

Toshi Yoshihara has served as a visiting professor at the U.S. Air War College, in Montgomery, Alabama, for the past two years and has recently accepted an appointment at the Naval War College. James R. Holmes is a senior research associate at the University of Georgia Center for International Trade and Security, Athens, Georgia. Their work on seapower in Asia has appeared in such journals as Comparative Strategy and Defence & Security Analysis, as well as the Naval War College Review.

Report Documentation Page

*Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE 2006	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2006 to 00-00-2006			
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Japanese Maritime Thought: If Not Mahan, Who?		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER			
		5b. GRANT NUMBER			
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER			
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER			
		5e. TASK NUMBER			
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval War College, 686 Cushing Road, Newport, RI, 02841-1207		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER			
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)			
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)			
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 30	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

JAPANESE MARITIME THOUGHT: IF NOT MAHAN, WHO?

Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes

The late Colonel John Boyd, who knew a thing or two about strategic thought, was fond of declaring that excellence in warfare and other human endeavors depended on people, ideas, and hardware—in that order.¹ We postulate that Japan has lost sight of this commonsense axiom, allowing strategic thought to atrophy. If so, this decline in strategic thought could impede Tokyo's ability to act outside the confines of the U.S.-Japanese security alliance—as it might need to, given the rise of an increasingly capable, seapower-minded China and mounting frictions between Beijing and Tokyo. We ask the following questions to assess the state of strategic thinking in Japan's naval forces:

- Why does maritime strategy matter now, in an increasingly interconnected world? Does economic interdependence eliminate the resort to power politics?
- How did Alfred Thayer Mahan view seapower and its uses? How much influence did Mahan exert in imperial Japan?
- How strictly did the Imperial Japanese Navy adhere to Mahan's theories, and, when it departed from Mahanian theory, why did it do so, and with what impact?
- How much continuity was there in strategic thinking between the Imperial Japanese Navy and the Maritime Self-Defense Force? What impact did any shifts in strategic thought have?
- Which strategic theorists do Japanese naval officials consult when they are grappling with vexing issues? If not Mahan, whom?

- If indeed strategic thought has languished in postwar Japan's maritime forces, how might political and military leaders revive it? To which strategic theorists should they look?

We close with a few observations and policy recommendations for Tokyo's naval establishment. Given the preliminary nature of this inquiry, we leave the article somewhat open-ended, in hopes of starting a sorely needed debate in Japanese and American naval circles rather than supplying answers that are likely to be premature.

JAPAN, GEOGRAPHY, AND MARITIME STRATEGY

While it may no longer be fashionable to equate geography to destiny, Japan's physical position reaffirms this apparently quaint axiom. The concept of maritime power is inseparable from its spatial meaning. Maritime power is at its most basic level concerned with a nation's ability to exploit the sea—a physical, nautical medium. The immutable geographic realities that Japan confronts merit particular attention because they have shaped and will continue to shape Japan's interactions with its neighbors. Japan's maritime posture, then, has always been and will always be intimately linked to geography. The Japanese often describe their key national characteristic in nautical terms, with the familiar notion that “Japan is a small island nation lacking resource endowments and is thus highly dependent upon seaborne commerce for its well being.” Clearly, Tokyo must always be mindful of the surrounding oceans.

Yet additional geographic features impinge upon Japan's strategic and maritime postures. It is natural to compare Great Britain and Japan, two insular powers seaward of great continental landmasses.² Japan stands considerably off the Asian continent, with nearly a hundred miles separating Honshu Island from the Korean Peninsula. By contrast, only twenty miles separate Britain from continental Europe at the nearest point. Concentrated in a few pockets of flat terrain on the east coast, major Japanese cities face outward toward the Pacific rather than inward toward the continent. In effect they gaze out at the United States, whereas Britain's major population centers physically tend to direct attention toward their European neighbors. Historically such demographic positioning has reinforced the isolation and insularity of Japan, while Britain has interacted regularly with the rest of Europe. Japan's distinctive geographic and demographic conformation conditions its strategic preferences, pulling Tokyo in divergent directions: geographically, Japan is part of continental Asia, but demographically it inclines toward transpacific ties. Japan has been ambivalent about whether it is (or wants to be) an Asian or a Western power, whereas Britain has managed to craft a special relationship with the

United States across the Atlantic while acting as a traditional offshore balancer across the English Channel.³

Japanese geography carries strategic implications. The four main home islands stretch 1,200 miles, roughly the entire north-south length of the U.S. eastern seaboard. This archipelago, which extends along the Ryukyu Islands to the south, forms a long crescent that hugs the eastern flanks of Russia and China, Eurasia's greatest land powers. Japan seemingly stands in the way of naval power projection from the mainland.⁴ Chinese vessels exiting the East China Sea into the Pacific must contend with the Ryukyus, while the Korean Peninsula, in effect a half-island appended to Eurasia, thrusts out toward the Japanese archipelago like the proverbial "dagger aimed at the heart of Japan." These enduring geographic traits have been arbiters of interstate relations and wars among the four powers for over a century.⁵

Finally, the physical defense of Japan requires credible nautical power projection. Tokyo is saddled with seventeen thousand miles of coastline to defend. By comparison with the great powers, India's shoreline is 4,600 miles long, while China's extends eleven thousand miles, America's twelve thousand miles, and Russia's twenty-three thousand miles (primarily facing the empty Arctic). Lacking strategic depth—the widest east-west length of Honshu is a mere 160 miles—Japanese planners must think in terms of defending forward at sea, much as the Israelis do about land warfare.⁶ To complicate matters, Tokyo possesses thousands of offshore islands, with the farthest ones located near the Tropic of Cancer. Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF, or MSDF) describes the nation's defense dilemma in vivid terms: if Wakkanai, the northernmost city of Japan, is Copenhagen, then the Ishigaki, Okinotori, and Minamitori islands are the equivalents of Casablanca, Tripoli, and Alexandria, respectively.⁷ In other words, Japan's maritime defense area encompasses an area as large as NATO-Europe, plus the entire Mediterranean.

Several implications flow from this geopolitical analysis. First, whereas continental powers have the option of venturing seaward or retreating from the oceans, Japan enjoys no such luxury. The importance of a coherent strategic framework for Japanese naval planners is hard to overstate. Second, and closely related, Tokyo cannot avoid entanglement with immediate neighbors that harbor maritime ambitions of their own. Japan is located near enough to the Eurasian continent that it must be alert for any realignment or imbalance in regional seapower. Third, if forced to defend its maritime interests by itself, Tokyo would not be able to ignore pressures to build up a maritime force far larger and more capable than its current modestly sized, if world-class, fleet. If Tokyo succumbed to these pressures, its actions would almost certainly bring about countervailing actions from its neighbors.

The bottom line: the direction and quality of Japanese strategic thinking about nautical affairs will have ripple effects on the international relations of East Asia and therefore bear careful examination. The following thus charts trends in Japanese maritime thinking from the prewar era to the twenty-first century and ventures some policy recommendations.

MAHAN'S SEAPOWER EVANGELISM

A century ago Japanese maritime thinkers, facing similar challenges, looked to America for guidance on seapower. Writing around the turn of the nineteenth century, Alfred Thayer Mahan exhorted an America long disdainful toward foreign political entanglements to amass a kind of “sea power” built on the “three pillars” of overseas commerce, naval and merchant fleets, and naval bases arrayed along the sea lanes to support fuel-thirsty warships.⁸ While there was a circular quality to his theorizing—the navy protected a nation’s trade, which in turn generated tariff revenue to support the navy—the commercial element of seapower seemed to be uppermost in his thinking. Mahan’s self-perpetuating logic beguiled advocates of seapower in his day, and it has a timeless quality.⁹ In today’s China, which aspires to its own place in the sun, appeals to Mahanian theory are increasingly commonplace.¹⁰

If there were any geographic bounds to Mahan’s vision of seapower, he did not say so. While his writings were appropriate to Great Britain or the United States, maritime nations with far-flung aspirations, they held only limited relevance for a fledgling power such as imperial Japan, whose aspirations were confined to regional waters and coastal areas. Where should an America rethinking political nonentanglement apply its nautical energies? In East Asia: for Mahan, seapower would assure the United States an equitable share of trade in China, a “carcass” doomed to be devoured by “eagles,” namely the great imperial powers.¹¹ If the United States failed to defend its share of the China trade—Mahanian thought had a strongly zero-sum tenor to it—it would lose out, with dire consequences for the nation’s prosperity.¹² Although he claimed to deplore the prospect of great-power war, Mahan seemed resigned to it if a rival injected “the alien element of military or political force” into peaceful seagoing commerce.¹³

Both merchant shipping and the U.S. Navy thus needed secure communications with East Asia. Communications, wrote Mahan, was “the most important single element in strategy, political or military.”¹⁴ The “eminence of sea power” lay in its ability to control the sea lines of communication, while the power “to insure these communications to one’s self, and to interrupt them for an adversary, affects the very root of a nation’s vigor.”¹⁵ Perhaps his central precept—and a staple of discourse in contemporary China—was his concept of “command of the sea” as “that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy’s flag from

it, or allows it to appear only as a fugitive; and which, by controlling the great common, closes the highways by which commerce moves to and fro from the enemy's shores."¹⁶ If the United States hoped to assure access to overseas markets, proclaimed Mahan, its navy must construct forces able to "fight, with reasonable chances of success, the largest force likely to be brought against it" in regions vital to American maritime traffic.¹⁷ This ability to impose a local preponderance of naval force was the hub of a prosperity-minded policy of seapower.

