

global governance and in the construction of the prevailing international norms, which up to this point have largely reflected the collective identity and communal concerns of the advanced industrialized states.

A Defense Analyst's Perspective

DAVID M. FINKELSTEIN

The recent conclusion of the 16th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in November 2002 and the ongoing transition to the so-called "fourth generation" leaders makes the publication of this superb volume as timely as it is informative. This book will likely stand for some time to come as the definitive overview of the complex changes that China's foreign and security policy formulation processes and institutions (formal and informal) have undergone as a result of the first two decades of "reform and opening up" (改革與開放, *gaige yu kaifang*). It will serve as well as a solid foundation for providing a context against which China's future policies and processes can be analyzed.

The book is informed by an impressive group of scholars who have successfully captured for its readership the dynamics of an epoch—the continuities and especially the changes. This is no small feat. The editor's decision to use a mix of narrative-expository chapters in conjunction with selected case studies was a wise one in that many of the key analytic judgments of the project reappear in different contexts. The volume provides a fast moving train of informed insights to those readers who decide to stay aboard cover-to-cover. For those who cannot go the distance, David

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Lampton's introductory chapter provides an excellent overview of the major themes that run throughout the study.

How does the volume fare from the perspective of analysts—especially government analysts—who are focused on Chinese defense and military issues? This is the question the editors of *Issues & Studies* asked this reviewer to address.

Overall, there is much in this book that makes for an extremely productive read for analysts concerned with military affairs. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) is the singular focus of Tai Ming Cheung's chapter on the Central Military Commission (CMC). To a lesser degree, military affairs are also addressed within the Miller-Liu chapter, Bates Gill's contribution on arms control policymaking, and Michael Swaine's analysis of Beijing's Taiwan policy process.

The major contribution in Cheung's chapter is his description of the types of meetings that the CMC usually holds in the course of conducting its business. Much of the organizational information is already known to PLA specialists. Yet, his institutional analysis will be extremely helpful and informative to those less familiar with the roles and missions of the key organizations of the Chinese military.

Interestingly, likely the best overview in the book of many of the key changes that the PLA has undergone over the past twenty years is to be found subsumed within the Miller-Liu presentation. One would not have expected to have found such excellent insights on the military within a chapter entitled "The Foreign Policy Outlook of China's 'Third Generation Elite'." This chapter deserves careful reading, being the only section of the book in which the dramatic shift in Beijing's strategic military posture is highlighted and placed in the greater context of a reforming China.

Bates Gill's analysis of arms control makes important contributions to our understanding of the PLA's role in various international regimes. Moreover, Gill provides important insights into the PLA's role in the promulgation of defense and arms control "white papers" over the past few years.

Michael Swaine's analysis of China's Taiwan policymaking process will be of particular interest to those focused on the role of the PLA in

national-level policymaking. His description and assessment of the various PLA organizations and institutions involved in Taiwan issues constitute, from a defense perspective, another key contribution in the volume.

There are two key judgments about the PLA that run throughout the volume that are worth underscoring:

First, the consensus assessment is that the PLA, as an institutional actor, does not have the authority to *make* foreign policy. Rather, the military *implements* foreign policy. This is an assessment with which this reviewer is in agreement. Contrary to other analyses, the authors find little evidence to suggest that the PLA has an "independent" foreign policy or that it has "hijacked" national-level foreign policy decisions in the recent past—even in times of crisis.

Second, the consensus of those authors who addressed military affairs is that over the past twenty years the PLA has become much more focused on professional military issues and much less involved in domestic politics that do not affect its corporate interests. I personally subscribe to this judgment as well.

In this second key judgment, however, lies the one reason why the book may disappoint students of the PLA. Realizing that the project managers had to make tough decisions about the contents of the book, an opportunity to include a chapter focused solely on the significant changes in Chinese military affairs since 1978 was lost. Including such a chapter would have underscored many of the key themes that run throughout the study: increasing professionalism and the need for technical expertise; institutional and organizational changes to adapt to new circumstances; the impact on the PLA of increasing exposure to foreign counterparts; and—in some very narrow issues—even the impact of "epistemic communities" on Chinese military affairs. Such a chapter would have also underscored the military dimensions of security that are implied in the book's title.

Will this book be of practical utility to government policymakers? It ought to be! The quality of scholarship is unsurpassed and, as mentioned earlier, the insights that the authors have nursed from their data have many implications for how government policymakers ought to think about their Chinese counterparts and the institutional contexts in which they operate.

Book Review Roundtable

At the same time, it is doubtful that "policymaking principles" will have the time to commit to going through some five hundred plus pages of text and endnotes—and this is shame. In a world dominated by Power Point and three-page background papers, this reviewer's suggestion to the project committee would have been to have included an appendix in which the key judgments of each chapter were presented in a quickly digestible executive summary format.

These critical comments aside, it is clear that this study should be required reading for the government analysts that support key policymakers. There is simply no other study that will provide as rich an overview and context for over two decades of change in Beijing's foreign and security policymaking process.