



The role of navies in statecraft and the East Asian security order

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Project overview

- ▶ **How can we explain the use of navies as a tool of statecraft in East Asia?**
 - ▶ the role of navies in statecraft
 - ▶ how states make policy that seeks to have systemic effect
 - ▶ Australia and Japan: shared strategic imaginaries and effort

Context

- **International Order**
- **Pivot point is East Asia**
- **Maritime regional environment**
- **Naval power in transition of regional orders**

Navies in Statecraft (1)

- ▶ **Navies offer a sophisticated policy instrument beyond traditional role in conflict**
- ▶ **A spectrum of naval activities generates political and strategic influence**
- ▶ **Navies build relations, establish narratives, communicate intent, and thereby influence strategic orders**

Navies in Statecraft (2)

- ▶ **Soft and hard power**
- ▶ **Intrinsic attributes of naval power**
- ▶ **Navies aren't just ships!**
- ▶ **Effects on relations with other states and overarching order**

Navies are diplomatic influencers

Literature review

- **Classical sea power – Mahan, Corbett**
- **Cold War:**
 - **Cable's 'Gunboat Diplomacy'**
 - **Luttwak; Hedley Bull**
 - **Booth's 'trinity'**
 - **Gorshkov**
- **Post-Cold War:**
 - **Till**
 - **Le Mière; Rowlands**
- **Not much diversity / East Asia here...**

My analytical lens: Strategic Diplomacy Framework

- ▶ **Prantl & Goh**
- ▶ **Conceptual significance and policy utility**
- ▶ **Hyperconnectivity of contemporary international system**
- ▶ **Complex systems thinking**
- ▶ **Statecraft squeezed**
- ▶ **System / order effects**
- ▶ **Strategic imaginary >**

Strategic Imaginary

- ▶ **A state's constructed rhetorical reality**
- ▶ **Creation, presentation, and perpetuation of a coherent 'story' about the state's disposition within and toward this system**
- ▶ **Internal and External effects**
- ▶ **Agency >> direction to Policy (stated and unstated)**
- ▶ **"Lived reality"**

Japan (1) – Strategic imaginary

- **Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)**
- **3 pillars**
 - **Promote and establish the rule of law, freedom of navigation, and free trade**
 - **Pursue economic prosperity (by improving connectivity and strengthening economic partnerships)**
 - **Commit to peace and stability (including maritime capacity building, humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief cooperation etc.)**

Japan (2) – new FOIP

- **Kishida 2023 revamped FOIP**
- **Turning point for international order**
- **4 pillars of cooperation**
 - **Principles for peace and rules for prosperity**
 - **Addressing challenges in an Indo-Pacific way**
 - **Multilayered connectivity**
 - **Extending efforts for security and safe use of the sea to the air**

Japan (3) – JMSDF role

- **Maritime aspects at centre of FOIP vision**
- **Role of Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force in ‘making it real’**
 - **Cooperation and alignment-building**
 - **Quad, United States**
 - **Engaging ‘Global South’**
 - **Other regional power navies, ‘middle powers’**
 - ***“Reactive system re-constructor”***

Australia (1) – Strategic imaginary

- ▶ **Indo-Pacific construct from 2012**
 - ▶ **Key documents**
- ▶ **Single strategic arc; source of risks and instability**
- ▶ **Empirical reality of Australian strategic geography**
- ▶ **Change in threat perception**

Australia (2) – Core aims

- ▶ **Maintain a stable and favourable strategic balance**
- ▶ **Open regional economic model**
- ▶ **Liberal and rules-based approach to managing the international order**
- ▶ **US-led regional security order**

Australia (3) – RAN role

- **Centrality of Maritime environment to Australian interests**
- **Royal Australian Navy role in supporting Indo-Pacific policy**
 - **Robust order-maintenance**
 - **Capacity-building**
 - **Alliances and alignments**
 - **Quad**
 - **AUKUS**
 - **Pacific islands**
 - ***“Proactive alignment-builder”***

Australia and Japan naval collaboration

- **Trident 2023 in SCS >**
- *“The relationship between the JMSDF and the Royal Australian Forces has never been stronger and more important, and the JMSDF will promote further improvement of interoperability and mutual understanding with the Royal Australian Navy in order to improve the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region” (RADM Nishiyama)*
- **Joint exercises**
- **Info/Intel-sharing**
- **Operations (e.g., Counter-Piracy)**
- **HADR**
- **Regional Security Forums**



Final arguments

- ▶ **The use of navies is an important tool of statecraft in East Asia. States with capable navies use them to shape their systemic strategic environment.**
- ▶ **The maritime space in East Asia is a crucial part of the prevailing strategic imaginaries of states in the region. Therefore, it is argued that states use navies to bolster their strategic narratives in order to maximize their position in the order.**
- ▶ **By taking a unit (state) and systemic (East Asia region) approach, it is proposed that the Strategic Diplomacy framework can help theorize the use of navies in statecraft.**

Thank you for listening!

