Return to the Westphalia agreement. Forming a Westphalia regime was an impetus to end the 30-year war. This war consists of four phases. First, in 1618-1625 the civil war in Bohemia. The war between the Catholics led by King Ferdinand and the Evangelical Union led by Prince Frederick came from Palestine. Second, in the years 1625-1629 namely the Danish War. This war involved King Christian IV, who came from Denmark, and was a defender of the Protestants. However, victory still went to the Catholics. The third phase is the phase of Protestant victory referred to as the Swedish War. King Gustavus Adolphus succeeded in making Denmark, Poland, Finland and other small countries the Protestant frontline. The fourth phase is a phase that arises because of the involvement of France, the Netherlands and Scotland to strengthen Protestants. No party won this last phase of the war until it ended in the Westphalia agreement with two treaties; *Muster* contains an agreement on peace between France and the great Roman Empire. *Osnabruk* is a peace agreement between Sweden and the great Roman Empire.<sup>20</sup>

If Westphalia is seen from the perspective of Foucault, it is necessary to trace the power relations of the Kings of France and the King of Sweden along with other Kings and the Great King of Rome to construct

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<sup>18</sup>S.D. Kresner, *International Rezim*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup>Polimpung, p. 27

<sup>20</sup>Polimpung, p. 114-115

a discourse which can then maintain its post-Westphalia existence. In this case the deconstruction reading shows that the sovereignty text is the most effective device to maintain the mortal god principle. In the view of Laclau and Mouffe's hegemony sovereignty text moves the epistemic community to universalism discourse.

The desire of the Kings to maintain their divine existence by legitimizing the principles, norms, rules, and procedures of decisions in a historic agreement. In other words that sovereignty or Hobbesian Leviathan is not something that is given but rather a power effort in the form of discourse aimed at maintaining the existence of the Kings in the contemporary era. Through this discourse of power (sovereignty), the state and its leaders (such as kings and kingdoms) exist in global politics. The birth of modern sovereignty through relations of power of Westphalia chose the country as its womb, and the international arena as its birthplace. Significant implications for the birth of this sovereignty can be confirmed in World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. Countries with a desire for sovereignty power produce wolf's behavior in other countries. Westphalia as a peace regime should create a discourse of sovereignty as a discourse of peace, but the reality is that it led to the behavior of wolves.

Thus said Polimpung, if the discourse of sovereignty was born because of the power relations of Westphalia, it could also be killed by other discourse powers. In another word, something born must ultimately die. Bourdieu said that the battle for discourse will continue to occur in the arenas of power such as the cultural, social, political and economic arenas. Deconstruction of Westphalia's sovereignty reveals the bad side of sovereignty so that the state will continue to experience security nightmares. Leviathan instruments such as military reinforcement, defense equipment, and sophisticated weapons are the choices for wolves to defend themselves. The following will show the implications of the birth of sovereignty in the arena of the South China Sea.

### **C. Sovereignty implication in the South China Sea**

Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Vietnam are faced with tensions related to the problem of claims of territory in the South China Sea (SCS), especially around the Spratly Islands. The South China Sea conflict is caused by overlapping claims between Southeast Asian countries and China. China claims Spratly, the Paracel Islands and surrounding waters and has tried to prevent other claimants, while Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia also claim the waters of the South China Sea as part of their territory. These mutual claims result in prolonged conflicts and may pose security issues of territorial sovereignty based on the national interest related to strategic borders.<sup>21</sup>

Political interests or power, as assumed by realism, became evident in the South China Sea conflict. Every country tries to self-help and survive by maintaining territorial sovereignty. The political interests of each Southeast Asian country involved in defending claims makes the conflict prolonged. The South China

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<sup>21</sup>Buszynski, pp. 85-104.

Sea dispute has a greater potential for conflict in the future. War may be unavoidable from the dispute because diplomacy is considered a failure to bring peace. Settlement efforts through negotiations began to weaken; negotiations within the framework of ASEAN regional organizations do not produce solutions or progress in diplomatic forums. For example, at the 2012 Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, ASEAN did not succeed in uniting views on negotiations with China regarding the governance of behavior in the disputed region of the South China Sea.<sup>22</sup>This condition caused tensions between the countries in dispute.

Indeed, peace efforts to avoid open war have been carried out several times by ASEAN within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). In July 1994, China was committed to resolving the Spratly island dispute with Vietnam on the basis of peace negotiations or diplomacy. In 1995, China agreed to discuss the Spratly dispute with ASEAN countries. This has evolved since China hosted the discussion of the Spratly dispute in 1997. In 1999, China and ASEAN agreed to consider the principles of the code of ethics for the SCS. In addition, an approach using international law has been carried out, including the 1982 UN convention on the Law of Sea (LOS), which has been recognized by China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Laos. Other approaches such as using the court or the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have been pursued by Southeast Asian countries.<sup>23</sup>

In April 2004, representatives of the Taiwanese East Asia and Pacific Division Lin Sung-Huan on two occasions met Huang Ru Li, Director of the Vietnam Office of Economy and Culture in Taipei, to submit a request that the Vietnamese government be restrained to avoid tensions in the region.<sup>24</sup> Vietnam is one of the countries that claim territory around the South China Sea, especially the Nansha islands. Tensions in the Nansha Islands since Vietnam placed its military on the island higher. Huang tried to reduce tensions by banning Vietnamese people from traveling to the area.

However, this effort is not an effective peace strategy; disputes are difficult to resolve by means of diplomacy. Political and security issues that have colored the SCS dispute must be taken seriously because it concerns the issue of territorial sovereignty which is the most important part of each country. Even though various diplomatic efforts have been made, the resolution of the dispute has not made any significant progress. The SCS dispute continues despite diplomatic and legal efforts. The conflict comes from each country's logic about sovereignty, which is the dominant discourse in SCS.

