

**National University of Public Service  
Faculty of Military Sciences and Officer Training  
Doctoral School Of Military Sciences**

**The Asia-Pacific strategy of the United States  
– and its influence on the development of the  
armed forces in the 21st century**

Theses of Dissertation

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## Goals, hypotheses, methods

The goal of my dissertation is to introduce how the Asia-Pacific region appears in the strategy of the United States today. The importance of this dynamically developing region will only increase in the future, and it is probable that it will be decided in the Western Pacific which country(-ies) will be the prominent power(s) of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The recognition of these important tendencies lead me to write my PhD dissertation in this subject. Because of the wealth of this subject, there was not my goal to give complete country analyses, instead, first of all I examine military type questions, which are relevant in my researches, however I touched other fields, which are also relevant for the whole picture.

Taking the above into account, I have built up my work according to this:

In the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter I present the US interests in the region, the emerging threats, how US foreign and defense policy evolved since the 2000s, and which US forces are stationed in the theater.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter I give a picture about the allied and partner countries (Japan, South-Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia), and the possible rivals (Russia, North Korea, China), about their motivations and capabilities, and their relations with the United States.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter I examine, according to the above, that how these factors influence the future development of the US armed forces, the strategy, and how will it appear at the four services.

In the final chapter (conclusions) I draw the lessons about the region, and what can Europe and our Homeland learn from these.

Research goals: Presenting the international relations of the Asia-Pacific, the role of the United States, her interests and goals in the region. Determining the goals and interests of the rivals and enemies of the United States, and its influence on the American security policy. Examination of the military-strategic connections of the region. Examination of the Asia-Pacific geopolitics. The characteristics of the modern warfare according to the regional trends, highlighting the blue water naval, expeditionary, amphibious, air force, long range precision strike, and operation in anti-access/area-denial environment. As secondary research goals, I draw such lessons, that could be useful for Europe and Hungary.

The basic hypotheses of the dissertation are the following:

- Asia-Pacific will be still a primary ground for the US long term strategy. The World's main economic, military and political center of gravity is, and will be here.
- On long term, China will be evolved to a true great power, which will be a determining player not only for the region, but the whole World.
- The strategic-power realignment will lead to heightening tensions among the regional and other interested states, however it doesn't necessarily mean war.
- The armed conflicts of the advanced or close to advanced states in the future will be high intensity, with considerable losses and a use of hi-tech weapons. Long range precision strike will be decisive, like the anti-access weapons. Anti-access/area-denial weapons will be a considerable challenge even for the most advanced countries and militaries, therefore the doctrines and strategies against them is vital.

During the research, I have used a huge amount of documents, papers, articles and data, including the daily news. I have done my research primarily through qualitative, non-empirical methods. I used combined applied and basic researches to create the most complex picture. Also, the complexity of the subject called for analysis-synthesis examination. With this dissertation I would like to provide a complex work about the current and future situation of the Asia-Pacific and create a picture about how it will affect the US strategy and military development.

## Results

The importance of the Asia-Pacific is already undoubtable, unprecedented economic, military and political power concentrates in the Western and Northern Pacific. For this it has a highlighted place in the focus of the American interests, and we have no reason assuming that it will change in the future. The evident cause of it is the rising China, which can compete with the USA on a long term. Because of this, a very intensive rebalancing was observable during the first Obama cabinet, although the changes in the world politics, preeminently in the Middle East and Europe, delayed this work. With the inauguration of the Trump cabinet, the government changes, but the playground remains the same, therefore we can count with significant continuity.

As a strong sign of the commitment, the requirements of the Asia-Pacific theater are the main cornerstones of the military developments in the US, including the challenge of the great and advanced countries. Like the air superiority, amphibious capabilities, long range precision strike, anti-submarine and surface-to-surface capabilities were rehabilitated. It is emerged again, that how could be the current military capabilities assured, if they face with strong and advanced regular armies. From them, we have to highlight the anti-access/area-denial system, on which field China is the leading power and Air-Sea Battle was created to counter this threat.

China has outgrown every nation with the exception of the United States, in the sense of gross national and military power, because of this China's great power status is not in question. The development of the armed forces is at least such spectacular, emphasizing the expeditionary and power projection capabilities. It is visible that the Chinese pour a massive amount of money into the development, which is supported by the World's second largest defense budget.

In the 2000s, the rising Beijing started to change the strategic balance, with slow, sure, but not spectacular steps, which resulted the defiance of the countries interested in status quo. From the probable Chinese geostrategic goals, the most important are: free access to the oceans, access to the sources and securing the sea lines of communication. We have to emphasize the question of the island disputes in the South China Sea and Taiwan. We have to also take a mention, that the theoretical possibilities and the strategies and doctrines created against each other, lowered the trust between the countries of the region.

Beijing has learnt a lot from the events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, therefore she knows that, if she wants to change the status quo by force, she will have to face the players interested in the current system. Also China's official rhetoric calls for peaceful rise. For this, I consider a large scale war among the great powers improbable in the foreseeable future, otherwise on longer term it would be a mistake to rule out any possibility.

A large scale war between the USA and China is improbable in the foreseeable future. One of the most important causes of it is the price what should be paid in human life and money. However, if a new large war takes place, it would be faster and more devastating, even if it would be fought with conventional weapons. Cyber, electronic and space warfare, beyond visual range, long range weapons and stealth platforms would affect the fighting basically. We can announce that the Asia-Pacific is a naval-air theater. Because of this, preeminently air dominance, offensive and defensive sea control, submarine and anti-submarine, mine warfare, long range strike, A2/AD, convoy and amphibious operations would dominate there. I think the main lessons for Europe are that she has to be able to replace US capabilities if the main portion of the US forces will be displaced into the Asia-Pacific, don't forget that this commenced once already. Also we have to count down with that view, that the defense of Europe is the task of America, and we shouldn't spend on military. Europe's power projection, ISR and transport capabilities should be developed; meanwhile conventional territorial defense is strengthened again. The upcoming role of the states as enemies again should be also emphasized.

