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The Twilight War: The Secret History of America's Thirty-Year Conflict with Iran

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(comprising three-quarters of the world) only to serve specific interests. Though those interests are expanding, most of the finite attention Chinese leaders give to international issues focuses on challenges within and near its borders.

Presenting China's obsession with its territorial integrity, Scobell and Nathan explain Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Taiwan in a sophisticated and integrated overall context. They conclude that China is not expansionist but rather unyielding within its identified historical claims. By focusing on these four core geographic areas and relegating discussion of the South China Sea and the Senkaku Islands to chapters on China's relations with Japan and Southeast Asia, however, the authors understate the sometimes elastic nature of Chinese claims. In this context, the authors' focus on elite political decision making arguably underrepresents the growing impact of popular nationalism on high-profile sovereignty issues. Nationalism, they concede, is "the only important value still shared by the regime and its critics" in Chinese society.

Finally, Scobell and Nathan present the instruments of Chinese power, focusing a chapter each on the economic, military, and "soft power" tools at the disposal of the Chinese Communist Party. They conclude by offering three possible trajectories for Chinese development: economic success and authoritarianism (the "Singapore model"), political democratization, and regime failure. The authors do not betray which of these outcomes they view as most likely. Consistent with their presentation of the Chinese point of view, they conclude that China no more knows its own future than does anyone else.

Reducing a topic this complex into one volume is inherently an exercise in intellectual triage, and some topics are naturally underrepresented. Issues of cyber warfare, the Internet, and the political impact of new media are touched on, but their full complexities as mechanisms of Chinese soft power, potential threats to regime stability, or means of economic espionage are not fully explored. Consideration of People's Liberation Army capabilities, while deftly crafted, comprises less than forty pages. The Chinese navy's three years of sustained operations in the Gulf of Aden are mentioned only in passing. Readers interested in details of Chinese military capabilities and institutions will want to consult more specialized texts.

With this limited caveat, *China's Search for Security* is the best one-volume introduction to Chinese security issues in print. At once rigorous and readable, it offers U.S. Navy officers headed to the Pacific a chance to consider the region through a Chinese lens. Specialist readers may disagree with specific points of interpretation but will be impressed by the scope of the survey and the synthesis presented.

COMMANDER DALE C. RIELAGE, USN



Crist, David. *The Twilight War: The Secret History of America's Thirty-Year Conflict with Iran*. New York: Penguin, 2012. 638pp. \$22

Author David Crist writes, "Conspiracy theories abound in the Middle East in part because there frequently *are* so many conspiracies." Every chapter of *The Twilight War* pulls back the curtain and sheds new light on many previously

undisclosed and often underappreciated events that have shaped U.S.-Iranian relations. This masterfully researched historical account focuses on U.S.-Iranian relations since the fall of the shah of Iran and the beginning of the Iranian Revolution. The policy and strategy decisions of the past six U.S. presidents, covert CIA operations, Iranian actions and reactions, and the struggle to create the present-day U.S. Central Command are all detailed in this book.

David Crist works as a historian for the federal government and as a frequent adviser to senior government and military officials. He is also a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve and a veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. His research for this work included interviews and access to records of many of the principal decision makers on both sides. *The Twilight War* comes at a critical time in the relationship between the United States and Iran.

If plotted on a graph, the thirty-year chronology of events between the United States and Iran would look like two opposing synchronized sine waves: when one is up, the other is down, and never the two shall meet. Crist's engaging account provides never-before-revealed insights into the near, and often missed, opportunities for reconciliation between both countries. In what could sometimes pass for a Sophoclean tragedy, if not for the very real consequences, these two opposing nations cannot seem to get in step long enough to find ways to resolve their standing grievances.

Some readers may criticize Crist's lack of detail on the complex history of Iran during the reign of the American-supported shah. Crist explains his decision to pick up the story of U.S.-Iranian relations at the time of the

Iranian Revolution on the grounds that these are the years of direct conflict and competition with Iran. It is clear that this decision allows for a more focused examination of the current regime, as well as the events that are currently shaping our world. Those interested in prerevolutionary U.S.-Iranian relations may wish to read Stephen Kinzer's *All the Shah's Men* (Wiley Press, 2008).

General James Mattis has made *The Twilight War* required reading for members of the U.S. Central Command staff. This insightful and intellectually provocative book should be required reading in fact for all military professionals who wish to gain a better understanding of what many in the profession of arms consider the most likely reason for military conflict in the next decade.

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Smith, Jean Edward. *Eisenhower: In War and Peace*. New York: Random House, 2012. 951pp. \$40

When you mention Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower, far too many people will hark back either to D-Day and the invasion of Normandy or to a mythical, almost lyrical presidency, when life was good, three martinis accompanied every lunch, and gas cost pennies a gallon. The truth, of course, is far different and far more interesting. In *Eisenhower* Jean Edward Smith has produced what may well be the best one-volume biography on this figure. The book moves fast and yet manages to leave nothing out.

In illuminating Dwight D. Eisenhower, Smith steps adroitly and rapidly through the years of his life, maintaining the