Changing Military Dynamics in East Asia: 
Grand Strategic and Technological Drivers and the Implications for 
U.S. and Regional Security 
Sponsored by U.S. Naval War College and 
University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation 
September 12-13, 2011 
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Is today’s military-security environment in East Asia undergoing fundamental strategic change that is leading to potentially far-reaching and disruptive adjustments in security postures and the reconfiguration and rebalancing of military power in the region? Recent major defense reviews from the U.S., Japan, China, Australia and other powers along with policy debates within these countries suggest that significant structural changes in threat perceptions, operational doctrines, force deployments, and weapons acquisitions may be taking place.

This workshop explores the changing military dynamics and landscape in East Asia with particular focus on grand strategic and technological drivers and their implications for U.S. and regional security. The first day will be devoted to examining grand strategies and defense technology issues. In the first session on “Evolving Grand Strategies”, key questions that will be addressed include:

- What are the grand strategies of major Asian powers? What is their nature? Are they accommodationist, defensive, or offensive in nature?
- Is there broad domestic consensus around these grand strategies or are there contending schools of thought?
- To what extent are major Asian powers reconsidering their grand strategies?
- What are the drivers of this reconsideration?
- Under what circumstances could individual Asian powers radically change their grand strategies?
- How is the rise of China affecting the grand strategies of major Asian powers?
- How might major Asian powers respond to U.S. retrenchment in Asia?
- How much of a role does domestic factors such as civil-military interactions, more assertive nationalist sentiments, and competing elite politics play?
- Are military ‘hard power’ considerations assuming a more prominent influence in grand strategic thinking among Asian powers?

The second session on “Military Technology and Defense Science and Technology”, will focus on examining the current and longer-term trends in defense-related science, technology, innovation, and industrial developments in East Asia and assess their impact on regional security. Key questions for discussion include:

- What are the key drivers of change and trends in the defense technological landscape in East Asia? Are the sources of innovation and transformation coming predominately from within or outside the region?
• In which areas are technological changes most significant and disruptive? Is it in conventional military spheres such as aviation, naval, and ground, or in more information and network-centric areas such as electronics, cyber, space, and unmanned systems?
• Is this technological change evolutionary in nature or are there areas in which we might see revolutionary change?
• Is there a technological arms race taking place in East Asia, especially between catch-up countries such as China and India and advanced powers such as the U.S.? If there is, what is the nature of this competition and what are the prospects for catch-up states to narrow the technological divide?
• How are smaller defense powers such as Japan, Australia, and Southeast Asian countries responding to developments taking place in the U.S. and China?
• How will these technological developments affect the military balance in the region in the near and longer-term? Will the advent of more technologically advanced powers with the ability to project their military power further and more precisely fundamentally alter the geo-strategic landscape in East Asia?
• What is the relationship between technological progress in the civilian and military arenas among East Asian states? Is the principal engine driving technological advances coming from the commercial marketplace?
• What are the patterns in the spread of military technologies and knowledge and associated industrial capabilities in East Asia? Are we likely to see widespread diffusion and proliferation of advanced military technologies, especially of potentially disruptive capabilities such as long-range precision strike weapons?

In sessions three and four, attention will turn to the implications for East Asia and the U.S. Here are some starting questions for session three:

• What are the long-term trends in the security environment in East Asia? Is the region becoming more or less stable?
• Will the current regional hotspots in East Asia (North Korea and Taiwan) be eclipsed by new hotspots, such as in the maritime, space, and resource arenas? If so, how will countries respond in the organization and projection of their military power?
• Will countries be required to spend more on military capabilities?
• Is there a need to develop new regional mechanisms and norms of behavior and understanding to govern the changing military landscape in East Asia?
• How can countries address the key sources of distrust and uncertainty towards their security and military postures, especially the issue of transparency?
• What will be the core principles of the grand strategies of China, the U.S., and Japan in 2020 and what are the regional implications?

Questions to be explored in session four on implications for the U.S. include:

• How can the United States best maintain its presence in East Asia given the changing political landscape?
• How best can the United States demonstrate its presence? Reassure allies? Deter adversaries?
• How should the U.S. military deal with the increasing risk to U.S. and allied forces in the Western Pacific?
• In what ways may the division of labor between the United States and its allies need to change?
• In what ways may the U.S. basing infrastructure need to change?
• In what ways may U.S. military doctrine need to change?

Requirements for Presenters

This workshop is intended to be a brainstorming enterprise to allow for intensive discussion among participants. Consequently, we would like to keep speaker presentations concise and sharply focused in order to allow plenty of time for debate. For Sessions One and Two, we would like designated presenters to speak for no more than 15 minutes. For presenters for Sessions Three and Four, we would like them to speak for no more than 10 minutes.

We would also like the presenters to produce a short 4-6 page policy brief that will be made available for public dissemination following the workshop. A payment of $500 will be provided upon completion of the brief.

Agenda

Monday, September 12
Location: Deutz Room at Institute of the Americas

8:30 am               Breakfast available in the meeting room
9:00 – 9:15 am       Welcome and Introductions - Tom Mahnken and Tai Ming Cheung

9:15 am – 12:30 pm   Panel 1: Evolving Grand Strategies
                     (15 min. tea break at 11am)
                     Chair: Peter Dombrowski, NWC
                     “United States,” Tom Mahnken, NWC
                     “China,” Susan Shirk, UCSD
                     “Japan,” Sugio Takahashi, Japan Ministry of Defense
                     “Australia,” Andrew Shearer, Lowy Institute
                     “India,” Tim Hoyt, NWC

12:30 – 2:00 pm      Lunch at Home Plate

2:00 - 5:00 pm       Panel 2: Military Technology and Defense Science and Technology
                     (15 min. tea break at 3pm)
                     Chair: Tom Mahnken, NWC
                     “United States,” Peter Dombrowski, NWC
“China,” Tai Ming Cheung, UCSD
“Japan,” Sugio Takahashi, Japan Ministry of Defense
“Australia,” Andrew Shearer, Lowy Institute
“India,” Tim Hoyt, NWC
“Southeast Asia,” Richard Bitzinger, Nanyang Technological University

5:30 pm Cars depart for dinner from the Estancia Hotel
6:00 pm Dinner at Sbicca (Del Mar)

Tuesday, September 13
Location: Deutz Room at Institute of the Americas

9:00 am Breakfast available in the meeting room

9:30 – 11:30 am Panel 3: Implications for the Region
Chair: Tai Ming Cheung, UCSD
Richard Bitzinger, Nanyang Technological University
Andrew Erickson, NWC
Sugio Takahashi, Japan Ministry of Defense
Stephan Haggard, UCSD
John Fei, RAND

11:30 am – 1:00 pm Lunch at the Bistro

1:00 – 3:00 pm Panel 4: Implications for the United States
Chair: Susan Shirk, UCSD
Drew Thompson, DOD, tbc
Joshua Rovner, NWC

3:00 – 3:30 pm Closing Remarks