

provide essential context for the reforms as well as analysis of their implications. This is a particularly important contribution because of the length of the volume and the wide range of subjects covered in its 18 chapters.

The main takeaway from this indispensable account of the reforms is that Xi's sweeping organizational changes are intended to accelerate the PLA's drive to become a world-class military, which he views as key to achieving the larger strategic goal of the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." As this volume underscores, the latest reform of the PLA is also an area in which Xi has distinguished himself from his recent predecessors. Although the need for sweeping reforms has been clear since the 1990s, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao were unable or unwilling to push for the fundamental changes required to transform the PLA from a ground-force-dominated military with an outdated organizational structure to a more modern, joint and operationally capable fighting force. In contrast, Xi appears to be succeeding in leveraging his political power and an unrelenting anti-corruption campaign to remake the PLA, resulting in the most important reorganization in its 90-year history. The reorganization will have major implications for the United States and other countries. In particular, as Wuthnow and Saunders observe in the Introduction, although challenges remain, Xi's reformed PLA is likely to be better able to deter or intimidate potential adversaries, win future "informationized" wars, and protect Chinese interests in the region and beyond.

Given the detailed coverage of the reforms and insightful analysis of their drivers and implications, the potential audience for this volume is not limited to China scholars and PLA analysts. It should also be of interest to a wider range of scholars and analysts. The volume is also suitable for teaching in the fields of Chinese studies and security studies, particularly for China studies or regional studies courses with a focus on Chinese military modernization, and for security studies courses that cover military reorganization and reform efforts more generally and might benefit from comparing PLA reforms to military reorganizations in other countries.

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China and Intervention at the UN Security Council: Reconciling Status

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Chinese officials have long been sceptical of using the tools of the United Nations to pressure those accused of human rights violations. Sanctions and military interventions weaken the norm of sovereignty, a strong version of which Beijing relies on to reject foreign interference in its own affairs. As a veto-holding member of the UN Security Council, why then has China sometimes acquiesced to, or even supported, such pressure? In *China and Intervention at the UN Security Council*, Hong Kong University professor Courtney Fung argues that anxieties about the loss of status can help explain the puzzle. In doing so, she not only draws attention to an underappreciated motive of Chinese foreign policy, but also develops a sophisticated, and largely persuasive, theory of how and when status concerns encourage leaders to do the unexpected.

In a nutshell, the book theorizes that a state will act on status concerns under two conditions: when leaders perceive that a failure to act will have a strong, immediate effect on their standing within a peer group (called a “status trigger”), and when the other members of the group have coalesced around a specific course of action, and are thus in a strong position to punish the would-be spoiler. Seeking to avoid the social costs of opposition, a state will bandwagon even if doing so requires a cost to its material interests or normative preferences. Conversely, in the absence of a specific trigger or a consensus among its peers, a state is likely to act in ways more consistent with those other interests. This argument builds on, and advances in a thoughtful way, the literature on the micro-processes of social influence in international relations.

The empirical heart of the book weighs this theory against Chinese decision-making at the Security Council in three recent cases involving mass atrocities: Darfur (2004–2008), Libya (2011–2012) and Syria (2011–2015). Marshalling over 200 interviews and a vast collection of UN documents and Chinese-language sources, the cases demonstrate how, at critical moments, Beijing considered the social costs of obfuscation and adjusted its positions accordingly. In the Darfur and Libya cases, a consensus among China’s two peer groups – the great powers (represented by the United States, Great Britain and France), and regional groups representing the developing world – made intervention hard to resist, while in the Syria case, divisions in the Arab world greatly reduced the costs of China using its veto to shield the Assad regime.