To "maximize the power of offensive action," which was "the great end of a war fleet," the United States needed a modest force of twenty armored battleships "capable of taking and giving hard knocks" in a major fleet engagement.¹⁸ Mahan disparaged *guerre de course*, or commerce raiding, as the strategy of the weaker power, hopeless in the face of a navy able to exercise overbearing seapower. His followers instead sought titanic clashes between concentrated fleets of battleships—in other words, a latter-day equivalent to Trafalgar.¹⁹

THE INFLUENCE OF MAHAN UPON JAPAN

Scholars agree that Japanese strategists leapt at Mahan's theories. Mahan recalled that his works had been more widely translated into Japanese than any other language.²⁰ In 1902, Admiral Yamamoto Gombei paid tribute to Mahan's analytical skills, offering him a teaching post at Japan's Naval Staff College.²¹ Declared Captain John Ingles, a British officer who taught at the Naval Staff College for six years, "Japanese naval officers are much impressed with the advantage in a land war of superiority at sea. They have been, I think, faithful students of the American naval historian, Captain Mahan."²²

But the exact nature of Mahan's influence on the Japanese naval establishment is a matter of some dispute. One view, seemingly predominant among contemporary scholars, draws a straight line between Mahanian precepts and prewar Japanese ideas about seapower. Ronald Spector describes the Japanese as "true disciples of Mahan."²³ Peter Woolley notes that "Japan took Mahan quite seriously. His books were carefully studied. His proclamation that navies were strategically dominant in the modern world was strongly embraced."²⁴ Richard Turk affirms that the Imperial Japanese Navy, or IJN, imbibed Mahanian seapower theory "in purer form" than did any other navy.²⁵ Clearly, a sizable body of scholarship accepts the notion that Alfred Thayer Mahan lent Japanese naval strategy its founding precepts and doctrine.²⁶

Other scholars take a more skeptical, more variegated view of the Mahan-Japan relationship. While Mahan earned acclaim from powerful naval leaders in Japan, in this account, he was far from the only influence on them. Both Akiyama Saneyuki and Satō Tetsutarō—the former commonly known as the "father of Japanese naval strategy," the latter as "Japan's Mahan"—drew intellectual

inspiration from many sources, ranging from ancient Japanese “water force” tactics to the writings of the Chinese theorist Sun Tzu. Satō spent six months studying naval strategy in the United States, but this came on the heels of eighteen months’ study in Great Britain, which after all was the world’s leading naval power and the model for aspirants to maritime preeminence.²⁷

Japanese strategists read Mahan’s works selectively, moreover, using his ideas to ratify preconceived ideas about how Japan should configure and use its navy. Even in the United States, some analysts have intimated, in a similar vein, that Mahan was more a propagandist than a perceptive strategic theorist. One, Margaret Tuttle Sprout, dubbed him an “evangelist of sea power.”²⁸ Roger Dingman, a leading skeptic, questions the extent of Mahan’s sway over the Japanese naval establishment: “I am skeptical of these claims about Mahan’s influence across the Pacific for several reasons. They are, in the first place, little more than claims, unsupported by any substantial body of evidence.”²⁹ Continues Dingman:

To suggest that Mahan the publicist of seapower was a tool of potentially great power to Japanese naval expansionists . . . is not to argue that he was in any sense the *cause* of their actions. . . . While they invoked his ideas and used his language in the wake of the Sino-Japanese War to justify fleet expansion, it was that conflict—and the prospect of another with Imperial Russia—that provided the much more basic sense of threat that yielded affirmative Diet votes for a bigger navy.³⁰

Conclude Dingman and like-minded analysts, Mahan was only part of a *mélange* of influences on Japanese naval thinkers. Japanese officials welcomed his emphasis on command of the sea, which seemed to reaffirm their experiences from wars with China and Russia, but they also used him freely to advance the IJN’s parochial aims.

If Mahan was only one among many intellectual influences on the IJN, seapower theory was only one among many political, bureaucratic, economic, and social factors that shaped the thinking of Japanese naval strategists. Notes one historian, the navy’s rise resulted in great part from an “interplay between power, pageantry, politics, propaganda, and nationalism.” Naval leaders “significantly altered politics, empire, and society in pursuit of their narrower and more parochial concerns, namely larger budgets.” “Politics,” he concludes, “was the lifeblood of the Japanese navy, as it was for the navies of Germany, the United States, and Britain in the same historical period.”³¹ Mahan made a useful ally for IJN leaders, helping them rally public support for an ambitious naval program—just as he made a useful ally to Theodore Roosevelt and his cohort of American navalists or, for that matter, to Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz in his tilts with socialists in the Reichstag.

Since the inception of the IJN, moreover, naval leaders had waged a bitter bureaucratic struggle with the Japanese army for preeminence in the eyes of the government and the populace. Bureaucratic politics tended to deflect Japanese naval strategy from the Mahanian trajectory it would have followed had the IJN abided purely by Mahanian precepts. For the Japanese navy of the mid-1890s, flush with victory over China, “the problem of grand strategy was more than a topic of theoretical discussion at the Naval Staff College. . . . [T]he navy . . . pressed for status beyond interservice parity, toward a position of seniority from which it could set the nation’s strategic priorities and claim the lion’s share of national prestige, public acclaim, and most important, the government’s military budget.”³²

To gain this senior position and the funding and prestige it would bring, IJN leaders realized they needed “a carefully elaborated statement of the preeminent importance of seapower, an argument backed by the weight of historical example, taken not just from Japan’s own past, but also from the far greater experience of the traditional maritime powers of the West.” In short, they set out to propagate a “public credo” as much as a rational maritime strategy.³³ From the Western maritime tradition, the peculiarities of Japan’s geopolitical situation, and the IJN’s parochial needs, they fashioned a “blue water” school of strategic thought about the sea.

IMPERIAL JAPAN’S QUASI-MAHANIAN NAVAL STRATEGY

As it took shape, then, Japanese naval strategy bore only partial resemblance to the seapower-minded strategy Alfred Thayer Mahan espoused. To be sure, leading IJN thinkers such as Akiyama, Suzuki Kantarō, and Satō—who served together at the Naval Staff College in 1910–11, imparting their vision of Japanese seapower to the World War II generation of naval officers—accepted Mahan’s general advocacy of dominant seapower.³⁴ Satō, note David Evans and Mark Peattie, “seems to have fallen under the spell of Mahan’s navalism in its most global sense,” namely “command of the seas as the projection of naval power abroad and thus the means to national greatness.”³⁵ Like Mahan, he accentuated the connection among naval strength, maritime trade, and world power, predicating his own seapower advocacy on *riko o sake, umi o susumu* (avoiding the continent and advancing on the seas). This beckoned naval leaders’ attention toward Southeast Asia.³⁶ This southerly, seafaring outlook on regional strategy stood in stark contrast to the prescriptions issuing forth from the Japanese army, which had cast its gaze westward, on the Asian landmass.

In his treatise *On the History of Imperial Defense* (1908) and other works, Satō both confirmed the priorities of the Japanese navy, which had been forged in

victories over the Chinese and Russian navies, and sculpted these priorities in line with his own meditations on history and theory. He accepted the Mahanian notion that assured communications was the *sine qua non* of great maritime power and that the way to assure communications was to build a battle fleet capable of sweeping the enemy's flag from vital waterways. From the battle of Tsushima, as well as from his study of Mahan, he concluded that the single, decisive fleet engagement was the arbiter of dominant seapower. Further, he clearly fell into the "big ship, big gun" camp that represented the mainstream of Japanese naval thought in the decades leading up to the Pacific War.³⁷ Japan did opt for a Mahanian battle fleet, planning for a climactic fleet engagement with the "hypothetical enemy" Satō Tetsutarō envisioned—the U.S. Navy.³⁸

But, as Dingman and other scholars aver, Satō and like-minded Japanese navalists adapted Mahanian seapower theory to Japan's distinctive geography and political and economic imperatives. How, and why, did they depart from Mahanian precepts? Several factors were in play. First, Mahan had identified six "principal conditions affecting the sea power of nations": geographical position; physical conformation, including climate and "natural productions"; extent of territory; number of population; character of the people; and character of the government and national institutions.³⁹ These indices of powerful seafaring nations guided Japan in a different direction from that of the United States, or even of Great Britain—to which, by virtue of its insular conformation and its geographic position on the Asian periphery, Japan bore the greatest resemblance.

