

## BOOK REVIEWS

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

Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes  
Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010.

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There is another book named *Red Star over the Pacific*, which is the story of a US Army soldier during World War II, written by Malcolm Hodges. However, this is not the book that I will discuss.

First of all, I admire this book because the former naval officer and the scholar who wrote the book are both very familiar with naval weapons and tactics and can read Chinese. Chinese specialists in Japan are normally economists, diplomats, and sometimes active duty or RETIRED Army officers. Very few naval officers or scholars can read Chinese and are also familiar with naval weapons and tactics.

The authors wrote that Chinese maritime strategy is derived from Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and Alfred Thayer Mahan's writings.<sup>1</sup> I agree with that. The philosophy of Sun Tzu is prevalent throughout all parts of the PLA.

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1 Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, *Red Star over The Pacific*, Naval Institute Press, 2010, pp. 14–43.

In 2001, I met with General Xiong Guankai, Deputy Chief of Staff in Beijing. When I muttered a phrase of Sun Tzu, General Xiong Guankai responded to me by reciting entire sentences from Sun Tzu. When I visited PLA Nanjing Army Command Academy in October 2011, I saw big characters on the library wall, 'Use the normal force to engage; use the extraordinary to win', which is a phrase in chapter V of Sun Tzu's *Art of War*. I also found a frame, inside of the library, which shows whole sentences starting from 'All warfare is based on deception' from Chapter I of Sun Tzu.

The authors did not quote Sun Tzu's famous phrase 'Army avoids strength and strikes weakness' from Chapter VI of *Art of War*.<sup>2</sup> The weakest point of the Western Armed Forces, including the United States, is the heavy reliance on information such as computer networks and satellites. Therefore, the PLA wants to attack them using cyber warfare for the soft kill and striking satellites as the hard kill.

When I visited China in October 2011, I had a conversation with prospective PLA Navy Commander, Admiral Sun Jianguo, currently Deputy Chief of Staff, General Staff Headquarters. He said that there are only three Admirals in the PLA Navy who are qualified on both conventional and nuclear submarines. He is one of them; the second Admiral is currently the Deputy Navy Commander, and the third Admiral is currently the Deputy South Sea Fleet Commander. From his statement, we can see how PLA Navy trusts submariners and how PLA Navy values the importance of the South Sea Fleet. Comparing with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, we had only one submariner Chief of Staff, Maritime Self-Defense Force as well as Deputy Chief of Staff, Maritime Self-Defense Force out of more than 30 of them. PLA Navy Commanders and Deputies since the beginning of this century, former Commander, Zhāng Dìngfā, current Deputy Commander and prospective Commander, Sun Jianguo, are submariners. Additionally, the PLA Navy is positioning superb submarines in the South Sea Fleet. Therefore, arguments in *Red Star over the Pacific* emphasizing the South Sea Fleet<sup>3</sup> and submarines<sup>4</sup> are totally correct.

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2 Samuel B. Griffith, *Sun Tzu The Art of War*, Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 101.

3 *Red Star over The Pacific*, p. 143.

4 *Red Star over The Pacific*, p. 199.

There is a wide range of evaluations regarding Chinese maritime power from overestimations to underestimations. Of those who overestimate the most, Richard D. Fisher, Jr, of the International Assessment and Strategy Center is at the top, followed by the authors of this book. On the other hand, Robert S. Ross, Professor of Political Science at Boston College and Retired US Navy Captain Bernard D. Cole in the National War College are the first and the second in underestimating Chinese maritime expansion. The former does not mention the weakness and shortcomings, whereas the latter does not focus on the growing future capability of Chinese maritime power.

The weaknesses and shortages of Chinese maritime power are numerous; first, joint operational capabilities and experiences; second, logistic and supply capabilities including global oversea hardened bases; third, the naval strategy which is derived from the Army way of thinking<sup>5</sup>; fourth, lack of system integration capabilities and weapon technologies which come from foreign countries, namely Russia<sup>6</sup>; fifth, command and control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities especially wide-area surveillance capability; sixth, qualified human resource limitations; seventh, noisy indigenous submarines, and eighth, weak anti-submarine warfare capabilities.<sup>7</sup> Those weaknesses and shortages are not clearly discussed in *Red Star over the Pacific*.

Also, the authors cited Chinese scholars' remarks regarding the Japan factor such as 'Tokyo is in fact seeking to become a major military power' and seeking 'to expand military might in an attempt to become a world political heavy weight'.<sup>8</sup> Those statements are totally incorrect from the Japanese perspective.

In conclusion, *Red Star over the Pacific* is a very informative book that discusses the Chinese maritime strategy. Everybody who is interested in learning about Chinese maritime power should read this book.

5 Captain Bernard D. Cole, US Navy (Retired), 'Drawing lines at sea', *Proceedings*, US Naval Institute, November 2011, pp. 48–51.

6 James C. Bussert and Bruce A. Elleman, *People's Liberation Army Navy – Combat Systems Technology, 1949–2010*, Naval Institute Press, 2011.

7 Bernard D. Cole, *The Great Wall at Sea*, 2nd edn, Naval Institute Press, 2010, pp. 98–104, 109–110, 147, 193–194.

8 *Red Star over The Pacific*, pp. 112–115.

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## **Sinicization and the Rise of China: Civilizational Processes beyond East and West**

Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.)

London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

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paperback: \$29.95)

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This book follows *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* in presenting Peter Katzenstein's framework for interpreting the way civilizations face each other in a period he refers to as 'the era of China's peaceful rise'. Another book in his trilogy is *Anglo-America and Its Discontents: Civilizational Identities beyond West and East*. Although highlighting two civilizations, Katzenstein asserts that 'we need to move beyond sharp distinctions between East and West' (xi). Since China will not cause a rupture, resulting in a dramatic break in world affairs, nor return to the past when it ruled the existing order, Katzenstein offers reassurance that we can expect a future of recombination. Minimizing conflict between civilizations, he notes pluralism within these contexts as a single global civilization eventually takes shape.

The term sinicization refers to China's impact on the outside world. The concept of China's rise calls to mind how its growing power of all types will lead to changes at home and abroad. Civilizational processes presume attention to how a civilization is interpreted at home and then interacts with other civilizations. Distinguishing East and West and going beyond suggests a framework for comparing civilizations while analyzing