

Wang Gungwu and
Zheng Yongnian (eds.),
*China and the
New International Order*

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China and the New International Order, 2008,
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Wang Gungwu and Zheng Yongnian's edited book studies the issue of how China has been transformed and reshaped as a consequence of the new international order and how China's role has been redefined. The book also attempts to study the domestic sources of China's international behaviour. Its central premise is "how China can reshape the international order depends on whether China has such a capacity, which is a function of its domestic development. On the other hand, how the world can reshape China also depends on whether China's domestic forces accept or resist any external influence they face" (p; 3). The importance of this premise is based on the Fairbankian analysis that "most of the dynasties in China collapsed under the twin blows of inside disorder and outside calamity; that is domestic rebellion and foreign invasion" (Fairbank, 1968; p. 3 cited in p. 5).

Based on this idea, the book discusses the contours of China's role in international relations; from its origins to its determinants, its constituents and its implications. The book is divided into four sections and each focuses on a different aspect. The first section looks at the key issues in conceptualising Chinese international relations and it deals with issues like historical precedence, nationalism, Chinese concept of sovereignty and civil-military relationship. In the second section, China and globalisation, different aspects of China's interactions with the world, especially over the last two decades are discussed. These include, China's role in the world economy, Chinese perspectives on the emerging world order, and China and global governance. The third section, China and regionalism, looks at China's perspectives on regionalism and multilateralism, and the patterns of its regional interaction by studying its role in SCO and ASEAN. The fourth section studies China and international relations, in practice and in studies. It focuses on the Chinese Realpolitik tradition and asks if the emergence of the Chinese School of International Relations is likely.

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The strength of the book lies in its blend of academic and policy research. Its strength also is in the nuanced understanding that the well known contributors to this volume bring to the study. 