Security stability in the South China Sea is full of friction, conflict and tensions that color relations between regional countries so that they are very dangerous and sensitive. The power of discourse on sovereignty has implications for conflict countries trying to improve their military power posture with a

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<sup>22</sup> KTT ASEAN Dibuka di Tengah Krisis Laut China Selatan, *Wn.com* (daring), 2012,

<<http://www.antaraneews.com/print/344033/ktt-asean-di-tengah-krisis-laut-china-selatan>>, Accessed December 24, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Thao, pp. 108-109.

<sup>24</sup> J.I. Chong, 'The South China Sea Disputes: Documents and Context,' *Chinese Law & Government*, vol. 46, no. 3, 2013, pp. 25-26.

large defense budget from 2005 to 2017 and a comparison of military power in 2019 (see graph 1 and Table 2). Increasing the defense and defense equipment budget of each country is the implementation of the sovereignty text.

Chart 1. Defense budget of conflict countries in the South China Sea (in billions of dollars)  
 'The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database,' SIPRI <<https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>>

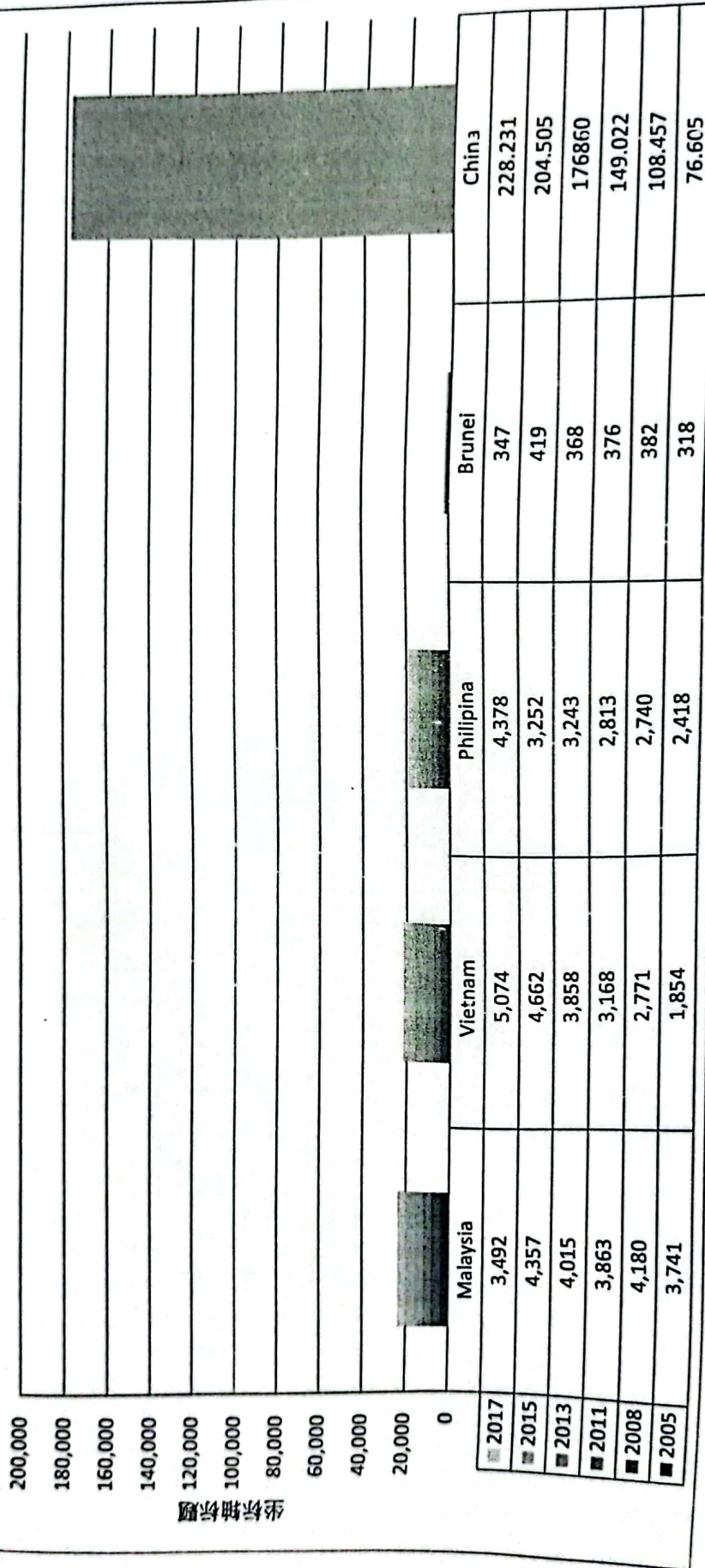


Table 1. COMPARISONS OF MILITARY STRENGTHS 2019<sup>1</sup>

SUBJECT	CHINA	VIETNAM	PHILIPPINES	MALAYSIA
GFP Rank	3 (of 137)	23 (of 1370)	64 (of 137)	41 (of 137)
Total population	1,384,688,986	97,040,334	105,893,381	31,809,660
Manpower available	752,855,402	51,043,216	51,887,757	15,201,837
Fit-for-service	621,105,706	41,804,394	42,547,960	12,587,121
Reaching military age	19,614,518	1,651,274	2,127,394	526,147
Active personnel	2,183,000	482,000	125,000	116,000
Reserve components	510,000	5,000,000	180,000	300,000
Total military personnel	2,693,000	5,000,000	305,000	4,100,000
Defense budget	\$224,000,000,000	\$3,365,000,000	\$3,000,000,000	\$4,700,000,000
External debt	\$1,598,000,000,000	\$96,580,000,000	\$76,180,000,000	\$217,200,000,000
Foreign reserve	\$3,236,000,000,000	\$49,500,000,000	\$81,570,000,000	\$102,400,000,000
Purchasing power	\$24,810,000,000,000	\$686,500,000,000	\$951,000,000,000	\$977,500,000,000
Total aircraft	\$3,187	318	171	187
Tank strength	\$13,050	2,575	18	74
Total naval assets	714	65	119	61

<sup>1</sup>Comparisons of World Military Strengths, "Global fire power" <<https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-comparison.asp>>, Accessed April 18, 2019.

