

CONCLUSION

Assessing Chinese Military Reforms

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China's military reforms are driven by Xi Jinping's ambition to reshape the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to improve its ability to win informationized [*xinxihua*, 信息化] wars and to ensure that it remains loyal to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). There is broad political support within the party for Xi's goal of building a stronger military. The outline of the current military reform agenda was endorsed at the third plenum of the 18th Party Congress in November 2013, and Xi played a central role in working with PLA leaders to develop detailed reorganization plans and implement the reform agenda.¹ At the first meeting of the new leading group on military reform in early 2014, Xi declared that the overriding goal was to produce a military that can "fight and win battles."² The 19th Party Congress work report in October 2017 advanced the timeline for Chinese military modernization, calling for achieving mechanization and making strides on informationization and building strategic capabilities by 2020 and building "world-class forces" [*shijie yiliu jun*, 世界一流军] by mid-century.³

The reforms are unprecedented in their ambition and in the scale and scope of the organizational changes. Virtually every part of the PLA now reports to different leaders, has had its mission and responsibilities

changed, has lost or gained subordinate units, or has undergone a major internal reorganization. The relationships between and among the Central Military Commission (CMC) departments, offices, and commissions, the services, and the theater commands have all changed. The military education system has been reformed to reduce duplication and place greater emphasis on jointness, and changes to the military assignment, promotion, and grade/rank systems are still to come. The reforms will have important implications for the PLA's responsiveness to political direction and ability to achieve the modernization goals that the CCP has set for it.

The chapters in this book explore various dimensions of Xi's PLA reform agenda in detail. This conclusion draws the analytical threads together to assess what difference the reforms are likely to make for the PLA's ability to conduct joint operations, for the CCP's control of the army, and for civil-military integration. The analytic judgments draw on some of the arguments, evidence, and assessments presented in the individual chapters, but those authors do not necessarily share all our conclusions.

Assessing the Reforms

While the reforms are not complete, the chapters in this book show how much has been accomplished in a relatively short period. One important judgment is that Xi and fellow PLA reformers have succeeded in forcing the military to adopt needed reforms that previous CMC Chairmen Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao were unable to push through and that the PLA could not adopt on its own. Xi's political strategy for pushing his reform agenda through bureaucratic opposition appears to have succeeded, with the reforms breaking up the four general departments (previously described as "independent kingdoms"), reducing the institutional power of the previously dominant ground forces and purging the senior PLA officer corps of many potentially disloyal and corrupt elements.⁴

The structural reorganization of the PLA is basically complete, with the responsibilities and constituent parts of the four general departments redistributed to CMC departments, commissions, and offices or sent to

the new army headquarters, Strategic Support Force, or the Joint Logistic Support Force. The seven military regions have been converted into five joint theater commands, which now exercise operational control over the ground, naval, air, and conventional Rocket Force units within their areas of responsibility. The army has stood up its new headquarters, the Rocket Force is now a full-fledged service, and the Strategic Support Force and Joint Logistics Support Force are both operational. Ground force group armies and air force fighter and fighter-bomber units have been reorganized into a standardized “group army/corps-brigade-battalion” structure. The PLA claims to have completed its downsizing of 300,000 officers and troops, cutting over 1,000 units and 30 percent of commissioned officers by the end of 2017.⁵ The military education system has been reorganized and downsized to achieve efficiencies and increase emphasis on joint operations and technology. Changes have also been made to the People’s Armed Police, which handles domestic security as part of China’s armed forces. Planned changes to the military assignment, promotion, and grade/rank systems—which will have a major impact on the ultimate success of the reforms—are yet to be implemented.

