

institutions are briefly discussed, but none receives detailed attention. There are similar problems in the chapter on societal influences, which deals only briefly with the role of political parties on foreign policy. Much more could have been made of the parties' attempts and success at setting the foreign policy agenda during elections campaigns. For instance, the KMT decision to accept the need to apply to rejoin the UN was affected by the DPP's use of the appeal during campaigns in 1991–92.

There are also places where data appears to be of questionable relevance to the making of foreign policy. For instance, some of the sections on the mass media, on government institutions and on the personal backgrounds of the main presidents did not contribute to our understanding of foreign policy making. Similarly, since the author barely mentions the ROC Constitution in the text, why was a 30-page appendix of the constitution required?

Despite the above mentioned minor defects, this volume makes an important contribution to the field of comparative foreign policy analysis. It should be considered an important reading for courses on Sino-US relations, cross-Strait Relations and the International Politics of Asia. I intend to make it a set text in my own course on *Government and Politics in Taiwan* at SOAS.

DAFYDD FELL

Wenge sishi nian ji – 2006. Beijing. *Wenhua dageming yantaohui quanjilu* (In Memory of the CR: Minutes of the Symposium on the Cultural Revolution, Beijing 2006)

Edited by HAO JIAN

Forth Worth, TX: Fellows Press of America, 2006

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The year 2006 saw the 40th anniversary of the launching of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution come and go in silence in the PRC. No memorials were uncovered, no plaques unveiled. CCP historians – custodians of the archives and writers of *official* history – held a few closed workshops on Mao's final decade in power, but no major conferences. Under the radar of the authorities, though, a three-day unofficial conference bringing together 16 Chinese and foreign scholars and historians of the Cultural Revolution was held in a resort outside Beijing in March. Participants included a number of widely respected names whose scholarship normally appears in liberal Chinese-language print-media like *Twenty-first Century*, *Hundred Year Tide* and *Yanhuang Chunqiu* and on the world-wide web. The conference saw “a hundred schools of thought contend,” as those who felt comfortable occupying a moderate middle ground engaged with those who claimed more radical positions on the left and right.

This book contains the minutes from the conference, based on tape recordings carefully edited for clarity of exposition. It is an academic work, not a political broadside or disguised manifesto quoting *J'accuse!* to the Chinese authorities. Perhaps in another three or four decades it will be viewed as a snapshot of where things stood in 2006: what topics, other than those that dominated official history, were being probed and which issues were hotly debated.

A powerful theme of the *Minutes* is accepting the diversity of the Cultural Revolution experience: people, work units, social groups, and regions often lived it as if cursed in radically different “interesting times.” This historical dissimilarity today serves as a great wall from which seminal ideas are bounced, rather than as an obstacle that premature grand theorizing runs up against. Tang Shaojie's insights

drawn from years of research into what happened at Qinghua University in Beijing, Xu Hailiang's tentative conclusions based on the case of the Cultural Revolution in Wuhan, of which he is *the* master historian (*pace* Wang Shaoguang), and the prolific He Shu, stupendously knowledgeable chronicler of the movement in his home of Chongqing – none of them claim in the *Minutes* to have understood what the Cultural Revolution was *all* about or assert that on a national level, it was *really* like *that* or like *this* (because “that’s what my data show”!).

Conference participants come out in favour of the intrinsic value of methodological “eclecticism.” Though the *Minutes* record a lively debate on, in particular, the pros and cons of oral history, nobody really objected on serious grounds to the commonsense position that if information and understanding is what you seek, you do so with whatever tools you have, all of them, rather than only a fraction of the total in the interest of methodological “purity.” Xu Youyu from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences served as one of two (and by far the most effective) presenter of foreign research trends, while Chen Donglin from the Contemporary China Research Institute read a paper that situated a thoughtful analysis of the Cultural Revolution in the context of repeated post-1949 attempts to reform China’s political system. Where the conference broke particularly important new ground as far as sensitive topics and approaches are concerned was in the case of one presentation by Wu Di – a scholar of the Xibo nationality, best known outside China for his work on the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia (reviewed in *CQ* No. 140, pp. 1194–95) – who spoke on collaboration (pp. 113–18) as a trope for dealing with inter-ethnic relations in the Cultural Revolution.

Close to the end, the *Minutes* record one participant lamenting the fact that three decades after it came to a close with the death of Mao Zedong, the Cultural Revolution is being “covered up, forgotten, misinterpreted, and ‘transformed and abused’ at will.” And if that is not in itself bad enough, he charged, an even bigger problem is the fact that there seem to be so few younger scholars showing an interest in researching, interpreting, understanding and teaching its history: “We who are here today are in our fifties; in another ten years’ time, if it’s still only members of our generation meeting like this, then the study of the Cultural Revolution may well face the risk of becoming an “extinct subject (*juexue*)!” (p. 173). Unlike him, I believe there are grounds for optimism and that what he fears will not come to pass, although a review like this is not the medium for arguing what is really a tangential point. But to reduce by just a little the likelihood of the extinction of the subject, I permit myself here to switch from review to “pledge mode” and ask interested *CQ* readers to make your personal contributions to the furthering of independent historical scholarship inside China on the Cultural Revolution by purchasing this fine book!

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Bold Plum: With the Guerrillas in China's War against Japan

HSIAO LI LINDSAY

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In early December 1941, less than six months after they married, Hsiao Li and Michael Lindsay escaped inevitable internment in Japanese-occupied Beijing by fleeing westwards into the Chinese Communists' Jinchaji Base Area. Professor