The data above shows the paradoxical side of the Leviathan. Classical realism reads that the balance of power between countries as an instrument is not a war in the South China Sea. The above behavior is more indicative of an effort to maintain its existence as the king maintained his existence in the Westphalia treaty. The data shows that there is no balance of power between countries. The potential of large war makers in the SCS can only come from China, with regard to the defense budget graph which continues to rise until 2019, the completeness of sophisticated war defense equipment compared to other countries. In this way, the allied states try to present an intrusive system in the SCS region. They are strong countries outside the region such as the United States and Russia. If this presence is read from discourse power, the alliance pact does not exist out of security reasons, but relations of power and ideology are strong reasons.

Other sections have come to offer the game of "prisoners' dilemma" as a discourse on neoliberalism. Anarchy is overcome through absolute and relative benefits. This will result in discursive hegemony affecting social movements based on nationalism. If the logic of sovereignty is maintained as a principle of achieving peace, then this is a veiled lie espoused by the country's elite. State logic and sovereignty will never produce knowledge of peace, because it comes from the same tree, namely the power of Westphalia's sovereignty discourse. This tree of knowledge has the fruits of conflict and war (proven PD I & WWII).

The behavior of countries in conflict on the graphs and tables above proves that even though sovereignty in the contemporary era seems weak in power, on the one hand countries continue to make it a driving regime in international politics. It strengthens the data that countries remain worried about their existence. Realism considers that strengthening military defense equipment and increasing the defense budget can have implications for maintaining security. For them, the state must be militarily strong to ensure its people are safe.

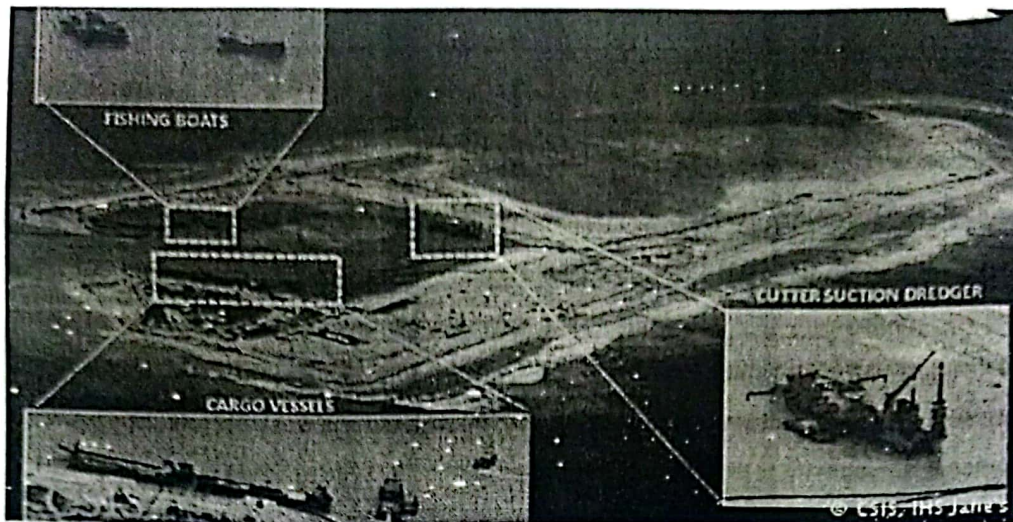
The implication of the text of territorial sovereignty can be confirmed again participation by China, namely military intervention, seen in the SCS conflict. This can be seen from the Chinese policy of placing military bases in the SCS to safeguard its interests (see Figure 3). During April 2010, for example, China launched military intervention in the South China Sea by building the Fiery Cross Reef, which could make it easier for Chinese fishermen to enter the SCS.<sup>1</sup>

Figure 2. Chinese Military Base at SCS (*Fiery Cross Reef*)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>D. Scott, 'Conflict Irresolution in the South China Sea,' *Asian Survey*, vol. 52, no. 6, 2012, p.1036.

<sup>2</sup>'Fiery Cross Reef,' *Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative* (daring), <<http://amti.csis.org/mischief-reef/>>, Accessed on March 24, 2019



Since August 2014 the Chinese military has continued to expand Fiery Cross Reef on the western edge of the Spratly Islands. Experts from the Center for International and Strategic Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. and the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) believe that the bamboo curtain country is building an air base with a length of three kilometers and a width of 200 to 300 meters. The runway was able to accommodate Chinese H-6 long-range bombers. The Chinese military intervention is a manifestation of the sovereignty discourse. The Chinese military base in the South China Sea (possibly) is large enough to accommodate Y-20 military transport aircrafts, H-6 bombers and J-10 fighters.<sup>3</sup> This has triggered an arms race at the SCS. The spread of Chinese power in the South China Sea is not only frightening in the region, but also internationally. This is not just a matter of threatened economic interests—the South China Sea is a trade route that delivers international goods and services estimated at \$5 trillion annually<sup>4</sup>—but also the a threat to general perspectives, wherein now, border tensions and conflicts are no longer determined by diplomatic efforts, but through power military. This can be seen from the response of several countries, such as the US which has sent its military to the South China Sea to test freedom of navigation. Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines continue to conduct bilateral regulatory policies with non-regional countries in response to China.