Improving Joint Operations Capability

The reforms revised the division of labor within the PLA, with the CMC providing “general management” [*junwei guan zong*, 军委管总], the theater commands focusing on operations [*zhanqu zhu zhan*, 战区主战], and the services managing force-building [*junzhong zhu jian*, 军种主建].⁶ The resulting theater joint command and control structure, with the theater commands exercising control of ground, naval, and air forces through service-specific theater component headquarters, rectifies a major problem with the pre-reform command and control structure, where the military region headquarters did not have peacetime command of naval, air, and missile units within its area of responsibility. The new construct should be much better suited to joint planning, training, and operations. PLA joint exercises at the theater level appear to be focused on developing the ability

of commanders and their staffs to employ joint forces effectively. There have been significant growing pains as the theater commands and their components adjust to new command relationships and learn how to work together, but the basic joint command structure appears to be workable. The disruption caused by the organizational reshuffling and personnel downsizing has probably reduced the PLA's near-term combat readiness, but the reforms are likely to produce significant improvements in the PLA's ability to plan and execute larger and more complex joint operations within 2 to 3 years.

Important questions remain about the relationships between the CMC's Joint Staff Department (JSD) and theater commands and about how theater commanders will tap nuclear and nonnuclear strategic capabilities that remain under CMC command. The reforms established joint command and control structures at the national level (under the CMC's JSD, which also has nominal control of operations beyond China's periphery) and at the theater level (the theater commands). But the precise division of labor and willingness of the CMC to delegate decision authority to the theater commander remains unclear. Will the JSD (acting on behalf of the CMC) view its role primarily as providing supporting strategic capabilities (such as antiship ballistic missiles, intelligence derived from space and cyber systems, counterspace and offensive cyber capabilities, and long-range precision strike) to help a theater commander execute his war plan, or will the JSD (run by a CMC-member grade officer senior to the theater commanders) attempt to micromanage the theater's operations? The prevailing PLA organizational culture emphasizes caution and deference to authority, not taking responsibility for actions not fully vetted with more senior leaders.⁷ The notion of empowering military officers to exercise initiative to carry out the intent of their commanders (known as mission command), which is integral to some Western militaries, is not culturally accepted in the PLA at present.⁸ Integrated communications systems and a common operational picture provide both opportunities for timely support and temptations to intervene in the decisions of subordinate commanders.

A second question is the role of the services in supporting joint operations and building a joint force. In principle the reforms remove the service headquarters from operations, but in practice all of them have held onto some operational command responsibilities. Army headquarters retains responsibility for border and coastal defense; navy headquarters supervises the counterpiracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden; air force headquarters retains centralized control of bomber, transport, and airborne assets; and the Rocket Force has operational control over strategic forces. Moreover, all the services are using service-specific training requirements (including multi-theater exercises) as a means of asserting a continued operational role. The theater command service component commanders report to both the theater command headquarters for operations and to their service headquarters for service training and administration. How they will reconcile competing (and potentially incompatible) demands remains to be seen.

While the services are responsible for building forces to support joint operations, there is ample evidence of interservice rivalry and competition for missions and resources. Ian Burns McCaslin and Andrew Erickson show in their chapter how the higher priority accorded to the maritime domain by Xi Jinping has prompted efforts by the air force, Rocket Force, and even the army to develop and showcase capabilities relevant to maritime operations.⁹ Similar trends are evident in long-range precision strike, where the navy, air force, and Rocket Force all have systems that perform similar missions. Especially in an environment where military budgets are growing more slowly, interservice competition over missions and resources may impede operational cooperation. This may also be the case in the nuclear domain as the PLA Navy's submarine-launched ballistic missile-equipped nuclear submarines become operational and if the PLA Air Force develops nuclear capabilities. The tension between the services desire to maximize their budgets and capabilities and the needs of theater commanders for trained forces that can work jointly to achieve operational synergies is real. One question going forward is whether the removal of the service commanders from membership on the CMC will allow that organization to

override parochial service considerations and make procurement decisions that maximize PLA joint capabilities.