IJN thinkers recognized that Japan was a regional power with limited resources, whereas Mahan had derived his theories from the example of Britain, the world's leading sea power, which had interests and commitments ringing the world. They also recognized that their government and people saw the nation not as a sea power in the British sense but as a land power that had wrested away territorial holdings on the nearby Asian landmass and thus had certain interests at sea. Navy leaders were forced to wage a lively debate with their army counterparts, lobbying for a maritime-oriented foreign policy and strategy. Army leaders argued that the IJN should content itself with defending the Japanese homeland against attack. Navy leaders pointed to the importance of the sea lines of communication connecting Japan to vital foreign resources and markets. They also questioned how the army planned to support expeditionary forces in Asia absent secure communications with the home islands. Secure sea communications, upheld by the IJN, were crucial to even the army's land-oriented vision.⁴⁰

Naval leaders thus crafted a modified Mahanian naval strategy that was local and particularistic. They paid little attention to island bases, one of Mahan's "pillars" of global seapower, accepting the reality of large-scale territorial conquests in nearby Korea, Manchuria, and coastal China. Akiyama, Suzuki, and

Satō did turn their attentions toward Southeast Asia as they applied Mahanian precepts to Japanese conditions. But it was not until the 1930s, when the IJN converted its warships from coal- to oil-fired propulsion, that their case for “advancing on the seas” in a southerly direction took on real urgency in terms of the national interest.⁴¹ Japanese thinkers realized that the “southern strategy” they contemplated would likely bring Japan in conflict with the European imperial powers, which held most of Southeast Asia, and ultimately with the United States. In the interwar period, accordingly, the IJN devised a strategy aimed at luring the U.S. Navy across the broad Pacific to a Mahanian fleet engagement, where it would reprise the battle of Tsushima.⁴²

Second, Japanese mariners were a product of their bureaucratic environment and their operational experiences, which primed them to look at seapower differently than had Mahan, the seapower historian and prophet. Satō and his fellow navalists were practitioners, serving in numerous sea billets, whereas the academically inclined Mahan had seen only scant sea duty and had possessed little taste for more. (“I am the man of thought, not the man of action,” confessed Mahan on one occasion, venturing an explanation as to why his perspective differed from that of Theodore Roosevelt, by any definition a man of action.)⁴³ They also understood that their immediate task was to win ascendance over the army in the services’ perennial turf war. Indeed, Admiral Yamamoto Gombei rushed Satō’s *On the History of Imperial Defense* into print to help the navy make its case for bigger budgets and more ships.⁴⁴ These priorities help explain why Japanese navalists’ ideas diverged from those set forth by Mahan, who, comfortably ensconced in Newport, Rhode Island, was largely spared these everyday travails of navy life.

Japanese strategists focused primarily on tactics and operations rather than the more rarefied dimensions of naval warfare, in large part because, in contrast to their American counterparts, they learned about naval strategy more from combat experience than from abstract seapower theory. Observes Dingman, leading Japanese theorists were combat veterans of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars. Thus “they turned more to their own empire’s recent history than to the more distant past as Mahan had,” and their “pens were mobilized more to support specific building programs than to elucidate general principles.”⁴⁵ Their proposals were geared to big ships and big guns. Says Spector, “Japanese admirals were too faithful students of Mahan to put their faith for ultimate victory in any weapon except the battleship.”⁴⁶

Tactics and even hardware, then, propelled Japanese naval thought at least as much as did the ideal relationship among strategic theory, naval strategy, and force structure. In effect the IJN inverted this relationship, fitting seapower theory around its immediate needs for ships, budgets, and bureaucratic supremacy.

JAPAN'S POSTWAR MARITIME POSTURE

“One searches the pages of recent histories of the Imperial Japanese Navy in vain for any mention of Alfred Thayer Mahan,” declares Roger Dingman.⁴⁷ Just so. Written to commemorate the centennial of the Russo-Japanese War, a recent *Naval War College Review* article by Vice Admiral Yoji Koda, a senior JSMDF officer, is nearly mute on Mahan.⁴⁸ Interviews with retired officers from the Maritime Self-Defense Force likewise imply that Mahan is missing from Japanese strategic thought today. Indeed, the MSDF has seemingly allowed strategic thought to languish entirely, owing primarily to Japan's close alliance with the United States. Asked to describe the sources of Japanese seapower thinking, these officers invariably call for reinforcing the alliance with the United States and its navy.⁴⁹ While joining in a composite maritime force with the U.S. Navy confers undoubted benefits on the MSDF—giving the service the offensive punch it lacks as a matter of policy and law—Japan's dependence on its superpower partner clearly has marked drawbacks.

The demise of the Imperial Japanese Navy in 1945 did not end naval planning for Tokyo, even if it did discredit Alfred Thayer Mahan and other thinkers; it simply starved Japanese naval planning of intellectual sustenance. Former IJN officers soon began rebuilding the nation's maritime forces with full approval and oversight from the American occupation authorities. Indeed, even before the formal surrender ceremonies on board the *Missouri*, the United States ordered Japan to clear heavily mined areas along the Japanese coast.⁵⁰ The ad hoc flotilla of minesweepers formed for this purpose, using remnants of the imperial navy, became the nucleus for postwar Japanese naval power.⁵¹

It quickly became clear that a functioning institution was required to safeguard Japan's basic maritime interests. In 1948, accordingly, the Japanese government established the Maritime Safety Agency, the precursor to the Maritime Self-Defense Force. The Korean War induced U.S. defense planners to seek Japanese military assistance. Unbeknownst to the outside world, Japanese minesweepers were deployed to combat zones off the Korean Peninsula under American operational command, performing a critical support function that the U.S. Seventh Fleet lacked.⁵² Postwar Japan, then, devised a navy only in response to the demands of its occupiers. Strategic thinking about naval operations independent of the United States was absent from the start.

Following the full restoration of Japanese sovereignty in 1952, Tokyo rapidly expanded its maritime responsibilities. Strikingly, the 1952 U.S.-Japan defense treaty signed at San Francisco made the security of the Far East—implicitly including Japan's maritime environs—a key area of responsibility for the alliance. But the broad geographic scope of the alliance had less to do with Japan's intrinsic needs than with America's emerging containment strategy in Asia.⁵³

Four years after the MSDF entered service in 1954, the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) unveiled its first formal defense buildup plan (1958–60), which set forth three central tasks for Japan's maritime defense. First, submarines were deemed the most pressing threat; accordingly, the MSDF's primary mission was to conduct antisubmarine warfare (ASW) operations in waters adjacent to the Japanese archipelago.⁵⁴ A second, equally urgent mission was to protect the sea lines of communication (SLOCs). Third, the MSDF needed to defend against a direct invasion from the sea. These three pillars informed subsequent four-year plans and still form the basis for Japan's maritime defense posture. Renewed attention to SLOC defense may or may not have reflected thinking inherited from Japan's prewar strategic traditions, but there was little sign that Tokyo thought about seapower in rigorous theoretical terms. Wartime defeat had banished Mahan from the Japanese lexicon, and no one had taken his place.

An intriguing episode during this period illustrates Japan's early naval ambitions in the Cold War.⁵⁵ In 1960, as a part of the regular revision and update of the first defense plan, the MSDF floated a proposal to acquire a helicopter carrier for ASW operations. The initial plan for a six-thousand-ton vessel was revised upward, calling for an eleven-thousand-ton ship capable of carrying up to eighteen helicopters. Such a project, if executed, would have represented a quantum leap in the tonnage and capability of Japan's nascent postwar fleet. Notably, the Japanese cited American requests for sea-based helicopter support during the Korean War as precedent for a carrier acquisition. (In 1953 the United States had offered to lease Tokyo a seven-thousand-ton escort carrier to track Soviet submarines, while Tokyo considered converting a transport ship into a carrier.)

Japanese aversion to military matters, amplified by bureaucratic politics, ultimately nullified the MSDF's bid for a carrier, but its ambitions along these lines endured. It crafted a fleet centered on helicopter-carrying destroyers, in an effort to sidestep political objections to aircraft carriers. The service eventually got its wish three decades later (discussed below). A carrier of that capacity would have substantially bolstered Japan's ASW capacity, but in these early days the MSDF clearly ignored the political climate, budgetary realities, and, most importantly, the proposed vessel's place in Japan's long-term maritime strategy. The MSDF's tendency to covet the latest in naval technology without reference to a broader naval strategy or Japan's political needs persists to this day.

Geopolitical events and domestic debates reinforced the MSDF's central role in securing the nation's welfare. The 1960 revision of the U.S.-Japan security treaty added a "Far East clause" that more explicitly codified the need to protect Japan's nautical environment while widening allied cooperation to the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, and the northern Philippines. To ease strategic pressures on a nation weary from Vietnam, President Richard Nixon promulgated the "Guam

Doctrine,” calling on U.S. allies to shoulder responsibilities in proportion to their needs and capabilities. Against this backdrop, Prime Minister Eisaku Sato declared publicly that Korea and Taiwan were areas of security concern for Japan. Response to a cross-strait contingency would have required the MSDF to project forces far beyond the Japanese home islands.⁵⁶ Again, both the Far East and Taiwan clauses served America’s strategic interests in Asia rhetorically, but they supplied no concrete guidance on how to harness Japan’s naval strategy and capabilities for contingencies beyond defense of the home islands.

As Japan agreed in principle to take on greater responsibilities, this mismatch in policy and strategy stood in ever sharper relief, until it became impossible to overlook. As a consequence, genuine debate about the nation’s maritime priorities emerged. Despite politicians’ declarations that Japan had acquired capabilities adequate to defend its maritime interests by the early 1970s, the force structure continued to exhibit serious deficiencies.⁵⁷ Recognizing this misalignment between political ends and naval means, Osamu Kaihara, a secretary general of the National Defense Council, argued that Japan should dramatically scale back its maritime posture, setting limited objectives that the MSDF could realistically achieve. Japan’s SLOCs could be cut at countless points on the map, he argued; protecting far-flung sea lanes exceeded Japan’s maritime capacity. Kaihara urged Tokyo to restructure the JMSDF to resemble a coast guard geared exclusively to defending the home islands from a direct invasion.