Seeing the implications of the territorial sovereignty struggle in the SCS, ranging from border disputes, interstate tensions, to responses of increased military power, it can be argued that this region has a unique security reality. There has not been a war in the SCS in decades, but that does not mean that the area is free of potential war. Increased defense equipment and defense expenditure budgets from each regional country

<sup>3</sup>'Fiery Cross Reef,' *Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative* (daring).

<sup>4</sup>'Mengapa Indonesia Menambah Kekuatan Militer di Natuna,' *BBC Indonesia* (daring), Accessed on March 26, 2019, <[http://www.bbc.com/indonesia/dunia/2015/12/151230\\_dunia\\_indonesia\\_natuna](http://www.bbc.com/indonesia/dunia/2015/12/151230_dunia_indonesia_natuna)> dan 'Review Artikel: ASEAN Diuji Hadapi Sengketa Wilayah,' *Kompasiana* (daring), 2013, <[http://www.kompasiana.com/www.nokjannah.com/review-artikel-asean-diuji-hadapi-sengketa-wilayah\\_5528d8896ea834a47f8b45a0](http://www.kompasiana.com/www.nokjannah.com/review-artikel-asean-diuji-hadapi-sengketa-wilayah_5528d8896ea834a47f8b45a0)>, Accessed on March 26, 2019



indicate that the SCS is preparing to face the possibility of open warfare, especially those arising from border conflicts and territorial claims.

The constellation of conflict and tension in the SCS region is an important security issue because it involves the existence of the country and the lives of its citizens. Traditional security issues still color the international politics of the region, where prolonged conflicts in the region can trigger interstate war. The entire conflict in this region has the same issue, namely the territorial sovereignty of each country. The potential for war is strengthened by the show of strength between countries as shown by the increase in defense and defense equipment budgets. These countries have also balanced power by establishing military relations with stronger countries outside the region. Based on this, it can be argued that the root of the SCS conflict is the presence of sovereignty discourse as the power to lead countries to the same behavior (the same logic of sovereignty), so that this logic is believed to be able to produce open war in the SCS. In Bourdieu's view, it takes the power of other cultural discourses to balance the power of the discourse of modern sovereignty. In this case, a minor narrative that is born of Chinese culture will be traced, so as to realize the absence of war.

### 3. Minor narrative

Revealing the local discourse that has been politically buried will be shown through the power approach that was initiated by Bourdieu to show social movements who support local minor texts using Laclau and Mouffe about discursive hegemony. This section is very interesting to explore because it can give birth to views new in international relations. The clash of power of Chinese culture and the power of modern culture will make a major contribution to conflict in SCS. The minor text is believed offset the text of sovereignty through Chinese foreign policy in the SCS. Power is not something understood by structuralist thinkers; however, power is domination of legitimate discourse and through the process in the battle arena. Said in other words, 'discourse' is real power. Bourdieu describes power in three important ways: habitus, capital, and arena. To show the meaning of Chinese minor texts that affect each power's arena, it will be mapped across three stages of search; first, it shows Confucianism as habitus including all types of cultural activities; production; perception; and evaluation against the practice of everyday life. Confucianism's habitus occurs in social spaces through experience over long periods of time. Social experiences form doxa, which then control the elites in formulating policies in SCS. Doxa meant the schemes of thought and perception of the political elite produced by social structures. Thus, the agent/actor is one of the nature producing discourses that are influenced by the cultural environment, as opposed to being the doxa that controls it.

Second, it shows the elite or power in relation to the Confucian text. This matter is the capital used by Chinese elites to achieve their dominance. Among them is contained economic, social, and cultural or symbolic capital. Economic capital is related to ownership of property owned by someone. Social capital is someone who has economic and cultural capital. Cultural capital or symbolic power is verbal ability, skills,

education, and knowledge possessed by someone. Bourdieu explains that one type of capital can blend with other forms of capitals. For example, someone could possibly possess all forms of capital: economic, social and cultural. To achieve power is gambling and struggle in certain arenas that have doxa (structure) well-established in that arena. The construction of Confucian texts in the arena will distinguish it from the dominant structure that has been legitimized; Third, it shows the arena/domain/field as a battle room for sovereignty and Confucianism which has several specific indicators; conservation strategy is an attempt to maintain the dominant discourse or doxa; succession is an effort to achieve power by using capital; subversion is an attempt to tear down a mature structure or offer discourse reproduction. It is believed to be an orthodox or belief about something right. In the arena, there is always a battle of discourses because there are heterodoxa or the many schemes of thought and perception produced by the objectives of social structures. Thus, the incorporation of habitus and capital in the arena will produce dominant discourse that reaches legitimacy. The power will influence the behavior of state actors to act not to fight in the SCS. The following will show the implications of Confucian policy in the SCS.

#### **A. Confucianism habitus**

Confucianism discourse is important in political discourse, though at in fact no Confucian seems to have become a political actor significant during the Classical period. However, in the contemporary era, the Confucianism text attracted intellectuals of ethnology and anthropology and even international relations. After the cold war, international phenomena shifted to cultural clashes. It seems like Fukuyama (yet) is right to universalize knowledge about the end of world civilization in liberal democracy, even though the knowledge of liberalism has a relationship with strong power so that both (power and knowledge) still exist in the contemporary era.

Fukuyama's hasty hypothesis was criticized by Huntington in his famous book, *Clash of Civilizations*. He shows that liberalism is not the end of human's civilization, but in the future there will be a clash between Western & Islamic civilizations and the west & east. The WTC 9/11 2001 event proved Huntington's prediction was approaching the truth. In 2002 in China, Zheng Bijian declared the peaceful rise based on values Confucianism. This illustrates that western values are dealing with local values. This section will elaborate on Confucian values which are the text counter to Western knowledge. Confucius was a great teacher who came from plain of China. He was born in 551 BC, during the reign of King Ling of the Zhou Dynasty, with the first name Khung Chiu or Zhong Ni. Confucius is known for his teachings on morality or virtue as the main foundation for living a life harmoniously. Michale Hart, in her book *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*; Fermi-Hart paradox, positioned Confucius in fifth place after the Prophet Muhammad, Isaac Newton, Prophet Isa and Buddha.