Achieving the potential synergies of a joint force will ultimately depend on the PLA's ability to successfully recruit, educate, and train operational commanders and staff officers who can lead and work effectively in a joint environment.¹⁰ The PLA recognizes this as a current weakness, and some planned military reforms are aimed at fixing these problems. PLA Army officers currently spend the bulk of their careers in a single group army, in a single theater, with limited opportunities to work with units from other locations or services. This system produces officers and commanders who may be proficient in their service tasks and assigned responsibilities in specific contingencies, but who have a very limited perspective. Building effective joint commanders will require changes not only to the military education system to teach soldiers about the other services and how to conduct joint operations but also to the military assignment, promotion, and grade/rank systems. Without cross-fertilization and broader operational experiences, PLA effectiveness could be stunted.

However, these changes are interdependent and would constitute a major disruption of longstanding PLA practices. For example, a rotational assignment system would allow officers to gain experience with other services, localities, and job responsibilities and help them develop into well-rounded commanders capable of leading joint operations. But rotational assignments would require developing new military housing and schools for dependent children to entice officers to accept assignments in remote regions.¹¹ They would also likely require a shift to a centralized promotion system that evaluates officers fairly and rewards them for their experience and qualifications rather than their relationship with their local commander.¹² Such changes to the assignment and promotion systems are being contemplated and experimented with, but conversations with PLA officers suggest that military leaders remain cautious about implementing reforms that will reshape career incentives and affect every member of the PLA.

Ensuring CCP Control over the Military

A second major driver for the reforms was Xi Jinping's desire to strengthen party control over the military, which had eroded during Hu Jintao's tenure as CMC chairman. Rampant corruption within the PLA was one major problem, but the potential for the military not to follow orders from the CCP (and from Xi himself) was an even bigger issue. Xi asserted his authority over the PLA by emphasizing the "CMC Chairman Responsibility System" [*zhongyang junwei zeren zhi*, 中央军委责任制], which gives the chairman the ultimate authority over military affairs, and by using anti-corruption investigations to root out senior officers who might be disloyal, including retired CMC Vice Chairmen Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong (both appointed by Jiang Zemin). The example set by these cases—and the vulnerability of other corrupt officers to investigation—proved to be a potent weapon in defusing potential opposition to military reforms.

Xi has implemented a series of structural and personnel changes designed to combat graft and ensure political orthodoxy among the officer corps. These include reducing the susceptibility of PLA supervisory mechanisms to the influence of commanding officers by elevating the Discipline Inspection Commission to independent status, raising its secretary to CMC member status and placing the audit bureau and the military court system under direct CMC oversight. It also includes efforts to reemphasize the importance of party organs and political work at all levels of the PLA, including the requirement to incorporate Xi's writings on military issues into the military education system. Finally, Xi has used corruption investigations, rotations of senior officers, forced retirements, and promotion of younger officers to reshape the ranks of the senior PLA officer corps, eliminating or sidelining officers deemed to be potentially disloyal and promoting those viewed as politically reliable and relatively free from corruption.

These measures have marginalized potential opposition to Xi's PLA reform agenda and have likely been effective at uprooting officers who might have been part of patronage networks tied to Xu and Guo. The structural changes to the CMC's organization should improve the effectiveness of

monitoring mechanisms, while the appointment of Zhong Shaojun as head of the CMC General Office gives Xi's long-time personal aide the ability to monitor communications and activity within the CMC. Xi's personal involvement in the promotions of senior officers and ability to initiate (or withhold) investigations are powerful carrots and sticks to help ensure an obedient officer corps. However, the continued effectiveness of these measures requires Xi to continue to dedicate significant time to military personnel issues and is likely to create a climate of toadying and fear that may stimulate resentment and inhibit diverse or contrary military advice.

More generally, efforts to use political work to rekindle the ideological flame of belief in Marxism-Leninism will be difficult. Senior PLA officers are willing to mouth the correct slogans and swear their loyalty to the party and to Xi as its core leader. But formal compliance is not the same as genuine belief and may not produce better behavior over the long term or loyalty to the CCP and to Xi personally in a political crisis. Moreover, the hypocrisy of CCP leaders pursuing an aggressive anti-corruption campaign when their own family members have amassed fortunes by trading on their political connections is likely to breed cynicism and undermine efforts to produce a cleaner PLA.

