

CHINA GOES TO SEA

ANDREW S. ERICKSON, LYLE J. GOLDSTEIN, and CARNES LORD, eds.

“This is an original and well-designed collection of scholarly essays on the larger historical context of China’s current maritime growth. Readers will be drawn immediately to the chapters on our contemporary balance of forces across the Pacific, to studies of the PRC’s shipbuilding programs, commercial expansion, and weapons-systems development. But they should also spend time on the historical case-studies, which are specifically focused upon *land* powers that go to the sea. Since this is clearly what most concerns China’s navy, it ought also to capture the attention of external observers of China’s sea-power growth in the twenty-first century. This is an important read.”

Paul Kennedy, Yale University, author of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*

“For readers interested in seapower, this book is a veritable feast of delights. It shows how important Chinese maritime power is likely to be for the rest of us, but also how complex that issue actually is. By way of a multifaceted approach which sweeps across both the experience of other maritime powers over the centuries and the varying fortunes of seapower in Chinese history, it explores the way that great land powers have transformed themselves into maritime powers. It identifies so many lessons, and it establishes the dangers, limits and opportunities so well that we must hope that Chinese policy-makers also read this deeply authoritative book closely, for their sake, as well as for ours.”

Geoffrey Till, Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, UK

“The maritime history of China has long been a neglected field. The absorbing interpretive essays in *China Goes to Sea* bring that knowledge-gap to an end by offering us two contrasting settings from which to view China’s current naval development: the first is an illuminating historical overview of how continental states from Persia and Sparta down to Imperial Germany and Soviet Russia applied their skills and resources to becoming naval powers. The other is a history of China’s own quest for naval growth, from the famous Ming dynasty voyages of the early 15th century down to the current blue water visions of expansion in the People’s Republic. This volume will be an indispensable companion to those seeking to understand where China’s navy may be heading.”

Jonathan Spence, Yale University, author of *The Search for Modern China*

“Throughout Asia today, China dominates the conversation. Within this dialogue, China’s turn to the sea and its development of a blue water capability has economic, diplomatic and military implications. This valuable new book provides in one volume a comprehensive assessment of China’s naval development, the principle historical precedents, and the complex thought process that guides the PLA(N) leadership.”

Admiral Walter F. Doran, USN (Ret.), former Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet

“This book deserves to be read by every career Navy and Marine officer and then retained on his/her bookshelf. The content, scope, and organization of this book are extraordinary. The selection of subject matter leading to an understanding of current Chinese naval developments is also excellent. The volume is nicely bookended with an engaging introduction and a crisp but thorough review of its arguments in the closing chapter. The book examines the historical record of maritime transitions in other states to reflect light on the current Chinese situation. The book marches through naval history from Persia, Sparta, and Rome to the Soviet Navy transformation under Admiral Sergey Gorshkov during the Cold War. One need not be a scholar in Chinese studies to profit greatly from this approach. I am pleased to recommend this book highly to a wide public that is interested in where China may be headed. The book is especially recommended to those who wonder whether or not the next challenge to the U.S. Navy will come from China.”

Rear Admiral Ronald J. Kurth, Ph.D., USN (Ret.)

“*China Goes to Sea* is a remarkable collection of essays by a group of outstanding scholars. It applies the method of comparative analysis in a critical and sophisticated way to illuminate current naval developments in the light of the experience of states developing naval capacities and strategies through the ages. Current developments make it essential reading for students of China, strategy and international relations.”

Donald Kagan, Yale University, author of *On the Origins of War*

“Here is a rich and suggestive collection of essays unique in its wide range over space and time. Among its many other merits, it provides a valuable window into what the Chinese themselves are thinking about strategic maritime matters.”

John Curtis Perry, The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University

“*China Goes to Sea* is a major contribution to the development of a comparative and historical perspective on contemporary China’s growing maritime ambitions. Experts on the naval history of pre-modern and modern European powers and of Chinese naval history offer illuminating discussions of the sources of land power interest in developing extensive maritime power and the enduring constraints on their simultaneous development of maritime and continental capabilities. Within this analytical framework, distinguished experts assess China’s interest in expanding its naval capabilities and its progress toward developing a power projection navy. *China Goes to Sea* is essential reading for scholars and policy-makers concerned about Chinese defense policy and developments in Chinese maritime policy.”

Robert S. Ross, Boston College, co-editor of *China’s Ascent*