

that has examined how internal dynamics in both China and the European Union shape their foreign policy objectives and policies, the domestic context is not factored into the analysis. Simultaneously, the changing broader geopolitical environment shaped by the US's rivalry with China hardly gets a mention in the book until its very end, and then only as a potential further avenue for research. Yet American policy evolved from the Asia Pivot and the identification of the South China Sea as the US's core interest under Obama, via relentlessly confrontational rhetoric, trade and diplomatic "wars" under Trump, to the consistent attempts under Biden to enlist Europeans in a variety of minilateral coalition-building efforts that target China. Although this has exerted well-documented structural, policy-specific and issue-specific pressures on the Europeans to reconfigure their relationship with China, it does not get adequate treatment in the book.

An analytical framework that took account of these variables and the broader context within which both the European powers and China operate would have provided for a more nuanced analysis of the dynamics shaping the three European countries' approach to and relationship with China. Such a comprehensive context-setting would inevitably challenge the neat and linear narrative provided in the book of increasing assertiveness and increasing threat perceptions resulting in the hardening of the policy. Likewise, as it is, the analysis does not fully appreciate the engagement aspect of the European powers' China policies and their attempts to balance the benefits and risks of the relationship with China.

Overall, however, the book offers an accessible overview of the change in the three major European powers' approach to China and a well-informed view of the changing perceptions and assessments that contributed to that change. The book will appeal to both academic and policy audiences interested in Sino-European relations and is well-positioned to serve as supplementary reading material for undergraduate and postgraduate courses concerned with European foreign policy, "global" China, and the evolving global political and security landscape.

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## Crossing the Strait: China's Military Prepares for War with Taiwan

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Continuing a longstanding series of annual conferences on the People's Liberation Army (PLA) jointly sponsored by Taiwan's Council on Advanced Policy Studies (CAPS), the RAND Corporation and the US National Defense University, this volume represents the papers of the group's 2020 meeting. Its 12 chapters, each contributed by a highly respected expert on the PLA, are divided into four sections: an initial overview on how the current cross-Strait situation developed and the stakes for China, Taiwan and the US; a second section reviewing the impact of PLA modernization on the China-Taiwan military balance and on the PLA's ability to execute the major options available to Chinese leaders; and a third summarizing the current debate on when the PLA might be able to conduct the most demanding option – an amphibious invasion



of Taiwan – and what factors might influence Beijing’s decision to pursue forcible unification. A fourth considers the options for Taiwan. Charts and diagrams aid in explaining concepts that may be unfamiliar to the non-specialist reader. Contributors cite an impressive variety of unclassified PLA and Taiwan documents as well as English-language government and think-tank sources.

Generally speaking, the authors credit the PLA with awareness of its shortcomings, efforts to overcome them, and significant improvements over past years. Yet serious deficiencies remain. As Joel Wuthnow points out, no one serving in the PLA has experience in executing any cross-Strait campaign, and the PLA lacks a rotational assignment system. Officers are not required to pass through joint assignments, and the limited flow of officers between joint organizations at national and theatre levels reduces mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities at both levels.

Some of these shortcomings can be overcome, but more intractable is the mindset of a Leninist organization culture that retains consensus decision-making through Party committees and that values control at the highest level. This could limit a commander’s ability to quickly execute a war plan and make adjustments, lead to fragmentation between the commander, the national service and the external theatre forces needed to support it, and create a lack of proficiency in joint operations among the commanders and staff officers charged with enabling the system to function smoothly at both the theatre and the national levels. There is a tendency toward buck-passing and, even after Xi Jinping’s reorganization, stove-piping.

Sale Lilly’s chapter draws attention to a heretofore neglected topic: what will the PLA do, assuming it overcomes its disadvantages and arrives on Taiwan’s shores? A dedicated urban warfare site was established in 2009, in Zhurihe in Inner Mongolia, complete with mock-ups of the president’s office and other major facilities. Later, a second site was created in Jiangsu, whose geography is better suited to a Taiwan scenario than Zhurihe’s. Nonetheless, Lilly finds that urban warfare has been largely absent from PLA literature and, to the extent it appears, has been focused on decapitation strikes rather than counterinsurgency. Interest has been centred on the American experience in Iraq and Syria, and here the PLA seems to have learned the wrong lessons, since it neglects the protracted insurgencies that followed decapitation while ignoring cases in which the offensive side suffered setbacks.