In contrast, Hideo Sekino, a respected commentator on defense affairs, considered a direct Soviet invasion unlikely. Given Japan’s dependence on overseas resources, the nation was most vulnerable to commerce raiding in a conflict. The 1973 Arab oil embargo lent credence to Sekino’s basic premise and to his recommendation that Tokyo procure the wherewithal to defend sea lanes as far away as northern Indonesia. Sekino insisted that such a posture would be fully compatible with American regional strategy in Asia, enabling Japan to influence events within the alliance.⁵⁸ Interestingly, the most persuasive aspect of Sekino’s argument was his claim that Japan could best support U.S. strategic interests in Asia by heeding his recommendations.

Broader geopolitical alignments quickly overtook events. U.S.-Soviet détente and Nixon’s dramatic opening to China in the early 1970s fed Japanese fears that Washington was preparing to abandon the alliance. In response, the Japanese government issued its first comprehensive report on how the force it envisioned—based on a “standard defense force concept”—would meet Tokyo’s national security objectives. Strikingly, it took Japan nearly a quarter of a century to address the most basic responsibility of any nation: matching national policy with a coherent strategy and supporting forces. But little serious thought went

into the report. If Japanese officials ever revisited their basic assumptions, the document betrayed little sign of it.

In keeping with the maritime priorities established more than two decades before, the 1976 National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) provided guidelines for the MSDF to defend against a direct invasion of the home islands; provide warning and defense against threats to Japan's coastal areas; protect major ports and straits; and conduct active air reconnaissance and surveillance of the seas adjacent to Japan's Pacific coast (out to three hundred miles) and in the Sea of Japan (perhaps one to two hundred miles from Japan's west coast).⁵⁹ The NDPO's directives envisioned a fleet centering on modern destroyers, submarines, and fixed- and rotary-wing ASW aircraft. Two years later, Tokyo and Washington signed Guidelines for Defense Cooperation that formally committed Japan to maintaining "peace and stability" across the Asia-Pacific region. The expansiveness of the outline and the guidelines sealed the ascendance of Sekino's vision, emphasizing the complementary role Japan could play in American security strategy.

By the 1980s, the revival of Cold War competition and a convergence of Japanese and U.S. strategic interests had given rise to unprecedented naval cooperation. In 1981, Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki sketched a Japanese defense perimeter extending a thousand miles from Japanese shores.⁶⁰ Two years later a U.S.-Japanese study group examined the potential for combined operations to defend SLOCs against the Soviets. For the rest of the decade, American and Japanese naval forces perfected the art of combined ASW, working to bottle up Soviet submarine forces in the Seas of Okhotsk and Japan. During this period the MSDF matured into a genuine partner of the U.S. Navy in the Pacific theater. By the end of the Cold War, the JMSDF was second only to the United States in Asian waters.

Whatever its benefits, closer allied collaboration held serious risks for Japan. According to one study, "The SDF's emphasis on the procurement of interceptor aircraft and antisubmarine warfare ships designed to complement and defend U.S. offensive military assets operating from Japan meant that the structure of its defense force became highly skewed, to the point that it lacked the balanced range of capabilities necessary to defend Japan independent of the United States."⁶¹ Any prudent theorist of naval affairs would have frowned upon this apparent shortsightedness—especially in a nation whose destiny lay on the seas.

Several patterns emerge from this brief survey of MSDF history. First, the Japanese took to heart the bitter lessons of World War II, when the IJN's failure to defend commercial shipping against U.S. submarines led to disaster for the wartime Japanese economy. Tokyo's near-obsessive focus on sea-lane defense during the Cold War stemmed in part from its desire to avoid a replay of these events. Second, major historical events, namely the Korean War and the broader Cold

War, seemed to underscore the importance of defending the sea lanes. From the start, Japanese planners focused on antisubmarine and antimine warfare, and subsequent strategy making deviated little from these central missions. Third, Tokyo's rigid adherence to the ill-defined mission of SLOC defense left the MSDF's capabilities lagging far behind its ambitious maritime vision. The ensuing policy-strategy mismatch would not be repaired until the 1980s.

Fourth, preparations for SLOC defense served the allies' needs asymmetrically. The MSDF's primary tasks filled serious gaps in American ASW and mine-warfare capability while dovetailing fully with the U.S. strategy of containing Soviet naval power. Tokyo was able to exercise greater influence within the alliance, as the founders of postwar Japan had hoped, but their grand bargain entailed serious risks that persist today. Japanese naval strategy was always subordinate to the U.S. regional posture in Asia. It is no exaggeration to observe that the MSDF lacked an independent identity, becoming a mere appendage of the U.S. military. The American imprint on the Japanese navy is unmistakable. Indeed, Japanese naval officers revere Admiral Arleigh Burke, not one of their own, as "the father of the JMSDF."⁶² But Japan's heavy reliance on American concepts, doctrine, and equipment amounted to intellectual buck-passing.

Finally, postwar Japan is a case study in the pitfalls of strategy making without a larger theoretical framework. Policy documents set forth hazily defined notions of regional peace and stability, while service-level directives focus overwhelmingly on operations (sea-lane defense), tactics, and equipment. The tissue that binds strategy to national policy is tenuous, if indeed it exists. Imperial Japan's derivative of Mahanian strategic theory clearly did not outlive World War II. Nor do Japanese planners refer explicitly to Sir Julian Corbett's theories, which were predicated almost exclusively on controlling sea communications, even though the menace of *guerre de course* transfixed Japanese naval officials.⁶³

THE POST-COLD WAR ERA AND BEYOND: THE MSDF DIVERSIFIES

The security environment grew more and more complex in the post-Cold War epoch, even as domestic and international constituencies prodded Japan to step up its efforts to maintain peace and stability, commensurate with its economic power. The MSDF saw its roles and missions grow accordingly, performing tasks well beyond homeland and sea-lane defense.⁶⁴ Whether this diversification will impel the MSDF to transform itself into a service with all the trappings of a traditional navy remains to be seen.

Japan got off to a rough start as the superpower rivalry neared its end. During the 1990-91 Gulf War, Tokyo's failure to provide meaningful military assistance provoked accusations, both domestically and abroad, that Tokyo had indulged in free-riding and "checkbook diplomacy." Notably, however, the MSDF ended

up playing a critical, path-breaking role, partly reversing the harsh international verdict. The minesweeping force Japan deployed to the Persian Gulf after hostilities had ceased boasted state-of-the-art equipment, and the MSDF discharged its mission. Harking back to the Korean War, Japanese forces again performed functions that outstripped U.S. Navy capabilities in-theater.

Determined not to suffer another public-relations disaster, the Japanese Diet passed the International Peace Cooperation Law in 1992, easing restrictions on overseas deployments of Japanese units. The legislation marked the beginning of unprecedented international activism. Starting in 1992, the MSDF took part in numerous relief and peacekeeping operations. Its first such effort involved transporting personnel and equipment to Cambodia for a United Nations–mandated peacekeeping mission. The carrier-like *Osumi*-class transport vessels (LST, or landing ship tank) debuted during the 1999 East Timor crisis, arousing suspicions in some quarters that Japan was taking its first step to enhance power projection. Tokyo’s embrace of international operations was only the beginning of the MSDF’s expansion in the nautical arena.

Throughout the 1990s, Japan sought to organize regional initiatives to combat piracy in Southeast Asia. As early as 1997, the National Institute for Defense Studies, the JDA’s in-house think tank, proposed an ambitious security enterprise dubbed “Ocean Peace Keeping” (OPK). The OPK concept envisioned a standing maritime security force composed of naval contingents from nearby states. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi formally proposed a regional coast guard at the 1999 ASEAN+3 Summit. While Obuchi’s proposal failed to catch on due to its perceived radical nature, successive prime ministers lobbied for the OPK initiative in regional forums.⁶⁵ When OPK faltered, the Japanese government pressed for bilateral cooperation, including combined exercises and aid. Tokyo achieved considerable success with this more modest approach, forging agreements with littoral states such as Brunei, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand.⁶⁶

The 11 September terrorist attacks created new incentives for Japan to expand its maritime missions. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi pushed legislation through the Diet permitting the Self-Defense Forces to provide rear-area military support to allied forces operating in the Indian Ocean. The MSDF dispatched combat logistics ships, transports, and escorts on a rotating basis. Notably, the MSDF’s responsibilities and capabilities gradually grew. Its refueling mission, initially limited to U.S. and British vessels, came to include eight other coalition partners, with Japan meeting some 30 percent of allied fuel demand.⁶⁷ As of September 2005, Japanese oilers had dispensed some 410 million liters of fuel, worth \$140 million, free of charge.⁶⁸ In December 2002, after some

prodding from the United States, Japan reluctantly agreed to deploy a frontline Aegis destroyer to the Indian Ocean.⁶⁹

Japan assumed an assertive stance before and after the 2003 Iraq war. While many Japanese politicians and most citizens questioned the legitimacy of the invasion, Koizumi stood firmly behind the George W. Bush administration's claim that Iraq was a central front in the global war on terror. After the Diet enacted the necessary legislation, Tokyo dispatched six hundred ground troops to Samawah, a city considered secure, in a noncombat role. The MSDF employed its *Osumi*-class ships to support this mission.