Confucius' teachings are rooted in cultural values of harmony. He taught that every human life is always based on love for others. In its development, Confucius's teachings were used as the rationale for various

things aspects of life for centuries. Limitation of this harmonization value has been rooted in Chinese society. They maintain harmony between humans and nature; between individual and society; between different community members; and between mind and body. Of all the teachings of Confucius, the core value is harmony. The intended harmonies are not necessarily all the same. The harmony of Confucius is different from uniformity. This textual foundation is a difference, so values are needed to produce a culture of harmony. Furthermore, the value of Confucian harmony has become an energy unifying China, causing it to develop from an uncoordinated country to a country coordinated; from asymmetry to symmetry; and from imbalance to balance.<sup>5</sup>

The scheme of Chinese peoples' thinking is based on the value of Confucian harmony. Values of traditional Chinese culture about harmony, virtue, truth, politeness, wisdom, honesty, loyalty, and filial piety are manifested in external Chinese policy through the concept of harmony.<sup>6</sup> The value of harmony then developed into value Asia in economics. For example In the past few decades, Asian politicians like Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore, or Mahathir from Malaysia has supported this myth by drawing attention to the 'decadence' of Western individualism and by declaring that the economic strength of their country is caused by a strong culture of collectivity based on Confucian family values (originating in China) such as order, respect, hierarchy, and harmony.<sup>7</sup>

Historically, the value of Confucian harmony has become a habitus that developed into a scheme of economic development thinking. Among these, there are four values in the text of Confucian harmony; Confucianism & prosperity, Confucianism & inner circle; Confucian relationships; and joining the Confucian family. Confucian values can be said to have encouraged high savings rates and hence contributes much capital for economic growth. The average savings rate in China is around 50 percent of income, one of the highest in world. Confucian values also stem from the attitude that family interests and close friends in the group must be protected by all means and placed before public interests. In addition, economic value is based primarily on trust, leading to reciprocity and obligations that originates from Confucian values. Therefore they are not subject to contracts or transactions but to trust, sincerity and loyalty. Again, the value of Confucian economic development is based on good relations long established in sincerity and loyalty.<sup>8</sup>

## **B. Confucian capital**

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<sup>5</sup>Z. Lihua, 'China's Tradition Cultural Value and National Identity,' *Center for Global Policy* (Daring), November, 21, 2013, <<https://carnegietsinghua.org/2013/11/21/china-s-traditional-cultural-values-and-national-identity-pub-53613>>, Accessed April 20, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Lihua, 'China's Tradition Cultural Value and National Identity,' *Center for Global Policy* (Daring).

<sup>7</sup>David Clive Price, '4 Confucian Values for Doing Business in China (daring), <<http://davidcliveprice.com/4-confucian-values-business-china/>>, Accessed April 20, 2019.

<sup>8</sup>David Clive Price, '4 Confucian Values for Doing Business in China (daring).

The values of Confucian harmony receive very high cultural capital in the elite's Chinese politics. Starting from the first Chinese president, Mao Zedong, to the current president of China, Xi Jinping, Confucianism has become specialized, pluralized knowledge. Relationships between the power of Confucian culture and elite capital in the political arena have contributed greatly to the formation of cultural capital. However, implementation of Confucianism has only been seen since Hu Jintao became president. Confucian texts of cultural power are the truth of Chinese people that has long been buried. Even though political elites are products of Confucian knowledge, this discourse is beginning to rise in the post-Cold War era.

President Hu had been trying to stabilize China's rotating moral direction in the construction of socialist knowledge. The direction of China in the Hu era was returned to the teachings of Confucius. This is because he felt a greater cultural debt than Mao Zedong. The prominent figure Zheng Bijian was known as a thinker and strategist as well as political adviser to the leader of the People's Republic of China, Hu. This suggests that the basis of the rise of China in the future will be the resurrection of Confucian values.

In addition to Confucian cultural capital that is inherent to political elites, it is also true that many scholars continue to produce Confucian knowledge. For example, the scholar Martin Stuart Fox stated that, "Confucius believed in the order social and moral relies on universal recognition and acceptance of social hierarchy and political. It is very important that everyone must know their place in the world, accept their duties and responsibilities, and recognize their superiors and subordinates." In addition, Tan See Seng and Amitav Acharya said that Confucianism was<sup>9</sup>

Mutual trust ("huxin", or non-hostility and non-suspicion sustained by regular, multiple-track dialogue and communications), mutual benefits ("huli", or economic-integration-driven common security), equality ("pingdeng", or equality of voice regardless of differences in wealth, size, and power, and respect for diversity of cultures and ideologies), and cooperation ("xiezuo", or non- exclusion, non-targeting of third parties, tolerance of differences, peaceful and equal consultation resolves disputes and prevent military conflicts, and gradualism).

Furthermore, harmonization values that exist in the above ethics are understood by the scholar Na Chen in that "Confucianism has become a part of it de facto inherent in Chinese socio-cultural life, revival Confucianism came spontaneously and in some cases was carried out without realize it. The revival of Confucianism was accompanied by rebuilding Chinese cultural identity."

Through the capital possessed by the Confucian text above, it can be assumed that Confucianism as a minor text has the power of discourse because it is related to political elites and scholars. At the cultural and ethical levels, Confucian morality occupies the highest value in the science that is focused on peace.

