Naval War College Review

2015

The Military Lens: Doctrinal Difference andDeterrence Failure in Sino-American Relations, by Christopher P. Twomey

David Burbach

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Japan. In a campaign breathtaking in its brutality, Japan destroyed China's nascent republic, enabled the victory of the Communists in their civil war with the Nationalists, and destroyed the old imperial order in Asia. Thus, the new China was born into a world of many possibilities. Unhappily, none of the good ones, either domestically or internationally, was realized until 1979, when China's current "rise" can be said to have begun.

Westad's fine account of what has come before brings us to realize that the rise of China will not necessarily have a calming effect on either the Chinese people or on others who live nearby. Since 1750, "internationalization," though not entirely a one-way street, has been mostly that; now, the restless empire, once in a defensive crouch, is moving out smartly in all directions. Perhaps this should be expected of a "civilizational state," except that today's China offers to the world nothing of what it once did—no high culture, no attainments in intellectual and philosophical life, and certainly no models for wise and effective governance. Instead, as Westad helps us see, the current regime is thrashing around, which makes its own future, as well as the futures both of its "near abroad" and of the world at large, hard to predict.

Empires, we have been taught, are supposed to bring peace, but today's Middle Empire ruled from today's Beijing displays many indications that it is bent on becoming a major disturber of the peace. Yet even under a more enlightened outlook, there would be challenges: the Middle Empire borders on three nuclear-weapons states—Russia, India, and Pakistan—and probably also a fourth, North Korea. Even so, from his own well-informed examination of

China's modern experience Westad concludes that prospects for peace remain—not a ringing vote of confidence in the powers that be in Beijing, but neither is it a wholly despairing outlook. After all, Westad is an accomplished historian of the Cold War, the nonviolent, freedom-enhancing outcome of which reminds us that things do not always turn out badly.

CHARLES HORNER
Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute
Washington, D.C.

Twomey, Christopher P. *The Military Lens: Doctrinal Difference and Deterrence Failure in Sino-American Relations.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 2010. 240pp. $35

It has been said that "weapons speak to the wise—but in general they need interpreters." *The Military Lens,* written by political scientist Christopher P. Twomey, associate professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey, California, shows the difficulty of that quote. Twomey makes a strong case that differing military languages and doctrines explain otherwise puzzling examples of deterrence failure and escalation.

The Military Lens is a welcome addition to the literature on deterrence, which too often treats actors as interchangeable "black boxes." Twomey writes in the spirit of authors who, like Robert Jervis, explore psychological factors that led to misinterpreting the actions of others. Twomey's work adds the new factor of military doctrine. Every military has its own doctrine, or "theory of victory," its vision of how military resources are to be used to achieve operational success. Twomey's core argument is that strategists look through a doctrinal "lens" when assessing capabilities

and intentions and that this weakens deterrence in two ways: the credibility of others' threats is discounted, because their doctrines are thought to be ineffective, and the others' signals are missed by the use of one's own doctrine as a template for indicators. This attention to misperceptions at the level of operational net assessment is new and of direct relevance to planners and analysts.

Much of the book tests the author's theory against three Korean War–era episodes: China's failure to deter U.S. movement north of the thirty-eighth parallel, American failure to deter China from entering the war, and the less well-known maritime story of how the United States prevented a planned Chinese invasion of Taiwan. Twomey also traces how greatly the United States and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) underestimated each other's land warfare capabilities and as a result issued threats that neither considered credible. The PLA Navy, with officers largely educated abroad, understood that U.S. air supremacy rendered landings impossible. The choice of the 1950 Korean cases was wise, as most variables other than PLA army/navy differences are constant. A notable feature of the case studies is archival research, both in the United States and in China; fresh documentation alone will appeal to Korean War specialists.

Doctrinal difference fits the Korean War, but the radical divergence of the revolutionary PLA and atomic American military makes this a relatively easy case, as Twomey acknowledges. How often do doctrinal differences generally lead to deterrence failures? An additional chapter on two Arab-Israeli cases argues that deterrence failure is correlated with doctrinal divergence. The evidence is suggestive, but the book could be

strengthened by a larger universe of cases that may answer such additional questions as these: Are doctrinal differences more common in ground than naval warfare, for example? Do opponents in long-lasting rivalries (compared to the United States / People's Republic of China in 1950) fare better at assessing the others' capability despite differing doctrines?

The Military Lens offers a warning that clear, credible threats may not be understood as such by others. Since doctrinal misperceptions take place at the military level, the lessons here are particularly relevant to planners, as they develop assessments and deterrent options for civilian leaders. This work also holds implications for professional military education, stating as it does that officers should be encouraged to overcome doctrinal filters, that scholars should study foreign doctrines, and that educational exchanges might reduce misunderstandings (the author himself is involved in U.S.-Chinese dialogues). Perhaps weapons speak a common tongue, but Twomey reminds us that militaries need to be fluent in multiple languages.

DAVID BURBACH
Naval War College

Kane, Tim. *Bleeding Talent: How the U.S. Military Mismanages Great Leaders and Why It's Time for a Revolution*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 271pp. $27

This book provides a critical analysis and highlights a dysfunctional U.S. Army officer personnel management system. The author explains why the best and brightest young officers depart early for civilian careers and what can be