

Preface

When everything comes together, the challenges of producing an edited volume are more than compensated for by the increased understanding of complex problems that results from interaction among the contributors and insights that emerge from the juxtaposition of independently authored analyses. Most of the patterns and trends that become apparent when comparing and aggregating the interpretations in this volume were not anticipated when we began this project in 2012 or predicted by any of the participants when we discussed alternative ways to explore and explain interactions among China and the countries of Northeast Asia. The decision to focus on specific dyads and multistate groupings without attempting to fit the analysis to a predetermined framework, model, or theory proved fruitful. We all learned new and important things about China's engagement and about changes within the countries of Northeast Asia. I hope—and expect—that our readers will also discover new insights and deepen their understanding of China's perceptions, priorities, and policies and that they will gain similar insight into the ways in which regional states responded to perceived opportunities and risks resulting from China's rise and greater activism on the regional stage.

As director of the Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, I am pleased that the center was able to support the project and proud to include this volume in our series published by Stanford University Press. It is the second in a planned series that will examine China's interactions with other regions of the world and, we hope, reveal additional trends and patterns transcending individual regions and strengthen confidence in our judgments about

how and why those patterns exist. Neither this volume nor others in the series attempt to predict the future, but the identification of trends, what drives them, and their implications for the countries involved provide a useful starting point for anticipating how events may unfold.

Tom Fingar's acknowledgment section properly cites the contributions of the many people who helped transform an interesting idea into a scholarly contribution to our understanding of China's objectives, how other countries perceive them, and how China's increased engagement with other parts of the world is changing both regional and global interactions. Many people contributed, but the genesis of the project was his observation, based on decades of experience as a State Department and intelligence community analyst, that all nations formulate foreign policy goals and strategies on the basis of their perception of perils and opportunities and that no nation ever achieves all that it hopes to achieve in the international arena.

What actually happens, he observed, almost always results from the interaction of multiple actors pursuing independent agendas with varying amounts of skill and resources. China's rise, he argued, makes it a more formidable player, but China does not and cannot have the ability to ignore the actions and aspirations of prospective partners and interested third parties. He translated this insight into a proposal and the proposal into a plan. His observation and argument made sense but remained to be subjected to rigorous empirical analysis. My Shorenstein APARC colleagues and I decided to fund the project because it appeared both possible and important to learn whether, or to what extent, his observations were correct and to discover the most important directions and drivers of China's global engagement. This book more than justifies the confidence we had in both Fingar and the project. More important, its publication makes the research of the contributors and the insights from the project available to students, scholars, and government officials seeking to understand and to influence developments in the global arena.

Gi-Wook Shin

Director

Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center