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<sup>9</sup> Tan See Seng and Amitav Acharya (ed). 2004. *Asia-Pacific Security Cooperation: National Interests and Regional Order*. New York: Routledge. Hal. 61

Therefore, this minor text is worthy of partaking in the combative discursive battles in the social, economic and political arena.

### C. The arenas of Confucianism

In this section, Confucianism is faced with dominant discourses, such as sovereignty. The grand narrative of sovereignty still dominates the life of the Chinese state. For example, the increase in defense equipment and military reinforcement shown earlier is evidence that the power of the sovereignty text became Chinese knowledge. But in reality Confucian efforts by using various forms of capital can become rivals of the text in every arena. In this discussion, three arenas will be described important in the struggle for discourse on state sovereignty and Confucianism. Nowadays, the Westphalian version of sovereign nation produces knowledges of political economy based on Western neoliberalism. The forced adoption of this understanding took place throughout differing parts of the world. It has not only influenced the politics of the nation state, but also more became the power of cultural hegemony in modern lifestyles. The contemporary era of the state is no longer empowered where the sovereignty of the country appears as gloomy, lethargic, helpless, and weak, as if the country lacks vital nutrients. However, in fact there was quiet fighting against hegemony targets in culture, intellectual, and moral fields. China is one country that is different in understanding logical neoliberalism. The state controls every aspect of its people's economic life through its centralistic system. This level of cultural hegemony is higher compared to countries that embrace decentralization. Is China's sovereignty melting because of Confucian culture or increasing? In the previous discussion, it was explained that the logic of a sovereign state is the logic of "fear" of circumstantial security. This requires universal legitimacy that justifies its actions (God & Devil), whereas Confucian logic is the logic of harmonization, where it does not justify fans who commit acts of violence for any reason. This matter is interesting if traced in the discursive arenas of culture and politics.

In the cultural arena, the basic philosophy of Chinese life is based on the teachings of Confucianism. Through culture, Confucian moral values and ethics were introduced to the community. There is a scheme of thought inherent historically to each Chinese society. This cultural capital encouraged the rise of China with harmonious values. Confucianism through the Hu government has carried out succession and subversion, for example the teaching curriculum for secondary schools included in teaching classical Confucianism, and some experimental schools have been established which are mostly focusing on the classic teachings of Confucius. Overseas, the government has promoted Confucianism through the branches of the Confucius Institute, the center of Chinese language and culture compete with France's Alliance Française and Germany's Goethe Institute.<sup>10</sup>For government, the promotion of Confucian values has several

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<sup>10</sup>The New York Times, *China's leaders rediscover Confucianism - Editorials & Commentary - International Herald Tribune(daring)*, 14 September 2006, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/14/opinion/14iht-edbell.2807200.html>>, Accessed April 20, 2019.

advantages. In the country, the affirmation of harmony is intended to reflect the party's concern with power over all classes. Abroad, the call for peace and harmony intended to disarm worries about China's rapid rise.

In the political arena there is a Confucian struggle to become the foundation of the foundation peaceful and harmonious Chinese foreign policy. For example in Zheng's speech it is suggested that, "Over the next 10 to 20 years, or maybe even throughout the first half of the 21st century, Asia has historically unique opportunities for rise peacefully. China's peaceful rise is only part of a peaceful awakening Asia. This not only means that the process of modernization and reform, and the rise of China, directly related to the experience and development of other Asian countries, more than that indicates that China as part of Asia's main constituency will have an increasingly positive effect on the development, prosperity and stability of other Asian countries, especially the closest neighboring countries."<sup>11</sup>

His speech further reinforced the statement of Chinese foreign policy terminology, namely *peaceful rise* that comes from the harmonious value of Confucianism, that:<sup>12</sup>

China hopes to rise not through territorial expansion or challenges to other strengths but as a result of his own hard work and international environment that is peaceful. Unlike the strength that has increased in the past, which disrupts the order international both to facilitate their revival or as a result. China look for different paths and will try to integrate themselves into the order the world instead of challenging it. This requires ongoing efforts from China to seek and supporting interdependence, a development path that will also direct China to seek cooperative economic and security relations.

There is no discourse resistance. Moral emptiness is being filled by sects Christianity, Falun Gong and extreme forms of nationalism. But the government assumes that such an alternative threatens the peace and stability won with difficulty which sustained China's development, so it has encouraged the revival of Confucianism. Therefore, in February 2015, Hu said harmonization originating from Confucius must be respected. Struggles in the political arenas were intensified through conservation. Several months later, he ordered a cadre of Chinese parties to build a "community's harmony." Carrying the theme of Confucianism, Hu said China must promote values such as honesty and unity, as well as establishing closer relationships between the people and government.

Besides Hu, Chinese President Xi Jinping continued to fight for teaching Confucianism in political institutions through political speeches. Confucius is part of Xi's reform team. For 2,000 years, the doctrine of Confucius established a code of ethics for good behavior in China. In 2013, Xi issued a statement that "China boasts a long traditional culture, and China will create a new glory of its culture. Confucian thought

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<sup>11</sup>Y. Zheng & S. K. Tok, 'China's 'Peaceful Rise': Concept and Practice,' China Policy Institute, London, 2005, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Z. Bijian. China's Peaceful Rise: Speeches of Zheng Bijian 1997-2004, <<https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/20050616bijianlunch.pdf>>, Accessed April 20, 2019.

can play a positive role in China's development today.<sup>13</sup> Through Xi's statement, we can see that he believed Confucianism could play a harmonious role in the development of a peaceful China.

