



University of
Zurich^{UZH}

Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies
Chinese Studies Department
Taiwan Lecture Series



The most dangerous place on earth? Assessing the risk of conflict in the Taiwan Strait

Prof. Dr. Dirk Schmidt

May 12, 2022 | ONLINE and ON-SITE EVENT Room: KOL – G-217 A, Rämistrasse 71

18:00 - 20:00 (Zurich time) 20:00 – 21:00 Aperó riche

ABOUT THE LECTURE: Many policy makers and analysts agree that the Taiwan Strait is the most likely contingency in a future US-China major conflict. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has once again brought this topic to the public attention with the widely shared concern "Could Taiwan be next?" Indeed, a massive Chinese military modernization program, the PRC's overall military strategy focused on the Taiwan theatre and its recent military as well as diplomatic actions vis-à-vis Taiwan all highlight the potential for a military stand-off. The mainland continues to propagate "one country, two system" as the only solution to the "Taiwan issue" and the acceptance of the "one China principle" as the prerequisite for any bilateral consultations. At the same time, as a result of decades of democratic experiences and living in the shadow of a more and more autocratic and revisionist neighbor, "Taiwan consciousness" - a distinctively Taiwanese identity - has massively gained ground on Taiwan so that Beijing's "one country, two systems" formula is flatly rejected in Taipei. Both sides of the Taiwan Strait are moving in opposite directions even though there still is a remarkable web of economic interdependence. This lecture provides an overview of the most contentious issues, the drivers of conflict and possible forces of cooperation as well as the role of third-parties so as to establish indicators and variables that are most likely decisive in shaping the future of cross-strait relations.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

Dirk Schmidt studied Political Science, Modern History and English at the Universities of Saarbrücken and Newcastle upon Tyne from 1989 to 1995 and learned Chinese in Taiwan. After graduation, he worked at the Institute of Political Science at Saarland University and completed his doctorate at the Center for Politics of China and East Asia under Jürgen Domes on a thesis on Chinese foreign policy. Since 2004, he has been employed at the Chair of Politics and Economics of China at the University of Trier, which he represented from 2013 to 2018. His work focuses on political economy, foreign policy and foreign economics of the People's Republic of China, and China-Taiwan relations. He is a member of the Social Science China Research Working Group of the German Association for Asian Studies and a reviewer for the DFG and the DAAD.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED:

<https://www.aoi.uzh.ch/de/institut/events/registration.html> Contact: Dr. Simona Grano (simona.grano@aoi.uzh.ch)

