



Red Star over the Pacific: China's Rise and the Challenge to U.S. Maritime Strategy

By Toshi Yoshihara, James R. Holmes

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Combining a close knowledge of Asia and an ability to tap Chinese-language sources with naval combat experience and expertise in sea-power theory, the authors assess how the rise of Chinese sea power will affect U.S. maritime strategy in Asia. They argue that China is laying the groundwork for a sustained challenge to American primacy in maritime Asia, and to defend this hypothesis they look back to Alfred Thayer Mahan's sea-power theories, now popular with the Chinese. The book considers how strategic thought about the sea shapes Beijing's deliberations and compares China's geostrategic predicament to that of the Kaiser's Germany a century ago. It examines the Chinese navy's operational concepts, tactics, and capabilities and appraises China's ballistic-missile submarine fleet. The authors conclude that unless Washington adapts, China will present a challenge to America's strategic position.

- For the Chief of Naval Operation's Reading List
- By *The Atlantic* as one of the Best Books of the Year on foreign affairs in 2010
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Editorial Review

Review

"*Red Star Over the Pacific* is the book to read to understand what China thinks of sea power (or what the United States thinks China thinks about sea power.)" ? *International Journal of Military History*

"*Red Star Over the Pacific* is a timely, focused, and persuasive analysis of Chinese naval strategy that stands well above other works on the topic. The patient, solid scholarship and nuanced argumentation of the work offer a comprehensive perspective of Chinese strategic thinking and naval development and their ramifications for the United States. Although cautious in its language, the book leaves readers with a firm impression that not only is the balance of naval power in the Pacific steadily shifting against the United States, but also, more importantly, public maritime interest and naval intellectual power are shifting in ways that are potentially destabilizing for the region.... *Red Star Over the Pacific* fills a significant gap in military and strategic analysis between grand but often empty theories of international relations and overly detailed analysis of specific ships or weapons.... Casual readers, naval historians, military officers, and perhaps some Chinese readers should all benefit from this work, which is likely to become a benchmark text in a burgeoning field." ? *Joint Force Quarterly*

"The authors present convincing arguments that China's 21st-century naval strategy and improvements in the quality and quantity of its modern naval forces signal a change from Mao Tse-tung's old theory of coast defense to a power projection naval strategy reaching into the Indian Ocean, into the South China Sea, and as far across the Pacific as Guam." ? *Military Officer*

"...An interesting and thought provoking discussion of the rise of China's naval capabilities... thought provoking... This volume is an excellent read for those interested in Asia, maritime strategy, and geo-strategic questions." ? **DCMilitary.com, Waterline**

". . . .A very useful volume. . . .Anyone with an interest in East Asian politics or maritime affairs will find it useful. . . . Recommended." ? *Choice*

"This is an indispensable book for anyone who wishes to be accurately informed about China's alarming maritime quest. Clearly written and impeccably documented, it analyses the full range of issues raised." ? *War in History*

"Red Star over the Pacific is an excellent overview of China's emerging naval capabilities, doctrine and strategy. It places China's rise in context. For this reason alone, this book will be an important source for anyone working in the fields of international relations, strategic studies or defence. For naval professionals it is essential reading." ? *Journal of the Australian Naval Institute*

"Yoshihara and Holmes have written an accessible yet comprehensive explanation of the precepts of Chinese maritime strategy and, by contrasting it to US strategy, have provided a framework by which to understand the rapid growth and where it might be heading. Red Star over the Pacific is recommended as an important contribution to the field." ? *Australian Defence Force Journal*

"The authors present convincing arguments that China's 21st-century naval strategy and improvements in the quality and quantity of its modern naval forces signal a change from Mao Tse-tung's old theory of coast

defense to a power projection naval strategy reaching into the Indian Ocean, into the South China Sea, and as far across the Pacific as Guam.” ? Military Officer

About the Author

Dr. Toshi Yoshihara is a professor in the Strategy and Policy Department at the Naval War College. Previously, he was a visiting professor in the Strategy Department at the Air War College. Dr. Yoshihara holds a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

James R. Holmes is a professor of strategy at the Naval War College and a faculty associate at the University of Georgia School of Public and International Affairs. A former U.S. Navy surface warfare officer, he earned a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

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