Also in 2003, as part of its broad-based support for the U.S.-led war on terror, Tokyo acceded to the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), in an effort to halt the proliferation of weapons technology at sea, aloft, and ashore.⁷⁰ A "core" participant in the PSI, Japan has taken part in a series of highly visible exercises held across the globe. Because Japanese law forbade the MSDF to board ships in peacetime, MSDF observers watched the Japanese Coast Guard during the first round of multinational exercises. To correct this awkward arrangement, one of the "war contingency bills" approved by the Diet in May 2004 loosened restrictions on the MSDF. In October 2004 Japan hosted its first PSI exercise, TEAM SAMURAI, but the MSDF was still limited to patrol and intelligence operations. It dispatched a destroyer, two P-3C surveillance aircraft, and two helicopters to the first PSI drill in Southeast Asia, which Singapore hosted in August 2005.

Humanitarian imperatives also raised the profile of the MSDF. In January 2005, Japan undertook its largest postwar military deployment, sending MSDF units to Indonesia in response to the devastating December 2004 tsunami. Numbering approximately one thousand personnel, the relief task force included three ships, five helicopters, and two C-130 transport aircraft. The MSDF dispatched an *Osumi*-class transport ship, along with a refueling vessel and an escort destroyer, to support helicopter operations off the coast of Aceh.⁷¹ Tokyo called on a naval flotilla returning from patrols in the Indian Ocean to furnish additional assistance.⁷² The mission, in which Japanese forces worked from an integrated command post in Thailand, represented the first time the three Self-Defense Force (SDF) services had operated jointly.

Tokyo's most recent reassessment of its defense policy and military modernization programs conforms to its activism over the past five years. The National Defense Program Guidelines issued in December 2004 reaffirmed Japan's variegated security posture, instructing the SDF to prepare for "new threats and diverse situations" and for any international operations that might arise.⁷³ The NDPG mandates the capacity to defend against ballistic-missile attacks, respond to incursions by enemy special-operations forces, defeat an invasion of Japan's offshore islands, patrol and prevent intrusion into Japan's surrounding seas and

airspace, and manage the effects of weapons-of-mass-destruction attacks. The JMSDF has an ambitious slate of missions.

Accordingly, the latest Mid-Term Defense Program, which sets out force-structure priorities to meet the NDPG's directives, forecasts sizable procurements of destroyers, submarines, and fixed- and rotary-wing patrol aircraft during fiscal years 2005–2009. Three of Japan's four Aegis destroyers will undergo upgrades to bolster their anti-ballistic-missile capabilities, while two new Aegis ships will join the fleet over the next decade. These increases will be balanced against efforts to streamline and consolidate the overall fleet, while growth rates in the annual defense budget will be trimmed. The potential disjunction between acquisition plans and resources has raised concerns about feasibility and sustainability.⁷⁴

The planned construction of a next-generation, 13,500-ton, helicopter-carrying destroyer signifies a potentially new direction for the MSDF, in which the service realizes one of its decades-old aspirations. The "16DDH"-class ship has attracted significant media and Diet attention, owing to its resemblance to an aircraft carrier.⁷⁵ The vessel's design features a starboard-side island superstructure and an uninterrupted flight deck, prompting observers to speculate that Japan may be eyeing a carrier capable of handling Harrier-like aircraft. Notes one analyst, "The configuration of the *Osumi* and the new DDH class indicates that Japan is rehearsing carrier-building technology to reserve for itself this potential military option; and thus, that it is considering discarding the constitutional prohibition on the acquisition of power-projection capabilities."⁷⁶

In the meantime, the 16DDH would fulfill many of the peacetime and wartime missions elaborated in the NDPG.⁷⁷ As a wartime flagship, the 16DDH would serve as a command-and-control platform, coordinating the activities of other units while its organic helicopters conducted ASW operations. During peacetime operations, or "military operations other than war" (MOOTW), the 16DDH would join the *Osumi*-class ships for peacekeeping and relief operations, as well as the "diverse situations" Japan foresees confronting on the high seas.

This array of maritime activities clearly reflects greater confidence on the part of Japan's political elite that the MSDF can cope effectively with demanding missions. The new defense plans also suggest that Japanese power-projection capacity will continue to grow. This convergence of intent and capability could very well yield a traditional maritime power along the East Asian littoral.

Such a shift would surely have implications for the regional configuration of power in Northeast Asia and for global security, but several important caveats are in order. First, Japan's activism on the high seas today represents the culmination of gradual, modest steps taken over fifteen years. This long gestation period permitted decision makers to ease the prohibitions against overseas

deployment without unduly alarming government officials or the Japanese electorate. Second, Tokyo's decisions to employ maritime forces were driven primarily by crisis and, often, by American pressure to act. The Gulf War fiasco epitomized the highly reactive nature of Japanese decision making. Third, Japan's ability to respond to crisis beyond the home islands was largely a by-product of enhancements to its alliance with the United States. For instance, Japan's impressive involvement in the war on terror would have been impossible absent the allied renewal process that began in the mid-1990s. Fourth, at a broader level, the MSDF largely remains an appendage of American maritime strategy, bereft of an independent, coherent naval strategy. This situation is acceptable in most contingencies, when Tokyo can count on support from Washington, but it will prove problematic if and when Japan needs to act alone.

Finally, Japan's expansion of the MSDF's roles and missions does entail strategic risks. The looming consolidation and streamlining of frontline forces suggest that Japanese political and military leaders believe the MSDF can do more with less, or at any rate more with the same forces. Such a posture makes eminent sense if future crises take the form of MOOTW, but this planning parameter assumes away the potential for higher-intensity confrontations, including traditional force-on-force engagements on the open seas. This trend is further evidence of Japan's break with Mahanian thought since World War II—and it is occurring at a moment in history when another resurgent military power's seafaring ambitions could usher in a new age of Mahan.

CHINA'S RISE: COLLISION COURSE AHEAD?

Sino-Japanese relations have seen better days. Some of the problems that have ratcheted the two countries' mutual ambivalence to new highs are perennial features of the relationship, while others are new and possibly more difficult to manage. Among the latter, early signs of maritime competition have appeared in the past two years. Four nautical issues have dogged bilateral ties: China's rapid naval modernization, ongoing cross-strait tensions, boundary and resource disputes in the East China Sea, and incidents at sea. All four problems have followed patterns that spell trouble for future Sino-Japanese maritime interactions.

In November 2004, for instance, a Chinese nuclear-powered attack submarine intruded into Japanese territorial waters, prompting the JMSDF to track the vessel and Koizumi's government to issue a rare public demand for an apology. A newly revised National Defense Program Outline appeared that same month, declaring that China's naval operations required greater vigilance on the MSDF's part. In February 2005, Tokyo unexpectedly announced that the Japanese Coast Guard would formally take charge of a lighthouse erected by nationalists in the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, sparking public protests in China. Beijing has also

placed on the table objections to Tokyo's claims to exclusive economic zones surrounding Japanese-owned atolls in the Pacific.⁷⁸ Similarly, a joint U.S.-Japanese declaration that the two countries shared "common strategic objectives" in the Taiwan Strait elicited angry recriminations from Beijing.

Ongoing territorial disputes in the East China Sea resurfaced in the summer and fall of 2005, after the Japanese government announced that it would grant certain companies the right to drill for gas deposits in and near contested areas. When China lodged a protest, Japan accused Beijing of starting extraction operations. In an unprecedented show of force, China dispatched a naval flotilla led by *Sovremennyy*-class guided-missile destroyers to the vicinity of the gas field, even as negotiators on both sides sought to defuse the situation. A Chinese ship reportedly trained its guns on a Japanese P-3C patrol aircraft.⁷⁹ In August the JDA specifically declared, in its annual defense white paper, that China's growing naval power in Asia was a matter of concern.⁸⁰ Following the release of the white paper, the head of the JDA, Yoshinori Ohno, averred that Chinese maritime activities required attention and called on Beijing to divulge more information about its military expenditures. The Japanese media subsequently leaked a highly classified scenario-planning document outlining a robust military strategy for repelling any Chinese invasion of the Senkaku Islands.

Given this escalating set of events, it has become increasingly urgent to discern how Japanese and Chinese seapower might interact in the future. One useful method for assessing this Sino-Japanese dynamic is to analyze Chinese strategic thinking about naval power and compare it against Japan's approach. Such a comparative analysis will hint at strengths and weaknesses in the MSDF's defense posture, suggesting whether and how Tokyo ought to realign its priorities.

The disparity between Chinese and Japanese strategic thought about maritime affairs could scarcely be sharper. In recent years a vocal school of thought in Beijing has noticed that Alfred Thayer Mahan's works furnish both the logic and the vocabulary with which to argue for assertive seapower.⁸¹ Proponents of this school of thought write and speak in avowedly Mahanian terms, and in many cases they explicitly cite his works to justify an ambitious maritime strategy. In particular, his portrayal of seapower as "overbearing power" pervades these Chinese thinkers' discourse on maritime affairs. Should the Mahanians win out among the cacophony of voices clamoring for the attention of senior policy makers in Beijing, Chinese strategy will take on distinctly offensive overtones.⁸² Japanese strategists and their American partners must remain mindful of this prospect.

