

Managing Editor's Comments

Welcome to volume 5, number 1, the winter/spring 2018 issue of *JTMS*. As always, *JTMS* aims at bringing you interdisciplinary discussions on territorial and maritime issues. In this issue, there are five research articles. Each of these articles provides timely discussion of a variety of topics for those who research international issues on land and at sea. In this issue especially, we offer scholarly articles on issues from around the world including Central and South America, Northeast Asia, and the South China Sea.

First, Nuno Morgado analyzes Brazil's geopolitical design and, at the same time, brings us an empirical test to the concept of *geomisguidance*. Starting with the assumption that Brazil can be assessed as a maritime country, he argues that the South American integration maneuver, which is Brazil's priority in terms of geopolitical design, stands in opposition to a grand strategy of Brazil as a *seapower*. Second, Horia Ciurtin reconceptualizes the underlying tenets of Westphalian links between sovereignty and territoriality, showing how an "exported" Eurocentric doctrine actually functions in a distinct legal environment—post-imperial China—and the manner in which a protracted political-ontological dispute can or cannot make use of established Western-based legal mechanisms. By focusing on the cross-strait dilemma of overlapping claims to sovereignty upon a "greater" China—advanced both by the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan)—Horia Ciurtin attempts to show how volatile (and fragile) the functionality of Westphalia actually is. Third, Krista E. Wiegand questions how leaders choose to divert the populace's attention from domestic problems to foreign disputes and whether there are peaceful options to pursue diversion rather than use of force. Building on diversionary force theory and foreign policy substitutability, she tackles the continuing debate about how domestic unrest could lead to diversions and what constitutes diversionary behavior. The theory presented is that leaders of states claiming disputed territory can use demands for peaceful dispute resolution (negotiation, mediation, etc.) to divert attention from moderate domestic unrest, initiating a militarized interstate dispute (MID) in the territorial dispute more likely to occur under severe domestic unrest, and economic unrest has no effect. Fourth, Dennis V. Hickey examines the South China Sea as one of the most disputed areas of sea in the world. He compares and contrasts the approaches and strategies adopted by the Republic of China (Taiwan) during the administrations of President Ma Ying-jeou and President Tsai Ing-wen toward the regional quarrel. He also employs primary source data, including government documents, media accounts, scholarly publications and even interviews

with former President Ma Ying-jeou. This background makes him arguably the region's foremost expert on Taiwan's claims to the South China Sea. Finally, Enyu Zhang and Yitan Li explore how the recent development in the territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea has affected the relations across the Taiwan Strait and identify what options and prospects there may be for both sides to move forward on the South China Sea disputes? They examine the maritime disputes in the South China Sea and the implications of the recent Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling on the relations between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan. Their findings suggest that both the PRC and ROC have almost identical claims over the disputes in the South China Sea and there could be a window of opportunity to enhance the political cooperation across the Taiwan Strait.

As always, the editorial team of *JTMS* is grateful to our readers for your continued support and interest in our journal and subject area. We wish you a bright start and continued success in 2018.

Lonnie Edge
Managing Editor