Strengthening Civil-Military Integration

A third major driver of PLA reforms is the desire to strengthen civil-military cooperation, known as civil-military integration [*junmin ronghe*, 军民融合] (CMI) or civil-military fusion. The PLA has long relied on defense mobilization to reduce military expenditures by tapping civilian transportation, personnel, and supply resources in a crisis or conflict. However, a major focus of CMI is finding ways for the military to leverage breakthroughs in the civilian science and technology (S&T) sector and to ensure that military science and technology needs are met. CMI also involves other types of military and civilian cooperation, including expanding reliance on civilian contractors in the military supply chain and incorporating military specifications into the design of civilian transport ships, which could be

mobilized during wartime (especially during an amphibious invasion of Taiwan). As Brian Lafferty discusses in this volume, strengthening CMI has been part of the PLA's reform agenda since the 1990s, but its implementation has been hindered by ineffectual top-level management, bureaucratic stove-piping, and other obstacles.

The PLA reforms include several initiatives to enhance CMI. One involves upgrading the PLA's Science and Technology Commission, previously subordinate to the General Armaments Department, to a higher level CMC organization that reports to Xi Jinping. This commission is responsible for the military's coordination with civilian experts in critical technological areas. Another change involves reforms to the military educational and research systems. For instance, several technical research institutes were merged into the PLA's Academy of Military Science, helping to more closely integrate technology advances with innovations in China's military doctrine.¹³ To improve management and supervision of the process, the government declared civil-military integration to be an official development strategy in 2015 and created a new Central Commission for Integrated Military and Civilian Development in January 2017, with Xi as chairman.¹⁴

In their chapters in this volume, Brian Lafferty and Tai Ming Cheung analyze the prospect for intensified CMI efforts to build on the existing foundation and produce important breakthroughs in military technology. Cheung sees the adoption of civil-military fusion as an official development strategy, the establishment of the new commission, integrated civilian and military S&T planning, efforts to develop China's advance manufacturing base as part of the "Made in China 2025" plan, and reforms of defense research institutes as creating the conditions for major innovations. He concludes with a positive assessment of "prospects for the Chinese defense industry to successfully transition from an innovation follower to an original innovator that is able to engage in higher end technological development."¹⁵ Lafferty has a more measured assessment, noting that the Chinese government has laid an initial foundation for CMI, improved its understanding

of challenges in implementing CMI, and shown a commitment to tackling them, but that success is not guaranteed.¹⁶

Although there are clearly potential civil-military synergies in some areas, the large-scale cooperation envisioned by CMI advocates requires Chinese companies and government agencies to reduce their organizational autonomy by opening up their decision processes to incorporate the views and interests of other actors. The contradiction between the CCP's desire to incorporate all civilian and military interests into economic and S&T decisionmaking and the reluctance of companies and agencies to cede control to others may make it difficult for China to move beyond formal compliance (for example, establishing mechanisms to participate in CMI) to actual accomplishments. The CCP's ability to appoint the leaders of Chinese state-owned enterprises is a powerful tool, but it has not prevented these leaders from pursuing the financial and institutional interests of the companies they run and resisting implementation of mandates that would interfere with profits.

Signposts for the Future

How can we gauge the extent to which PLA reforms are succeeding?

In the absence of a regional conflict that would put the PLA's new joint command structure to the ultimate test, joint training and exercises will provide the best window into improvements in PLA joint operations capability. Large exercises that involve multiple PLA services working together against an adaptive enemy would be the best evidence that new joint command and control structures can not only plan joint operations but also execute them and respond to changing battlefield conditions. Effective use of Strategic Support Force and Joint Logistics Support Force units to support theater exercises—and the ability to integrate other strategic capabilities controlled by the CMC or the services—would be additional evidence of improvements in higher level joint operational capabilities.