Perhaps the most thoughtful—though by no means the only—spokesman for China's Mahanian school is Professor Ni Lexiong of the Research Institute of War and Culture, Eastern China Science and Engineering University. Professor

Ni uses seapower theory to evaluate the competing claims of advocates of seapower and advocates of globalization. The latter, he contends, believe

[that] China should not act by following the traditional sea power theory in pursuing a strong Navy, because today's world situation is different from the time of Mahan . . . that the globalization of the world's economy has made various countries' interests interconnected, mutually dependent on each other to a greater degree, and that if a country wants to preserve its life line at sea, the only way to do so is to go through "cooperation" rather than the traditional "solo fight."⁸³

Globalization theorists, notes Ni, typically urge Beijing to refrain from a naval arms buildup. To do so would alert "today's naval hegemon," the United States, "making China's naval development a self-destructive play with fire," reminiscent of imperial Germany's quixotic bid for seapower at the turn of the nineteenth century.⁸⁴

Ni hedges by allowing for the possibility that the world is entering a Kantian era of perpetual peace, as many globalization enthusiasts maintain, but he postulates that even a pacific international system will ultimately depend on force. In either case, then, China should build up its naval forces. If the globalization theorists have it right, China will need a muscular navy to play its part in the "world navy," when one emerges, and to help along the transition to a peaceful international order. Ni clearly believes, however, that the world has not yet evolved beyond its Hobbesian state, in which nations must maintain powerful military forces as a means of self-help. Thus "it is China's necessary choice to build up a strong sea power" to guard against "the threats to our 'outward-leaning economy' by some strong nations"—again, code for the United States—in the lingering "Hobbesian era" he perceives.⁸⁵

Professor Ni reminds his readers of China's humiliation at Japanese hands in 1894–95, when a powerful Japanese battle fleet crushed that of the Qing dynasty. "The key to winning that war was to gain the command of the sea," he proclaims. Today's China should emulate imperial Japan's example, keeping in mind that Mahan "believed that whoever could control the sea would win the war and change history; that command of the sea is achieved through decisive naval battles on the seas; that the outcome of decisive naval battles is determined by the strength of fire power on each side of the engagement."⁸⁶ This is scarcely the language of someone predisposed to "protracted defensive resistance," the term used by some Western analysts to describe China's naval strategy.⁸⁷ If indeed this sort of thinking comes to dominate policy discourse in Beijing, Washington and its Asian partners will be compelled to come to terms with a newly assertive naval strategy on Beijing's part. It behooves Tokyo to relearn its Mahan and to revisit the Imperial Japanese Navy's

history, if for no other reason than to get a glimpse into what a prospective competitor may do in maritime East Asia.

What kinds of problems might these trends in Chinese maritime strategy pose for Japan? Observers in certain quarters of Japan's strategic community have begun to grasp the potential Mahanian challenge that Chinese seapower could present. Studies assessing Chinese maritime intentions and the Sino-Japanese military balance on the high seas have become more and more common.⁸⁸ The Japanese worry that China may be eyeing Japan's offshore islands as it extends its naval power eastward. One author cites the creeping expansion of China's naval presence in the South China Sea as a worrisome precedent.⁸⁹ Indeed, some analysts and authorities in China have hinted subtly at challenging Japan's legal interpretation of its administrative and sovereign prerogatives in the East China Sea, including those pertaining to Okinawa. A Japanese commentator alleges that Beijing harbors hegemonic ambitions to reestablish control over all territories governed by the Qing dynasty.⁹⁰

Hideaki Kaneda, a retired JMSDF vice admiral, explicitly links China's emerging maritime strategy to Mahan. Kaneda argues that China meets Mahan's six tests of seapower, three of which are favorable geography, a large population, and the national will to compete on the high seas. He observes that the Chinese are constructing strategic relationships and military bases along the sea lanes stretching from the South China Sea to the Persian Gulf, sea lanes that convey the energy resources and other commodities that sustain China's economic well-being. Under Mahanian logic, this emerging diplomatic and defense infrastructure (also known as a "string of pearls") would permit larger-scale military deployments in the future to protect Chinese commerce.⁹¹ He concludes, "All of Asia must wake up to the arrival of Chinese-style aggressive 'sea power.' Japan, in particular, must reformulate its national maritime strategy with this in mind."⁹²

A highly influential journalist, Yoichi Funabashi, implicitly endorses Mahan's view that national will is a key determinant of seapower. Despite the nautical character of Japan's geography, Funabashi bemoans the Japanese people's indifference to maritime matters, imploring Japan "to once again devise a maritime strategy aimed at opening up the four seas that surround it and taking advantage of the blessings of the oceans." As for China, he observes, "China is a major continental power on the rise. By contrast, Japan is expected to show its 'difference' and 'strengths' as a major maritime power more than ever. It should maintain 'free navigation' to build peace and stability in Asia seas and incorporate China in the framework."⁹³ Despite his somewhat conciliatory tone, Funabashi insists that Japan must nurture a national character that embraces maritime power if it hopes to compete with China on the world stage.

Jun Kitamura, a Japanese consultant to the U.S. Pacific Command, advocates a far more bellicose stance vis-à-vis China. He too complains that “Japan lacks a sense of caution in regard to China’s rapid military expansion.” Pointing to China’s maturing submarine force, he criticizes the Japanese government for failing to “fathom the geopolitical significance of the fighting power of submarines in today’s international community.” To remedy the apparent shortfall in national maritime consciousness, Kitamura urges the Japanese people to “establish clear national strategies for Japan on their own, and rebuild their military power as effective means to guarantee the strategies as soon as possible.” Specifically, he recommends shifting Japan’s line of defense seaward, arguing that repulsing a direct invasion would be too late and too costly. To support a forward defense, he says, the JMSDF needs to double in size, acquire a panoply of offensive weaponry, build massive naval bases, and develop its own intelligence infrastructure. Most controversially, he presses for an alliance with Taiwan that keeps the island from falling into Chinese hands, thereby safeguarding Japanese sea lanes adjoining the island.⁹⁴

Whatever the merits of and differences among these analyses, they all concur on one important priority: a fundamental reassessment of Japan’s maritime strategy that helps the JMSDF maintain its edge as China’s naval power grows. The apparent shift in tone and urgency among these well-respected observers suggests that a spirited debate about Japan’s maritime posture, harking back to the Sekino-Kaihara debate, may be in the making. Whether or not Japan’s national policy and maritime strategy will veer in the direction these commentators espouse remains to be seen.

In policy terms, the Japanese government has responded concretely to the potential Chinese challenge. Reflecting worries about Beijing’s intentions toward the offshore islands, the latest defense white paper sets the capacity to stage an effective response to island invasion as a major priority. Significantly, the report states, “If there is an indication noticed in advance, an operation shall be conducted to prevent invasion by the enemy’s unit. If there is no indication in advance and the islands in question were occupied, an operation shall be conducted to defeat the enemy.”⁹⁵ For the first time, the Ground SDF forces recently joined the U.S. Marine Corps in joint and combined exercises to defend offshore islands.⁹⁶ The Maritime Self-Defense Force would play a central role in carrying ground troops in such a defensive operation. The JMSDF has also engaged in antisubmarine drills with the U.S. Navy near Okinawan waters.⁹⁷

A recent study considers how the SDF’s capabilities would measure up against China’s military in combat over Japan’s offshore islands. The study postulates that if the Chinese side were able to surprise Japan and rapidly occupy the Sakishima Islands, the SDF would find it difficult if not impossible to dislodge enemy forces

on its own. Given the short distances involved, land-based Chinese fighter aircraft could easily provide protective cover against Japanese forces, while Japanese aircraft would have much shorter loiter times in the area. The author of the study concludes that a light aircraft carrier capable of handling vertical/short-takeoff-and-landing aircraft would be required to counter such an invasion.⁹⁸ Regardless of whether this analysis carries any policy weight, the bluntness with which it discusses a Sino-Japanese confrontation hints at changes in the public mood in Japan with regard to a Chinese maritime challenge.

THEORETICAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE JMSDF

From the foregoing analysis of Japanese strategic thought, it is possible to venture a few observations and findings.

Applying Strategic Theory Is Tough. Dogmatic adherence to seapower theory can be harmful if not fatal to maritime nations. So can an indifference to fundamental principles of seapower that unmoors strategy and force planning from any larger sense of national policy and grand strategy. Over the past century, Japan has exhibited extreme tendencies in both directions. In the case of prewar Japan, a variant of Mahanian dogma seeped into the Japanese consciousness about naval power, prodding the IJN leadership into fateful decisions about force structure and operational doctrine. Today, Japan's niche—and therefore highly unbalanced—capabilities and strategy derive from unquestioned assumptions about American security commitments. This could serve Japanese maritime interests ill over the long run.

China's Rise Could Portend Trouble. An area that requires further research is how two differing national approaches to seapower might intersect in practice. Substantial evidence indicates that Beijing is succumbing to Mahan's beguiling logic. If this is so, how will a post-Mahanian JMSDF, unaccustomed to strategic thought in any of its guises, interact with a Chinese navy that is fascinated with Mahan? This question has gained substantial policy urgency over the past few years, as naval rivalry between the two powers has taken hold. Is Japan endangering itself by directing the MSDF to keep performing its full array of Cold War-era missions while piling on new international operations, all without boosting defense spending? How might future acquisitions affect Japan's maritime security? Specifically, would ASW and minesweeping prove adequate in a tilt with the People's Liberation Army Navy?