He also appealed to government officials to manifest values Confucianism; Mr. Xi's point is "both good policy and faithful to the Confucian tradition: If government officials expect the common people to 'pay homage' to the government, it must be evident that they are trustworthy and are working for the well-being of the community as a whole. In other words, they must manifest the Confucian virtues of righteousness and benevolence."<sup>14</sup> The appeal was based on the concept of the Confucian elite, namely, "If the masses don't like someone, you have to check it; if the mass likes someone, you have to check it out." Xi's basic policy refers to two important delivered parts, namely, good policies from government elites and loyal to values that compose Confucian harmony.<sup>15</sup>

The second basic policy of Xi is his opposition to "Western values", He believes that Confucianism is better than the liberal values of the United States. This statement can be confirmed historically through the thinking of Jian Qing, who states that "constitutional Confucianism" is a more appropriate government system for China than Western liberal democracy. The Confucian advantage in the battlefield is politics because it has participating capital. Like Foucault's words, knowledge is always related with power, and conversely, the life of power is determined by knowledge relations. Knowledge of harmony dominates Chinese culture through Confucian teachings, because this understanding also talks about collective life. Through collectivist Confucian values, China's crafted its foreign policy on how to live peacefully under one harmonious umbrella of human life, which is in line with Zhaohe Chen strengthening Xi's statement: "The Chinese Cultural Root of the Community of Common Destiny for All Mankind."<sup>16</sup>

The participation of political elites in building Confucian local discourse as a basis for Chinese foreign policy influences all aspects of the discursive battle arena, so that Confucianism became the foundation of China's foreign policy. This has been seen since Hu came to power and began promote the peaceful rise resulting from the value of Confucian harmony, and the text changed to peaceful development in 2005. This was due to the political situation and international view of China's rise as a threat to the global order. The next principle in peaceful development is the cornerstone of Xi's policies in the world, especially in the SCS. Thus extending the discursive hegemony of the government is to universalize Confucian knowledge.

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<sup>13</sup> M. Samaruga, 'The Influence of Confucianism in Chinese Foreign Policy (1971-2013)', *ResearchGate* (daring), December, 2013, <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262103770> The influence of Confucianism in Chinese Foreign Policy 1971-2013>, Accessed April 20, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> B.W. V. Norden, 'The Confucian Roots of Xi Jinping's Policies,' *The Straits Time* (daring), Nov, 12, 2017, <<https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/the-confucian-roots-of-xi-jinpings-policies>>, Accessed April 23, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> B.W. V. Norden, 'The Confucian Roots of Xi Jinping's Policies,' *The Straits Time* (daring)

<sup>16</sup> Z. Cheng, 'The Root of Chinese Culture from the Common Fate Community for All Mankind' (daring, Dec, 2017, <<https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/icelaic-17/25886367>>, Accessed April 24, 2019.

#### **D. Confusionism implication in the South China Sea**

The South China Sea region covers the waters and land, namely the Spratly and Paracel Islands, and the banks of the Macclesfield and Coral Rivers Scarborough which extend from the Malacca Strait to the Taiwan Strait. Because this region is very broad and has a history of domination that changes frequently, there is often conflict of interest in this region. Today, several Southeast Asian countries – Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Malaysia – are involved in mutual claims with China and Taiwan for part of or all of the area. In addition, the South China Sea has various natural resources, for example very large oil reserves. Natural wealth in this region has caused multilateral conflict. Political economic interests trigger claims to overlap and give rise to traditional security issues that have implications for the possibility of open war between countries.

Disputes over territorial sovereignty in the South China Sea actually refer to sea and land areas on Paracel Island and the Spratly Islands. China claims the two islands, while Vietnam and the Philippines also claim the same. Malaysia only claims part of Spratly based on the EEZ, which is also followed by Brunei. Conflict and tension in the South China Sea region is a dispute which concerns the territories of sovereign countries, where settling the dispute with diplomacy has so far not been successful. What was said by Sir Ernest Satow is that "diplomacy is the application of intelligence and tact to conduct of the official relations between the government of independent state, the conduct of business between states by peaceful means,"<sup>17</sup> which has not successfully been applied in the South China Sea. It appears that the South China Sea represents a failure to practice the concept of diplomacy. It is interesting, alternatives to diplomacy, namely war, also do not occur in the region. According to the strategist war Carl von Clausewitz, "where war is identified as a political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means."<sup>18</sup> Clausewitz taught that war is a political instrument which is a continuation of political activities in another way. When diplomacy fails to run or the effort to take the path of peace is unsuccessful, then war is the last resort. In other words, war is an implication of diplomacy that is deadlocked. However, what Clausewitz said was also not proven in the SCS.

This situation creates uniqueness in the South China Sea. Even though there is a constellation of high political conflict and tension, also the deadlock of diplomacy that gave rise to the reality of prolonged conflict, but open war between countries has not occurred. What is present is a conflict without war embedded in a tense situation. Various territorial interests colliding in this region could incite a great war between countries to acquire national interests. Peaceful failed settlement efforts lead to show of force in the region.

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<sup>17</sup>L.T. Woods, *Asia-Pacific Diplomacy: Non Governmental Organizations and International Relations*, UBC Press, Canada, 1960, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> C. von Clausewitz, *On War*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1976, p. 87.



In addition, competition also arises from the countries in dispute for modernizing their armies and increasing their respective military budgets. These efforts produce political and security tensions, but each state continues in this way. China has many sophisticated military personnel and war equipment, and continues to increase its military budget in these past several years. Modernization of armed forces of the Southeast Asian countries involved in the dispute of SCS by means of a defense alliance with countries outside the region is the implication of the power of sovereignty.

In fact, China is a country that is able to rise and become the main competitor figure with world powers through its increased economic and defense capabilities. Nevertheless, the idea of a "peaceful rise" is a basic foundation that has always been the doctrine of the rise and behavior of foreign policy of China in the global political arena. This precedent is proven in many political cases of China overseas that tend to be low profile while carrying an idea of peace rather than confrontational or aggressive connotations when interacting with international actors, including who are rivals inside global political scene.

