

Annotation

This diploma thesis deals with the rise of China in the context of its behavior in the South China Sea over the past decade. The significant economic growth of the People's Republic of China over the last few decades is expected to affect not only the regional balance of powers, but also its position within the international system. There is a wide-ranging debate in academia about how China will grow and how it will affect the international community. As a reaction, in order to explain its growth, China has introduced the concept of "peaceful development", according to which its growth should be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat to the international community. An offensive realism approach was chosen for this work and the ideas of its main advocate John Mearsheimer will be applied to the specific behavior of China in the region. The role of the United States, which influences China's behavior, will also be discussed. The diploma thesis will further deal with the increased Chinese assertiveness in the area of South China Sea and the means it uses in it to enforce its claims. The basic aim of this work is to underscore the contrast between the declared official policy of China and its actual behavior.