America Needs a More Coherent Naval Strategy. Assuming the United States wishes to maintain its naval preeminence in Asia indefinitely, it must carefully reexamine its maritime strategy in the region. Tokyo should urge Washington to do so, and it should take an active hand in formulating combined strategy. Key

U.S. policy documents such as “Seapower 21” and the latest Quadrennial Defense Review represent sorry excuses for strategy, framed in terms too general and abstract to provide meaningful guidance. Many Japanese strategic thinkers, accordingly, have begun reassessing the benefits and costs of a far more independent posture in the maritime realm. How would such an outcome benefit or harm the United States? If American policy makers have thought about this prospect, they give no sign of it. Washington’s assumption that Tokyo will automatically follow its lead—or, for that matter, Tokyo’s assumption that Washington will furnish military support even in situations that do not engage U.S. interests—could engender mutually unrealistic assumptions about the two partners’ wills and capabilities, especially in times of crisis or war. Suppose the United States decided that a Chinese invasion of Japan’s offshore islands fell outside of the purview of the defense treaty. What then for the JMSDF?

Japan Needs a Theorist. It behooves the policy community in Tokyo to start thinking ahead now about how Japan should handle contingencies that threaten to strain the security alliance or leave the United States standing on the sidelines. If Alfred Thayer Mahan is no longer a useful guide to Japanese maritime strategy, who is? Julian Corbett’s writings offer a good starting point for this sorely needed debate and for a broader renaissance of strategic thought in Japan. Corbett fits better with contemporary Japanese political and strategic culture than does Mahan. He favored big ideas, not technical details or specific weapons systems; he was not a blue-water theorist to the same degree as Mahan; his vision was not universalist like that of Mahan but admitted of regional strategies such as Japan’s; and he was not fixated on absolute victory at sea. Rather, Corbett held out the possibility of limited naval operations aimed at limited political and strategic objectives—a trait that could endear him to a Japanese populace and government still averse to the use of force. And, like today’s MSDF leadership, he depicted controlling maritime communications as the foremost challenge facing practitioners of naval operations.⁹⁹

In short, Corbett’s works offer a promising platform for strategic discussions. Japan needs to resurrect its tradition of strategic thinking about the sea. Let the debate begin.

NOTES

The authors are indebted to Admiral Hideaki Kaneda and Admiral Sumihiko Kawamura of the Okazaki Institute and to Dr. James Auer of Vanderbilt University for their invaluable assistance.

1. For more on Boyd’s thought, consult *Defense and the National Interest*, www.d-n-i.net.
2. See for instance Julian S. Corbett’s analysis of geographic factors in the 1904–1905

- Russo-Japanese War. Julian S. Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905*, ed. John B. Hattendorf and Donald M. Schurman (Annapolis, Md., and Newport, R.I.: Naval Institute Press and Naval War College Press, 1994), esp. pp. 1–10.
3. For a detailed contrast between Japan and Britain on geography and history, see Peter J. Woolley, *Geography and Japan's Strategic Choices: From Seclusion to Internationalization* (Dulles, Va.: Potomac Books, 2005), pp. 1–6.
 4. Peter J. Woolley, *Japan's Navy: Politics and Paradox 1971–2000* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2000), p. 8.
 5. See Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, “China, a Unified Korea, and Geopolitics,” *Issues & Studies* 41, no. 2, pp. 119–70; Robyn Lim, *The Geopolitics of East Asia: The Search for Equilibrium* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).
 6. Duk-ki Kim, *Naval Strategy in Northeast Asia: Geo-strategic Goals, Policies and Prospects* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp. 168–69.
 7. See Kaijo Jieitai 50-nenshi Hensan Iinkai [MSDF 50th Anniversary Editorial Board], *Kaijo Jieitai 50-nenshi* (Tokyo: Boeicho Kaijo Bakuryo Kanbu, 2003), p. 126.
 8. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1890; repr. New York: Dover, 1987), p. 71. For more on Mahan, see Philip A. Crowl, “Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian,” in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret, Gordon A. Craig, and Felix Gilbert (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986), pp. 444–77; Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 167–91; Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan Reconsidered* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1997), pp. 80–98; Rolf Hobson, *Imperialism at Sea: Naval Strategic Thought, the Ideology of Sea Power and the Tirpitz Plan, 1875–1914* (Boston: Brill Academic, 2002). On Mahan's influence outside the United States, see John B. Hattendorf, ed., *The Influence of History on Mahan* (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College Press, 1991).
 9. Margaret Tuttle Sprout, “Mahan: Evangelist of Sea Power,” in *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, ed. Edward Meade Earle (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1943), pp. 415–45; and see James R. Holmes, “Mahan, a ‘Place in the Sun,’ and Germany's Quest for Sea Power,” *Comparative Strategy* 23, no. 1, pp. 27–62.
 10. See James R. Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara, “The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy,” *Comparative Strategy* 24, no. 1, pp. 53–71, and “Command of the Sea with Chinese Characteristics,” *Orbis* 49, no. 4, pp. 677–94.
 11. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Problem of Asia* (New York: Harper's New Monthly Magazine, 1900; repr. Port Washington: Kennikat, 1970), p. 15.
 12. Notes one analyst of Mahanian theory, “Central to the theory of sea power was the expectation of conflict. When a nation's prosperity depends on shipborne commerce, and the amount of trade available is limited, then competition follows, and that leads to a naval contest to protect the trade.” George W. Baer, *One Hundred Years of Sea Power: The U.S. Navy, 1890–1990* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1994), p. 12. See also Pekka Korhonen, “The Pacific Age in World History,” *Journal of World History* 7, no. 1, pp. 41–70.
 13. Mahan, *Problem of Asia*, p. 33.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
 15. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 124.
 16. Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power*, p. 138.
 17. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1897; repr. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries, 1970), p. 198.
 18. Mahan, *Interest of America*, p. 198, and *Lessons of the War with Spain*, in Sprout, “Evangelist,” p. 433.
 19. John Keegan, *The Price of Admiralty: The Evolution of Naval Warfare* (New York: Viking, 1989), pp. 101–102, 109, 170.
 20. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *From Sail to Steam: Recollections of Naval Life* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1907; repr. New York: Da Capo, 1968), p. 3.

21. Shinohara Hiroshi, *Kaigun sōsetsu shi* [History of the Navy's Establishment] (Riburo-pōto, 1986), pp. 409–13; David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887–1941* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997), pp. 67–71.
22. “The Chino-Japanese War,” *Pall Mall Gazette* (London), 18 August 1894, p. 7.
23. Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle against the Sun: The American War with Japan* (New York: Free Press, 1985), p. 293.
24. Woolley, *Geography and Japan's Strategic Choices*, pp. 11, 17.
25. Richard W. Turk, *The Ambiguous Relationship: Theodore Roosevelt and Alfred Thayer Mahan* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1987), p. 4.
26. S. C. M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895: Perceptions, Power, and Primacy* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), p. 150.
27. Spector, *Eagle and the Sun*, p. 43; Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, pp. 2, 133–51. See also Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, trans. Ralph D. Sawyer (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1993), pp. 145–86. Akiyama, who served as an observer on board Admiral Sampson's flagship during the Spanish-American War and later talked with Mahan, introduced many of the staff planning and war-gaming techniques he saw in Newport when he returned to the Naval Staff College.
28. Sprout, “Mahan: Evangelist of Sea Power,” p. 415. Mahan's contemporary theorist Sir Julian Corbett was biting. On one occasion he derided Mahan's work as “shallow and wholly unhistorical.” Eric J. Grove, “Introduction,” in Julian S. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London: Longmans, Green, 1911; repr. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1988).
29. Roger Dingman, “Japan and Mahan,” in *The Influence of History on Mahan*, ed. Hattendorf, p. 50.
30. Dingman, “Japan and Mahan,” p. 56.
31. J. Charles Schencking, *Making Waves: Politics, Propaganda, and the Emergence of the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1868–1922* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2005), pp. 2–6.
32. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, p. 134.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 134–35.
34. “Without a doubt,” declares S. C. M. Paine, “Japan had absorbed Captain Mahan's lesson concerning the necessity of the command of the sea” by the early 1900s. Paine, *Sino-Japanese War*, p. 327.
35. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, pp. 139–40.
36. Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power*, p. 71.
37. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, pp. 140–41. See also Satō Tetsutarō, *Teikoku kokubō shi ron* [On the History of Imperial Defense] (Tokyo Insatsu, 1908; repr. Hara Shobō, 1979); *Kaibo shi ron* [On Naval Defense] (Kaigun Dai-gakkō, 1907); *Kokubō no sakugi* [A Proposal for National Defense] (N.p.: 1913).
38. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, p. 64. See also Darrell H. Zemitis, “Japanese Naval Transformation and the Battle of Tsushima,” *Military Review* 84, no. 6, pp. 73–75.
39. Alfred Thayer Mahan, “Discussion of the Elements of Sea Power,” in *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, ed. John B. Hattendorf (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1991), p. 31.
40. Paine, *Sino-Japanese War*, pp. 150–53.
41. Tsunoda Jun, “The Navy's Role in the Southern Strategy,” trans. Robert A. Scalapino, in *The Fateful Choice: Japan's Advance into Southeast Asia, 1939–1941*, ed. James William Morley (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1980), pp. 241–95; Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, pp. 514–16.
42. Observes Samuel Eliot Morison, the United States spent “a much too big slice of the thin appropriation pie” on battleships in the interwar era, “due, fundamentally, to Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan's teachings to the effect that all other classes of warships would be so out-ranged and outgunned by them in fleet actions as to be useless.” Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Two-Ocean War: A Short History of the United States Navy in the Second World War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963), p. 11; Spector, *Eagle against the Sun*, pp. 19, 33, 47, 58.
43. Turk, *The Ambiguous Relationship*, pp. 1–6, 101–107. Henry Adams described TR as “pure act.” Henry Adams, *The Education of*

