

*Unafraid of the Ghost: The Victim Mentality of Mao Zedong and the Two Taiwan Strait Crises in the 1950s**

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Abstract

This article examines the origin of the two Taiwan Strait crises in 1954–1955 and 1958. Whereas the previous literature has focused on how domestic and international factors led to the shelling of Jinmen, this study investigates the effects of Mao's victim mentality. Like many other intellectuals in the late Qing and Republican eras, Mao was deeply disturbed by the Chinese "century of humiliation," a historical narrative emphasizing foreign intervention and imperialist aggression. Such feelings of humiliation and victimization were reinforced when the American fleet blocked Mao's plan to reunify China in the 1950s. It is argued that Mao's victim mentality was a significant factor contributing to his decision to shell Jinmen twice. By analyzing this case, this article reveals the emotional side of the PRC diplomacy.

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