shifan school of Beijing) who actively participated in the creation of modern Sino-Muslim identity as equally "Islamic" and "Chinese." In this sense Stewart's observation of contemporary Northwestern "revivalists" demonstrates that, despite their apparent novelty, Salafiyya and Tabligh Jama'at represent the latest manifestations of the historically deep-rooted Chinese Muslim quest for a comfortable space, within both the idealized global Ummah and the Chinese nation-state.

Stewart's book is an important addition to the rapidly growing field of Sino-Muslim studies and should also be of interest to scholars of Islam, contemporary Chinese society and religion. It might also be useful as teaching material, not only because of the wealth of information it includes and the quality of its argument, but also as a starting point for discussion on the ethical considerations of studying religious communities.

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China's Quest for Great Power: Ships, Oil, and Foreign Policy
BERNARD D. COLE
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Bernard Cole has written an uneven book. Cole (emeritus professor, National War College) ranks among the first to take a serious look at the modern People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). His *Great Wall at Sea* (Naval Institute Press, 2001) long constituted the starting point for anyone investigating China's effort to assemble its first oceangoing fleet since Zheng He's "treasure fleet" plied the South China Sea and Indian Ocean six centuries ago.

The virtue of Cole's latest work is that it situates energy security at the heart of China's foreign policy, maritime strategy and navy-building project. He compiles a wealth of information about the natural-resource imperatives driving Beijing to the sea, and into such faraway regions as the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf. These motives are real and compelling. Beijing now gazes into distant seas, and has instructed the PLAN to gird itself for "open-seas protection" of shipping routes connecting these waterways with Chinese seaports.

Upsides notwithstanding, there are several perplexing aspects to Cole's treatise. First of all, its subtitle – *Ships, Oil, and Foreign Policy* – hints at structural idiosyncrasies within the book. That is the order in which he organizes the book. In other words, he examines implements of policy (namely naval and merchant ships, chapters one to three), then an animating force for Chinese foreign policy (oil, chapters four and five), and then foreign policy itself (chapters six and seven). Nor, apparently, does he see any hierarchy among these elements of his analysis. Students of policy and strategy will blanch at Cole's idea that foreign policy constitutes a coequal "leg" of a "triad" (p. 2) or a "policy triumvirate" (p. 214). Not so. Policymakers set the goals toward which strategists strive, while strategists harness the means at their disposal to seek strategic – and ultimately political – gain. It makes little sense to depose foreign policy from its agenda-setting and supervisory perch atop the hierarchy among policy, strategy and operations.

Maritime strategy is a grand strategy. Its purpose is to open up commercial, political, and military access – in that order of precedence – to regions important to a country's economic vibrancy. Commerce is king. Military access makes diplomatic access possible, while diplomatic access assures commercial access so that firms can buy and sell in the region. To execute maritime strategy, sage leaders nurture production at home and commerce abroad; construct navies and merchant fleets; and negotiate access to harbours where merchantmen and warships can tarry for fuel, stores or upkeep. This is precisely the approach China takes to maritime strategy – including its quest for energy security.

It is puzzling, moreover, why Professor Cole examines ships, oil and foreign policy in that order. He examines the tool – the PLA Navy – before explaining what purposes the tool's users have in mind for it. This cart-before-the-horse approach puts the reader in mind of Captain Harry Yarnell's quip a century ago, when the US Navy was contemplating its post-World War I strategy. Designing a fleet without a sense of its larger purposes, complained Yarnell, is like "trying to design a machine tool without knowing whether it is going to manufacture hairpins or locomotives." Cole buries the lede, leaving readers wondering why China is sculpting the navy it is. Hairpins or locomotives?

Second, Professor Cole is given to grand pronouncements that he neither explains nor defends. For instance, he informs us (p. 92) that Alfred Thayer Mahan's writings are "largely irrelevant" to Chinese naval thought. That represents the sum total of his argument. Readers can be forgiven for asking who this Mahan fellow was, what ideas he espoused, and why they are irrelevant. Cole tells them nothing. (He would get an argument about this from Chinese strategists, by the way. Mahan is a fixture in their discourses about maritime strategy, as a cursory survey of Chinese commentary reveals.)

Nor is Cole especially fluent in the strategic canon. He implies, for example, that J. C. Wylie, who fought to repel aggression by a land-hungry Asian power, Japan, would somehow approve of China's efforts to wrest islands from their occupants (p. 89). He declares (p. 88) that Carl von Clausewitz defined "absolute war" as a mode of war, whereas absolute war is a theoretical fiction used to demonstrate certain traits of war. It does not exist in the real world – as Clausewitz himself states.

But the truly glaring oversight is this: Communist China's own strategic theorist, Mao Zedong, is conspicuously absent from this excursion through strategy. Official statements about military strategy make it plain that Maoist ideas – in particular "active defence" – remain the core of Chinese strategic thought. By neglecting Mao, Cole overlooks fascinating questions about China's nautical future. To name one: how will Beijing transpose active defence, a strategically defensive mode of warfare, to extra-regional pursuits – pursuits that require China to assume the offensive? If China must venture into the "far seas" to guard commercial access and thus energy security, as Cole contends, how will the PLAN and its political masters transact business there? How will they revise their playbook?

China's Quest for Great Power makes a worthwhile addition to the literature on Chinese policy and strategy. For insight into matters such as those raised here, however, readers are better off looking elsewhere.

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