In the white book issued by the Chinese government on December 22, 2005 entitled "China's Peaceful Development Road," it was explained in detail about the term "peaceful rise" and how Chinese foreign policy will always be based on five key bases namely, first, peaceful development is an inevitable way to modernization of China; second, promoting world peace and development with China's own growth; third, development by relying on its own strength; fourth, reform and innovation: seeking mutual benefits and development together with other countries; and fifth, to build a harmonious world of peaceful sustainable and shared prosperity.<sup>19</sup>

The concept of peaceful development that comes from the value of Confucian harmony show a more flexible attitude and a big chance to appear as the power of the text balancing desires of territorial sovereignty in the SCS. The peaceful development implications can be confirmed through Chinese foreign policy, which is actively in economic development and security regionalism in SCS. A good example of this is the ASEAN Plus Three multilateral framework (APT).

In some cases, Chinese foreign policy behavior relates to international organizations and regional organizations such as the WTO as a World Trade Organization production of Western countries. Since 2001, China has officially begun to recognize and became a member of the WTO until it became effective on January 1, 2002. Then, China also began to join actively in regional organizations such as the G-20, OPEC and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).<sup>20</sup>

The same goes for ASEAN regional organizations. China approaches with peace and understanding of the sensitivity of Southeast Asian countries through the efforts of a partnership dialogue approach found in

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<sup>19</sup>State Council Information Office of China, *White Paper: China's Peaceful Development Road* (daring), <<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/APCITY/UNPAN023152.pdf>>, Accessed April 24, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> S. Hadi, 'Indonesia, ASEAN, and the Rise of China: Indonesia in the Midst of East Asia's Dynamics in the Post-Global Crisis World,' *International Journal of China Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, p. 151.

the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) arrived the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, so that fostering the trust of ASEAN Countries towards China relates to disputes in the SCS. This step was followed by the signing of a free trading business between China and ASEAN within the framework of the ASEAN China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) with a transactional value reaching 200 billion dollars.<sup>21</sup>

The ACFTA has four important objectives: strengthening and enhancing cooperation economy, trade and investment between member countries; liberalizing progressive and increase trade in goods and services and create a system transparent to facilitate investment; exploring fields of new cooperation and develop appropriate policies in the context of economic cooperation between member countries; facilitating more effective economic integration of ASEAN's newest members - Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam - and bridging economic development disparity among member countries.<sup>22</sup>

Through the peaceful development of foreign policy, Hu and Xi have implemented the Confucian harmony policy in the SCS. Confucian discourse which is embraced in the history of Chinese society which was adopted frame of mind of political elites in conducting international relations, more specifically is intertextual harmony. Evidently power relations and Confucian texts are able to win discourse battles in the economic, cultural, and political arena. They are armed with tough elitist capital, Hu and Xi. Confucianism became a movement social together to achieve peace with everyone. In the context of external politics of a country, the power of Confucian text is implemented through a peaceful policy development. This is what causes Chinese foreign policy in SCS to be more flexible and cooperative through multilateral and bilateral peace frameworks.

This is not an absolute victory of Confucianism. It must always stand face to face with the logic of sovereignty in the SCS. China itself, even though it claims SCS from historical aspects, but the implications of territorial sovereignty discourse on SCS still occur. Therefore, Confucianism discourse must be the power of the balancing text that is always present discourse battle arenas. It can only survive if there is a hegemonic class alliance to defend the Confucian discourse. Borrowing from Laclau and Mouffe, "the hegemonic relationship itself can only be built when differences unites."

#### 4. Conclusion

Sovereignty is a contradiction. It is an authoritative discourse born of insistence by the Kings of France, the King of Sweden and their allies and the Great King of Rome to end the 30 year war. His birth was considered spectacular and had an impact on the existence of the Kings. Through the birth of Westphalia's

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<sup>21</sup>Hadi, p. 152

<sup>22</sup>'ASEAN- China Free Trade Area,' *Kementerian Perdagangan Republik Indonesia* (daring), <<http://ditjenkpi.kemendag.go.id/Umum/Regional/Win/ASEAN%20-%20China%20FTA.pdf>>, Accessed March 26, 2019..

sovereignty, the Kings remained in power. This matter proved that power is an implication of discourse. From 1648 to the era contemporary, the meaning of the sovereignty text persists by showing the implications for international relations, especially in the South China Sea. The production of sovereignty discourse has implications to behavior countries in the South China Sea because of territorial desires or sea boundaries. The resilience of sovereignty in the body of the state generates endless potential conflicts.

The birth of sovereignty is a Westphalian scandal. Thus, discourse or knowledge is the implication of power. Apart from revealing the discourse of sovereignty as the root of the conflict in the South China Sea, Confucianism as a local Chinese discourse also has implications for the external policy of the harmonious Chinese country. It was manifested in brilliant Chinese policies, namely peaceful development. The Confucian Declaration as the basis of all aspects Chinese life began with Hu's reign and continued by Xi. Armed with capital strong elitist, Confucianism became the dominant discourse in China (minor discourse) in global politics. It won the battle of discourse in the cultural, economic and political, leading to the realization of the power of Confucian discourse as implemented through the "Peaceful development" of China. The implications posed in the South China Sea are life without war. China acts very flexibly through various multilateral and bilateral frameworks.

Even though conflicts and political tendencies concerned with the struggle for territorial sovereignty in the SCS occur frequently, they do not cause open war between countries. Pay attention to China's strong and large military power, which has the potential to create a major war in the SCS. In addition, diplomatic efforts did not produce the desired peaceful results. However, alternative diplomacy, namely war also does not occur. This research claims that no the occurrence of war in the SCS because of the application of the values of the Confucian harmony manifested in peaceful development. In other words, war does not occur because of the power of Confucian discourse.

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