Another metric will be the extent to which joint operations and forces take priority over their service counterparts. A crude metric for assessing

reductions in ground force dominance is the army's share of overall personnel, theater command positions, important jobs in the CMC, and slots in the joint military education courses that will train future PLA leaders. A more sophisticated metric will be observing whether officers with joint experience enjoy a promotion advantage over peers who stick to traditional service-centric career paths. The U.S. military ultimately required congressional intervention to make joint experience a requirement for promotion to general officer; a similar PLA regulation would be an important milestone for jointness. Of course, major changes to the PLA assignment and promotion system would be necessary to support such an action. The U.S. experience suggests that building an effective joint force can take decades, since it requires a new generation of senior leaders that has experience working with other services and that develops a mindset that prioritizes joint operations over service interests.¹⁷

Another question is whether the CMC eventually develops the ability to contain interservice rivalry and discipline service desires for new weapons systems that advance service equities rather than joint objectives. The removal of the service chiefs from CMC membership in October 2017 may mark an important evolution in jointness within the PLA. The addition of the navy, air force, and Second Artillery commanders to the CMC in 2004 marked what might be called "representational jointness," with those services gaining a voice in high-level PLA decisions. The removal of the service commanders from CMC membership as part of Xi's reforms could mark a transition to "directed jointness," where the CMC imposes its decisions about how to build a joint force on the services. Given the service-centric nature of the PLA, the CMC is unlikely to play this role anytime soon, but this would be an important development if it occurs.

Assessing the degree to which Xi's efforts to reassert CCP control over the PLA have succeeded will be a much more difficult analytic challenge. All senior PLA officers are likely to say the right things in public; any officers who refuse to profess loyalty to the party and Xi will not last long. But the real test would only come in a major political crisis or if the CCP's efforts

to maintain economic growth and to achieve nationalist goals falter and call Xi's leadership (and the party's legitimacy) into question. Until then, our assessment that the reforms are likely to strengthen CCP control over the military in the short term, but will not guarantee military support in a crisis, must remain a tentative judgment.

Identifying markers of progress in civil-military integration is also difficult because the priority that CCP leaders place on the program requires Chinese companies and agencies to pay lip service to CMI and emphasizes procedural improvements rather than substantive outputs. The clearest evidence of success would be a leap forward in innovation in Chinese weapons systems that incorporate dual-use technologies and production processes. Another indicator would be a major expansion of PLA use of civilian contractors and Chinese defense industries subcontracting important parts of weapons system development to civilian companies or state-owned enterprises outside the defense sector.

Implications

If PLA reforms succeed, they will have significant implications for China's neighbors, competitors, and opponents. A better trained, organized, and equipped PLA will be in a stronger position to accomplish its primary functions: winning modern wars, especially what the U.S. Department of Defense terms "short-duration, high-intensity regional conflicts"; deterring both large and small competitors; performing a variety of military operations other than war (also known as nontraditional security missions); and protecting Chinese interests in Asia.¹⁸ A more effective joint command structure will enable the PLA to more quickly and seamlessly transition from peacetime to combat operations, as well as to more capably oversee complex peacetime missions that may require participation from multiple services, such as large-scale disaster relief or noncombatant evacuations. That system will be further improved as the PLA educates and trains commanders and staff to employ joint forces, and as more advanced capabilities in the various domains of warfare come online.

Rival territorial claimants, such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, and India, will face a more confident and capable adversary in the South and East China seas and across the Sino-Indian border. Reforms to the broader Chinese armed forces, including placing the People's Armed Police under firm CMC control, could permit closer coordination between PLA, coast guard, and maritime militia forces, thus giving Beijing a strong hand in gray zone operations against other claimants. Taiwan will have to contend with a PLA that can more credibly plan and execute joint operations, such as amphibious landings, blockades, and joint missile strikes.¹⁹ This will further strengthen the need for the Taiwan military to develop and implement asymmetric and innovative approaches to respond to the threat posed by a more capable PLA. U.S. forces operating throughout the Indo-Pacific region will face a PLA that can respond more quickly to regional crises and conduct counter-intervention operations more effectively. Moreover, a Chinese military and defense industry that can effectively harness civilian S&T breakthroughs to create advanced and innovative weapons would be an even more formidable strategic competitor over the long term. This latter point is important to counter the U.S. defense strategy that seeks to regain its technological edge over time to sustain a favorable regional balance of power.

