

Abstract

This diploma thesis, entitled „*The Geopolitical Importance of the South China Sea*”, deals with the issue of the South China Sea dispute in view of the economic and strategic importance of the region. The main goal is to analyze the claims of individual countries and to find out whether this dispute has the potential to grow into an armed conflict. The dispute arose from overlapping territorial claims that countries in the region began to make after the end of World War II. This is primarily the case of the various maritime features in the vicinity of which there are considerable reserves of natural resources. It is the interest in securing these resources that is the main issue of the dispute. To this day, this situation has not been resolved and on the contrary it has triggered a response from states outside the region, mainly the United States of America and Japan. In order to achieve the goal of this diploma thesis, the theoretical framework, which is geopolitics and critical geopolitics, is first introduced. Furthermore, the general meaning of seas and oceans with the current legislation is introduced. On this basis, country case studies are conducted with the aim of making a comparative analysis that should clarify the current form of the dispute and the potential of the dispute to grow into an armed conflict.