China’s overwhelming advantages in manpower and numbers of weapons notwithstanding, Taiwan is not without counter capabilities. Beginning in 2007, US defence department experts began regular consultations with senior Taiwan military officers to assess how the country could transform its military to adapt to growing PLA power-projection capabilities. Clearly, the American approach to warfare – projecting power over great distances while maximizing mobility and networks to take the fight to the enemy – was inapplicable to Taiwan’s need for short-range and defensive systems that can survive an initial bombardment from a larger adversary and that are suitable for deployment close to home should Taiwan come under blockade or attack. Much consultation, assumption-challenging and concept-testing ensued. In 2017, then Chief of the General Staff Admiral Lee Hsi-ming proposed an asymmetrical strategy that could increase the chances of preventing China from being able to take Taiwan by force. Known as the Overall Defence Concept (ODC) it targets the invading force when it is at its weakest: in Taiwan’s littoral. Defence operations are divided into three phases: “force preservation,” which assumes that a PLA campaign would begin with a blockade followed by missile strikes intended to destroy Taiwan’s military and demoralize its public. These would be met by large numbers of affordable, small, mobile systems that can sortie out from bases, employ deception, camouflage and decoys to make targeting difficult, and ensure that sufficient capabilities survive initial strikes. The second stage, the “decisive battle for the littoral,” defined as extending 100 kilometres from the shore, includes sea mines and large surface vessels equipped with domestically manufactured antiship cruise missiles. In the third phase, “destruction of the enemy at the landing beach” – 40 kilometres out from the anticipated landing beaches – the army will lay beach mines and target Chinese navy ships with precision fires, also targeting any vessels and troops attempting to reach shore.

No strategy, however elegant in theory, can be expected to provide security. Unaddressed by the ODC are severe and growing shortfalls in military recruitment. Taiwan's military must attempt to recruit roughly ten per cent of 18-year-olds each year just to maintain its current staff size – and the country's birth rate continues to decline. Moreover, a politically popular but militarily unwise decision to end conscription and shorten enlistment terms, recently reversed but now being challenged by a contender in Taiwan's 2024 election, bodes ill for the future. Finally, Taiwan's stagnant defence budget is insufficient to support needed investment in both asymmetric littoral defence and conventional long-range strike capabilities.

This book is an important contribution to our understanding of the cross-Strait military situation and its authors make their case convincingly. That the book is available in Open Access and written in clear, straightforward prose should encourage a wide readership. Yet its appearance nearly two years after the conference and perforce based on sources that are even earlier will leave readers wondering how much progress has been made in the intervening period. It is to be hoped that the next volume can be brought from conference to publication much faster.

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## Cooperating for the Climate: Learning from International Partnerships in China's Clean Energy Sector

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As the world transitions towards a low-carbon energy future, China's rise as a clean energy power has rung alarm bells in Western capitals. China's cost advantages in solar and other renewable energies, its dominance of global production of lithium-ion batteries and its stranglehold over much of the global supply and processing of critical minerals have been depicted as both a security threat and a challenge for the development of other countries' own clean energy industries. Such reasoning is most visible in the US's Inflation Reduction Act, whose stress on the promotion of domestic green industry is seen by many as undermining the free circulation of goods and ideas required for global cooperation in tackling climate change.

Joanna I. Lewis's new book, *Cooperating for the Climate*, reminds us of a bygone era when relations with China were not seen in zero-sum terms. The book examines the record of China's bilateral cooperation in clean energy research, focusing on government-led partnerships involving research institutes and the private sector. The starting premise is that "the benefits to international science and technology cooperation may outweigh the risks" (p. 5). Moreover, on account of China's status as the largest greenhouse gas emitter, the size of its energy markets, and, increasingly, its technological leadership in clean energy, "the economies and innovation systems of most countries in the world depend on engaging with China" (p. 6).

The book draws on an original database of bilateral agreements between China and 42 other countries, interviews held in six countries, and the author's own participant observation in China's clean energy cooperation initiatives with the US and Denmark. The cross-country analysis