- Henry Adams, intro. James Truslow Adams (New York: Modern Library, 1931), p. 417.
44. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, pp. 136–37.
 45. Dingman, “Japan and Mahan,” p. 61.
 46. Spector, *Eagle against the Sun*, p. 47. See also David C. Evans, ed., *The Japanese Navy in World War II: An Anthology of Articles by Former Officers of the Imperial Japanese Navy*, 2nd ed. (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1986), pp. 505, 507.
 47. Dingman, “Japan and Mahan,” p. 65.
 48. Yoji Koda, “The Russo-Japanese War: Primary Causes of Japanese Success,” *Naval War College Review* 58, no. 2, pp. 11–44, available at www.nwc.navy.mil/press/Review/2005/spring/art1-sp05.htm.
 49. Author interviews with retired JMSDF flag officers and academic specialists from the Okazaki Institute, Tokyo, February 2006.
 50. Given the extensive mining both by the Japanese defenders and the U.S. Navy, de-mining operations lasted for decades—in the end making the Japanese navy one of the most capable minesweeping forces in the world.
 51. James Auer observes, “By 1949, after Allied Occupation force reductions, the Japanese minesweeping force was the largest and most capable in the Western Pacific.” For more, see James E. Auer, *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces* (New York: Praeger, 1973).
 52. *Ibid.*, pp. 64–67.
 53. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982).
 54. The three major straits are the Tsugaru Strait (dividing Honshu and Hokkaido islands), the Tsushima Strait, and the Soya Strait (between Sakhalin and Hokkaido). Beyond the archipelago, the Luzon (Bashi) Strait between the southern tip of Taiwan and the northern Philippines is deemed a critical choke point.
 55. See Kaijo Jieitai 50-nenshi Hensan Iinkai, *Kaijo Jieitai 50-nenshi*, pp. 27–28.
 56. See James Auer and Tetsuo Kotani, “Reaffirming the ‘Taiwan Clause’: Japan’s National Interest in the Taiwan Strait and the U.S.-Japan Alliance,” in *Japan-Taiwan Interaction: Implications for the United States*, ed. Roy Kamphausen (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, October 2005), pp. 58–83.
 57. Auer, *Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces*, pp. 161–68.
 58. For details of the debate, see *ibid.*, pp. 132–47.
 59. Kaijo Jieitai 50-nenshi Hensan Iinkai, *Kaijo Jieitai 50-nenshi*, pp. 124–25. For details on the NDPO’s conceptual framework, see Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan’s Re-emergence as a “Normal” Military Power* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press), pp. 67–68.
 60. For an excellent account of the debate on sea-lane defense, see Woolley, *Japan’s Navy: Politics and Paradox*, pp. 65–87.
 61. See Christopher W. Hughes and Akiko Fukushima, “U.S.-Japan Security Relations: Toward Bilateralism Plus?” in *Beyond Bilateralism: U.S.-Japan Relations in the New Asia-Pacific*, ed. Ellis S. Krauss and T. J. Pempel (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2004), p. 67.
 62. Toru Ishikawa, “Japan Maritime Self Defense Force’s Enduring Relationship with the U.S. Navy,” *Navy League* (December 2002).
 63. See especially Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*. See also William R. Sprance, “The Russo-Japanese War: The Emergence of Japanese Imperial Power,” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 6, no. 3, pp. 1–24.
 64. The 1995 NDPO, the first in nearly two decades, revised its predecessor’s parameters for the post-Cold War strategic context. The NDPO accurately anticipated the new security responsibilities Japan would be called upon to shoulder.
 65. The apparent lack of enthusiasm stemmed in part from Chinese opposition to combined patrols.
 66. For details about Japan’s antipiracy activities, see John F. Bradford, “Japanese Anti-Piracy Initiatives in Southeast Asia: Policy Formulation and the Coastal State Responses,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 26, no. 3, pp. 480–505.
 67. Embassy of Japan, www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/pressreleases/2005/042505a.htm.
 68. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, www.mofa.go.jp/policy/terrorism/measure0510.html.

69. Japanese decision makers were deeply conflicted over the Aegis deployment, worrying that Japan would become embroiled in any combat that might ensue.
70. U.S. Department of State, "Proliferation Security Initiative," www.state.gov/t/isn/c10390.htm. See also Joel A. Doolin, "The Proliferation Security Initiative: Cornerstone of a New International Norm," *Naval War College Review* 59, no. 2, esp. pp. 31–34.
71. Jamie Miyazaki, "Japan Deploys Self-Defense Forces to Aceh," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1 March 2005.
72. "SDF Mission in Full Swing; But Tsunami Relief Exposes Flaws in Overseas Deployments," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 8 February 2005, p. 4.
73. Government of Japan, "National Defense Program Guidelines, Approved by the Security Council and the Cabinet on December 10, 2004," provisional translation by authors, available on request.
74. Yuki Tatsumi, "National Defense Program Outline: A New Security Policy Guideline or a Mere Wish List?" *CSIS Japan Watch*, 20 December 2004.
75. Speculation that the ship would be named the *Akagi*, after the World War II flagship that led the attack on Pearl Harbor, stirred a controversy over Japanese intentions.
76. Hughes, *Japan's Re-emergence as a "Normal" Military Power*, p. 82.
77. Koyu Ishii, "Heisei no Hinomaru Kubo '16DDH' no Opeleshon," *Sekai no Kansen*, 1 April 2005, pp. 106–109.
78. Martin Fackler, "A Reef or a Rock? Question Puts Japan in a Hard Place," *Wall Street Journal*, 16 February 2005, p. A1.
79. "Japanese MSDF Spots Five Chinese Naval Ships near East China Sea Gas Field," *Kyodo World Service*, 9 September 2005.
80. According to the report, "The Chinese Navy aims to extend the space for offshore defensive operations while integrated combat capabilities are enhanced in conducting offshore campaigns, as mentioned above. In addition, it is pointed out that the country aims to build a so-called blue-water navy in the future. Therefore, it is important to monitor Chinese movements and identify Chinese strategies underlying them." Japan Defense Agency [JDA], *Defense of Japan 2005* (Tokyo: 2005), p. 14.
81. We use Carl von Clausewitz's maxim that war's "grammar, indeed, may be its own, but not its logic" as a device. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976), p. 605; and see James R. Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara, "Mao Zedong, Meet Alfred Thayer Mahan," *Australian Defence Force Journal* 171, forthcoming October 2006.
82. Kim, *Naval Strategy in Northeast Asia*, p. 173.
83. Ni Lexiong, "Sea Power and China's Development," *Liberation Daily*, 17 April 2005, p. 2, U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, www.uscc.gov/researchpapers/translated_articles/2005/05_07_18_Sea_Power_and_Chinas_Development.pdf. See also Holmes and Yoshihara, "The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy," pp. 53–71.
84. Ni, "Sea Power and China's Development," pp. 1–2. On Germany's quest for seapower, see Holmes, "Mahan, a 'Place in the Sun,' and Germany's Quest for Sea Power," pp. 27–62.
85. Ni, "Sea Power and China's Development," p. 4.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
87. Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), pp. 24–26.
88. See for example Ryohei Oga, "What the PRC Submarine Force Is Aiming For," *Sekai no Kansen*, 1 July 2005, pp. 96–101, and Toru Kizu, "Japan and China: A Comparison of Their Sea Power," *Sekai no Kansen*, 1 November 2004, pp. 84–91.
89. "China Bringing Okinawa 'within Range': What Underlies Oilfield Development in the East China Sea," *Sentakui*, 1 January 2006, pp. 46–47.
90. Yoshiko Sakurai, "Proposal to Prime Minister Koizumi: The Enemy Is within Japan," *Sankei Shimbun*, 12 January 2006.
91. For "string of pearls," Bill Gertz, "China Builds Up Strategic Sea Lanes," *Washington Times*, 18 January 2005, available at www.washingtontimes.com/national/20050117-115550-1929r.htm.

92. Hideaki Kaneda, "The Rise of Chinese 'Sea Power,'" *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 22 September 2005.
93. Yoichi Funabashi, "Japan's Waters: Vast in Size and Potential," *Asahi Shimbun*, 13 January 2004.
94. Jun Kitamura, "The U.S. Military's Perception of Japan and National Strategies That Japan Should Have: Proposal for the Future of the Japan-US Alliance," *Seiron*, 1 February 2006, pp. 298–307.
95. JDA, *Defense of Japan 2005*, p. 43.
96. See "JDA to Step Up Vigilance against PRC; GSDF to Conduct Joint Exercises with U.S. Military; MSDF Developing New Torpedo," *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 31 December 2005, and "Japan, U.S. to Simulate Defense for Outlying Islands in Map Exercise," *Kyodo World Service*, 4 August 2005.
97. "Maritime Self-Defense Force News," *Sekai no Kansen*, 1 December 2005, pp. 160–61.
98. "Jieitai vs. Chugoku Gun: Jieitai Wa Kakutatakaeri," *Bessatsu Takara jima*, 1 September 2005.
99. John B. Hattendorf and Donald M. Schurman, "Introduction," in Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War*, pp. v–xvii.

