

Book Reviews

Managing Sino-American Crises: Case Studies and Analysis

Edited by MICHAEL D. SWAINE and ZHANG TUOSHENG (with DANIELLE F. S. COHEN)

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The project from which this book is derived was sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington and the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies (CFISS) in Beijing. It brought together important foreign policy scholars and practitioners from China and the United States for the purpose of drawing lessons from some of the most sensitive and disputed incidents in Sino-American relations. The goal was to provide insights regarding both the manner in which each side approached crisis situations as well as the outcome of their interaction in the hope that this might minimize the dangers inherent in possible future confrontations.

The volume includes essays on the methodology of studying international crises (Jonathan Wilkenfeld); two overviews of Sino-American crisis management by Chinese scholars (Wang Jisi and Xu Hui as well as Xia Liping); paired, separate essays by Chinese and American specialists on Korea and Vietnam (Zhang Baijia paired with Allen S. Whiting), the Taiwan Strait (Robert L. Suettinger paired with Niu Jun), the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade (Kurt M. Campbell and Richard Weitz paired with Wu Baiyi) and the EP-3 incident (Dennis C. Blair and David V. Bonfili paired with Zhang Tuosheng); as well as an introductory chapter and conclusion by Michael D. Swaine. This is clearly one of the more ambitious joint Sino-American social science projects that has been undertaken since scholarly contacts were restored in the 1980s.

Given these participants, it should not be surprising that this volume is rich in insights. These range from general themes such as the impact of cultural factors on behaviour and perceptions to the management styles of different generations of Chinese and American leaders, and the impact of learning on the management of crises (for example, both sides seem to agree that the experience of the Korean War avoided similar miscalculations in the Vietnam War).

Moreover, there are a number of fresh insights and facts that are embedded in the analyses of the specific confrontations. Since space is limited and readers of this journal will likely be more interested in the insights into the process on the Chinese side, brief mention is restricted to some of these. The contributions in this respect include major reassessments of Chinese motivations during the Taiwan crises of the 1950s; a wealth of information regarding the decision making on the Chinese side during the Korean and Vietnam Wars; and a discussion of the Belgrade embassy incident which not only draws from interviews of participants in the decision process, but provides nuanced insights into the impact of public opinion during the incident – a factor that figures prominently in Chinese analyses of recent decision making.

However, if the volume reflects how far Sino-American academic co-operation has come, it also reveals how much further it still has to go. For example, the overall tone of the contributions frequently reflects one of the prominent themes that comes out of the studies of the individual crises – mutual distrust and sharply diverging perceptions. Authors seem compelled to defend their side's posture in the crisis, often

by contrasting the deleterious impact of the bargaining position or the general attitude of the other side with their own side's reasonableness and flexibility.

Moreover, although the results of this conference have been published in both American and Chinese editions, the two volumes are not identical. No specifics are offered in an introductory note in the American version reviewed here that informs the reader that due to "differences in viewpoint and interpretation on a small number of issues," and despite the fact that the "two sides hold very similar views" regarding "most issues," a separate Chinese version with "some changes in structure and content that were agreed upon by both sides" would be published. In addition, there is a disclaimer that the co-editor and CFISS "do not necessarily endorse all of the views conveyed by Michael D. Swaine in the introduction and conclusion of this volume."

In the Chinese edition, *Duikang, boyi, hezuo: ZhongMei anquan weiji guanli anli fensi* (Beijing, Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 2007), we find similar statements. One footnote informs the reader that although the volume reflects "several shared or similar viewpoints" that came out of the study, there were also "certain differences (*chayi*) even comparatively large disputes (*fenqi*)" which resulted in both sides accepting the principle of "seeking common ground while reserving differences" (*qiutong cunyi*) (p 2). And, as the American edition anticipates, Michael Swaine's introduction and his conclusion are not included in the volume although a note informs the reader that parts of both are included in an introductory article. Swaine, we are told, agreed with its "principal contents, but did not agree with the entire viewpoint of the article."

Those who have taken part in Sino-American projects over the past few decades realize that behind such often predictable differences over publication or among perspectives of the participants, lie hours of extremely candid and valuable dialogue that cannot be reflected in the published papers. Moreover, it is not possible to assess the extent of the impact which these discussions may have had on the viewpoints of the very influential individuals who took part in the project and, thus, perhaps, also on future Sino-American encounters – both academic and diplomatic.

Some insights into the high quality of the intellectual discourse that likely characterized these meetings are found in Michael Swaine's introduction and conclusion. In both essays, Swaine not only ties together insights from a relatively large number of diverse chapters. He also does a superb job of teasing out some of the major themes from the project with the aim of assessing the nature of past encounters and of suggesting their applicability to a possible future crisis over Taiwan – an eventuality that was clearly weighing heavily on the minds of the participants in this project. Given the great dangers inherent in such a crisis, Swaine's essays, and the case studies that they bracket, deserve a wide audience and careful consideration within China and without.

STEVEN M. GOLDSTEIN

Redefining Nationalism in Modern China: Sino-American Relations and the Emergence of Chinese Public Opinion in the 21st Century

SIMON SHEN

Basingstoke, Hants: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007

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This is an extremely ambitious research project. Simon Shen sets up his goal: to deconstruct Chinese nationalism, and then re-construct it. This is why Shen uses the term "redefining" in the book title.