A Future Expeditionary PLA?

One future requirement that the current PLA reforms do not fully address is the potential need to command and support a broader range of military operations beyond China's borders. In the last several decades, PLA overseas operations have been limited to participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, counterpiracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden (since 2008), short-term deployments to participate in military exercises and conduct military diplomacy, and a few noncombatant emergency evacuations.

The theater commands are better equipped to respond to a range of regional contingencies than was possible under the pre-reform military regions. However, their ability to plan and execute operations has geographic

limits depending on their areas of responsibility and the specific contingencies they are assigned.²⁰ For example, the Southern Theater Command already routinely conducts operations that extend into the far reaches of the South China Sea, while the other theater commands have more limited areas of operations. However, in the event of a Taiwan contingency, the PLA Navy may be tasked to operate even farther from Chinese territory into the Western Pacific, and it is not clear whether the Eastern Theater Command, navy headquarters, or the CMC's Joint Staff Department would have operational control over forward-deployed naval forces. Command and control arrangements are even less clear in the event of a conflict with India that involves both ground operations along the Sino-Indian border and naval operations in the Indian Ocean, since the Western Theater Command does not have a naval component to conduct contingency planning or take charge of naval operations in a war.

The PLA is devoting considerable effort to developing power projection capabilities, doctrine, and political justifications that would support expeditionary operations well beyond China's land borders and outside the second island chain.²¹ The new PLA logistics base in Djibouti provides the ability to sustain peacetime naval operations in a permissive environment and a nascent capability to support other types of operations that may involve a combat role. These operations are justified domestically by the need to protect China's overseas interests and internationally by the claim that the Chinese military can provide public goods and contribute to international stability.²²

PLA operations beyond the theater command areas of responsibility are currently handled differently depending on the type of operations. For example, navy headquarters appears to retain responsibility for the counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, with each escort task force composed of ships drawn from a different fleet. Conversely, the Joint Staff Department's Overseas Operations Office is in charge of PLA deployments to support United Nations peacekeeping operations. Unlike the U.S. military, which assigns every part of the world to a geographic combatant

command responsible for contingency planning and operations within its area of responsibility, the PLA has gaps where potential operations fall outside the areas of responsibility of the theater commands. Moreover, it does not appear to have established a standing or ad hoc joint task force mechanism to command such operations.

To date, most PLA independent overseas operations (such as the evacuation of Chinese citizens from Libya in 2011) have been small, of short-duration, and in relatively permissive environments.²³ These types of operations could be assigned to either the Joint Staff Department or one of the service headquarters depending on the nature of the operation. However, these mechanisms are likely to prove inadequate if PLA overseas operations become larger, require joint forces, last for extended periods of time, or occur in nonpermissive environments where deployed forces face threats from hostile state or nonstate actors. Conducting multiple simultaneous overseas operations would further stress the PLA's ability to command overseas operations. If the PLA begins to regularly conduct such operations, new joint command and control mechanisms will likely be necessary.

Conclusion

This volume has traced the drivers of the PLA's ambitious reform agenda, examined how the reforms affect the component parts of the PLA and their relationships to each other, and assessed the opportunities and challenges that will affect the success of the reform agenda. The reforms that have been implemented have already had a major impact on how the PLA is organized and how it expects to plan, train, and execute combat operations. The reforms that are still to come—which will affect the military recruitment, education, assignment, promotion, and rank/grade systems—are likely to play a decisive role in determining whether a reformed PLA can realize Xi Jinping's goal of building a joint force capable of fighting and winning informationized wars. As the PLA begins conducting larger and more sophisticated joint operations and potentially expands the range and

scope of its overseas operations, experience is likely to reveal the need for additional adjustments to joint command and control mechanisms to fully support China's growing military ambitions.