From Hungarian point of view, we should take part in the development of common NATO capabilities, and we have to halt the further amortization of the Hungarian Defense Force and with a well-considered military development plan credible territorial defense capabilities have to be recreated which could be used in national and NATO operations, meanwhile maintaining mission capabilities.

In my dissertation I have revealed multiple aspects of this subject. So, a hybrid paper was born which has a military aspect, which can be divided into military science, strategy and military development, operational theory and military technology. We could see that there are not only abstract questions, but problems which are in the direct focus of the World's leading military powers, for this, use of these lessons in direct or processed form, at least in NATO level would be considerable. The other aspect is the international relations, which could be interesting from the point of civil security policy. According to my current knowledge, such complex work in Hungarian, hasn't appeared in papers, but in one great work, which walks

one logic line, wasn't born yet. From this and the real time of the subject, I think new and useful scientific results were born, which can be summarized in the following points.

- The complex research and analysis of the current situation and system of the Asia-Pacific region in Hungarian. Highlighting the interstate relations, interests, clashes and the military aspects of them.
- The complex analysis of the American Asia-Pacific strategy, foreign policy, military concepts and directions from the younger Bush government to the first measures of the Trump government stepping into power.
- The presentation of the current status of the US armed forces, the complex analysis of the current and future development according to the probable threats.
- The power balance (gross national and military power) of the Asia-Pacific region in numbers upon calculations. Ranking the states according to this, using proportion numbers to calculate the place of the states.
- The complex, new view analysis of the regional geopolitics, first of all in American-Chinese relation, which takes into account the interests and capabilities of the other regional states and their ranking and position in the strategic concepts of the two great power.

In my opinion the results of my work can be useful in the education system of NUPS, and also in the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense, and as useful reading for curious people in this subject. The dissertation could be a starting point or a base of the domestic researches of the region.

## My publications in this subject

- AirSea Battle – Amerika válasza a kínai aszimmetrikus kihívásra; Sereg Szemle 2012/4; pp. 79-98.
- A kíváncsi Dragon Lady - U-2 üldözés a Tajvani-szoros felett; Aranysas 2013/1; pp. 76-79.
- Szigetvita – Japán-kínai macska-egér játék; Aranysas 2013/10; pp. 20-23.
- A Sárkány és a Sas - A kínai-amerikai légierők egyensúlya az Ázsia-csendes-óceáni térségben; Aranysas 2014/9; pp. 30-34.
- Az amerikai hadsereg Irak és Afganisztán után; Nemzet és Biztonság 2014/6.; 99-109
- Az új japán védelempolitika I.; NKE Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont Elemzések – 2015/5 és Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/2; pp. 59-73.
- Az új japán védelempolitika II.; NKE Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont Elemzések – 2015/6 és Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/3; pp. 100-113.
- Az aszimmetrikus tengeri hadviselés II. - A II. világháborútól napjainkig; Hadtudományi Szemle 2015/1; pp. 78-93.
- Air-Sea Battle – A globális közös terekhez való hozzáférés hadműveleti koncepciója; NKE Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont Elemzések – 2015/8 és Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/4; pp. 56-69.
- A kínai kék vízi flotta fejlesztése; Felderítő Szemle 2015/március; pp. 118-141.
- A 26. ASEAN-csúcstalálkozó; Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/3; pp. 53-66.
- Tengeri biztonság (text book chapter); Globalizált világ kihívásai tankönyv (NUPS) (to be published); 15 pages
- Az amerikai tengerészgyalogság Irak és Afganisztán után; Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/5; pp 77-88
- A tajvani biztonságpolitika jelene és jövőbeli lehetőségei; Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/5; pp 51-64.
- A határ két oldalán: Észak-Korea; Nemzet és Biztonság 2015/6; pp 57-69.
- The future of war, the wars of the future; Defense Review 2017/01; 25 pages
- On As-Pac power balance; AARMS (to be published); 16 pages
- Keeping out others – the modern system of anti-access/area denial weapons; AARMS (to be published); 17 pages
- Az amerikai haderőfejlesztés és az amerikai haderő a 21. század első évtizedeiben; Nemzet és Biztonság (to be published); 16 pages

# Professional Resume

Name: Kiss, Roland  
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## Studies:

2015- Hungarian Defense Force – reservist company executive officer  
2015 Strategic Defense Research Center contributor (research associate)  
2014- National University of Public Service – Doctoral School Of Military Sciences  
2012-2014 Publications for Aranyas and Regiment magazines  
2012 National University of Public Service – School of Military Science  
Security and Defense Policy Master  
2010-2012 Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University – Kossuth Lajos School of Military  
Science  
Security and Defense Policy Master  
2007-2010 Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University – Kossuth Lajos School of Military  
Science  
Security and Defense Policy Bachelor

Qualification: HDF reservist training 2015  
ZMNDU Bachelor certificate (grade:): security and defense policy  
officer (civilian expert) 2012  
English speaking tour guide 2007

Achievements: Concha Győző Doctoral Scholarship 2017  
Pro Scientia Golden Medal 2011  
Scholarship of the Republic of Hungary 2011

Language knowledge: Hungarian native  
English fluent  
German fair  
Chinese started

Work experience: Hungarian Defense Force 2015-  
Hungarian Strategic Defense Research Center 2015  
Hungarian Strategic Defense Research Institute 2010-2012  
Ministry of Defence, Defence Policy Department 2009  
ZMNDU as Education Development Assistant 2010-2011