While the book is clearly valuable to international relations theorists and students of Chinese foreign policy, there are also useful insights for practitioners. In the conclusion, Fung argues that Security Council resolutions are most likely to succeed when they are not seen as stoking regime change. Dealing with “rogue regimes” with a lighter touch would address sensitivities piqued by the view in many quarters that NATO far exceeded its mandate in the 2011 air campaign against Libya that led to Gaddafi’s demise, concerns reflected in the Security Council’s failure to act decisively on Syria. Less ambitious proposals, though unsatisfying in Western capitals, could be more useful in galvanizing broad regional support, which Beijing will take into account when forming its own position.

Readers of this volume will leave with the impression that status has weighed on the minds of past Chinese leaders, especially when they feared isolation on the world stage, but may also question how relevant this consideration will be in an era of Chinese confidence. The threat of a Western boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics led China to shift its position on Darfur, but given Chinese appraisals of a US in relative decline after the global financial crisis and a growing willingness to stand up to Europe on human rights, it is unclear that China’s decisions would be as easily influenced today. It is also doubtful that Xi Jinping – a bolder leader in his own right – would be as willing to appear to bend to Western pressure as his predecessors.

China’s ability to influence the distribution of social rewards and sanctions also deserves greater attention. With greater economic and diplomatic power, Beijing is less likely to accept whatever the consensus of the major players and regional blocs happens to be. China, for instance, has leveraged its largesse among a few Southeast Asian partners to prevent ASEAN from adopting a stronger critique of China’s territorial claims in the South China Sea, thus avoiding social opprobrium. In a future debate on intervention, Beijing could also use various carrots and sticks to prevent other groups from unifying against its preferred position or dissuade them from imposing costs, such as boycotting the Olympics. Understanding the

means through which China is both adapting to and actively manipulating the ability of others to grant it status will thus be a key consideration as world leaders try to enlist Beijing in a future coalition.

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China in the World: An Anthropology of Confucius Institutes, Soft Power, and Globalization

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Amidst rising US–China trade tensions, anthropologist Jennifer Hubbert's book *China in the World* offers a timely and superbly insightful look into the cultural contention between the two “superpowers.” The immediate object of her analysis is the Confucius Institutes (CIs), a core component of China's soft power policy that has generated much controversy in the United States, perhaps more so than other places. But the significance of her approach goes much further. Whereas Niall Ferguson's coinage “Chimerica” in the context of financial history aims to but ultimately falls short in illuminating the economic entanglement between China and America, Hubbert's study is among the first to shed a more critical light on this chimerical entanglement from the critical perspective of cultural studies.

First and foremost, Hubbert takes the question of power – both in terms of soft power and what counts as and is expected of a 21st-century superpower – more seriously than most political scientists. Influential as Joseph Nye's “soft power” formulation is in shaping contemporary China's globalization practices, few have engaged with its impact from the standpoint of cultural production. Based on extensive fieldwork in both America and China, the book challenges the assumption that soft power policy directly translates into the ability to influence. Instead, Hubbert turns our attention to the contingent effects of cultural policies to rethink what they tell us about the state and state–society relations.

The critical impulse to unpack the relationship between culture and power permeates Hubbert's seven neatly organized chapters. Chapter one helpfully establishes the contribution of anthropology to international relations in enabling us to approach the CIs as a product of the Chimerican cultural entanglement. In chapter two, Hubbert draws on some of her previous and equally nuanced work on the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai Expo to analyse the CIs as a form of nation branding, which mobilizes traditional culture to refashion China's place in globalization.

Chapter three focuses on the CI classrooms in America, where many students' Chinese learning is motivated by a long-standing exoticism associated with Asian culture – which makes Chinese-learning “cool” – and an increased desire to equip oneself with the skills necessary to cope with the challenges of a risk society. Chinese, then, becomes less an instrument for the Chinese government to accrue power than a means for aspiring global citizens in American schools to acquire cultural capital. This process in turn boosts America's, not China's, soft power.

In chapter four, Hubbert follows a popular Chinese Bridge excursion led by the CIs for American high school students that showcases China's modern progress and ancient glories. The effects of such tours on participants, however, often contradict