Notes

¹ "CCP Central Committee Decision on Deepening of Reforms for Major Issues" [中共中央关于全面深化改革若干重大问题的决定], Xinhua, November 15, 2013, available at <http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-11/15/c_118164235.htm>.

² "Xi Leads China's Military Reform, Stresses Strong Army," Xinhua, March 15, 2014, available at <<http://english.cntv.cn/20140315/102892.shtml>>.

³ "Full Text of Xi Jinping's Report at the 19th CPC National Congress," Xinhua, November 3, 2017, available at <www.xinhuanet.com/english/special/2017-11/03/c_136725942.htm>.

⁴ See Minnie Chan, "Chinese General's New Job Suggests Army Revamp Finished," *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), June 25, 2016.

⁵ "Facts and Figures on China's Military Reform," Xinhua, December 19, 2017, available at <www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/19/c_136837189.htm>.

⁶ "Central Military Commission Opinion on Deepening National Defense and Armed Force Reforms" [中央军委关于深化国防和军队改革的意见], Xinhua, January 1, 2016, available at <http://news.xinhuanet.com/mil/2016-01/01/c_1117646695.htm>.

⁷ Roger Cliff, "Chinese Military Reforms: A Pessimistic Take," *Joint Force Quarterly* 83 (4th Quarter 2016), 53–56.

⁸ Eitan Shamir, *Transforming Command: The Pursuit of Mission Command in the U.S., British, and Israeli Armies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

⁹ See Ian Burns McCaslin and Andrew S. Erickson, "The PLA and Maritime Security Challenges," in this volume.

¹⁰ See Joel Wuthnow and Phillip C. Saunders, "A Modern Major General: Building Joint Commanders in the PLA," in this volume.

¹¹ See Shanshan Mei, *People of the PLA* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: China Aerospace Studies Institute, 2018).

¹² See Peng Wang and Jingyi Wang, "How China Promotes Its Officers: Interactions Between Formal and Informal Institutions," *China Quarterly*, no. 234 (June 2018), 399–419.

¹³ Interviews with People's Liberation Army (PLA) Academy of Military Science personnel, 2017.

¹⁴ “Xi to Head Central Commission for Integrated Military, Civilian Development,” Xinhua, January 22, 2017, available at <www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-01/22/c_136004750.htm>.

¹⁵ See Tai Ming Cheung, “Keeping Up with the *Jundui*: Reforming the Chinese Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Industrial System to Engage in Advanced Innovation,” in this volume.

¹⁶ See Brian Lafferty, “Civil-Military Integration and PLA Reforms,” in this volume.

¹⁷ PLA officers have asked U.S. counterparts how the U.S. joint professional military education system works to develop a “joint mentality” among the U.S. officer corps.

¹⁸ *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China 2016* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2016), i; “China’s Military Strategy (Full Text),” Xinhua, May 27, 2015, available at <http://english.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2015/05/27/content_281475115610833.htm>.

¹⁹ Phillip C. Saunders and Joel Wuthnow, “What Do China’s Military Reforms Mean for Taiwan?” *NBR Commentary*, May 19, 2016, available at <<http://nbr.org/research/activity.aspx?id=692>>.

²⁰ See Andrew Scobell et al., eds., *The People’s Liberation Army and Contingency Planning in China* (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2015).

²¹ Kristen Gunness and Oriana Skylar Mastro, “A Global People’s Liberation Army: Possibilities, Challenges, and Opportunities,” *Asia Policy*, vol. 22 (July 2016), 131–155.

²² This theme is prominent in China’s 2012 defense white paper. See *The Diversified Employment of China’s Armed Forces* (Beijing: State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, April 16, 2013).

²³ See Michael S. Chase, “The PLA and Far Seas Contingencies: Chinese Capabilities for Noncombatant Evacuation Operations,” in Scobell et al., *The People’s Liberation Army and Contingency Planning in China*, 301–319.