cent of Jiankang's population were poor in 2005. More remarkably still, only 1 per cent of Jiankang's households were poor according to all four approaches. In one sense, none of this is surprising: we know that poverty estimates are sensitive to how poverty is defined and measured. Nevertheless, to find this degree of variation in a single village is quite extraordinary, and we are in Lu's debt for illuminating the point so graphically.

For all that, generalization from this type of work is difficult. Jiankang is anything but a typical Chinese village. Every part of the village stands more than 2,300 metres above sea level, it was hit by an earthquake in 1995, and 57 per cent of its population is non-Han. It is therefore not surprising either that the incidence of poverty is high, or that different poverty measures produce such varied outcomes for this sort of differentiated socio-economic landscape. I also find Lu's attachment to participatory poverty assessment rather unconvincing. To be sure, she outlines some of the problems – allowing the population to self-assess whether they are poor inevitably inflates poverty; the well-off in China are hardly likely to support poverty relief when assessment is so "subjective"; aggregation of different indices requires the use of arbitrarily chosen weights; and it is impossible to compare rates of poverty across different parts of the People's Republic. Nevertheless, Lu does seem excessively sympathetic to participatory poverty assessment. This is all the more surprising given the strictures she directs towards the official approach, which makes extensive use of local knowledge (albeit the knowledge of local officials) and which often allows villagers to voice their objections to the poverty list at public meetings, thus making it a genuinely participatory process. For all that, this is a fascinating book which demonstrates the way in which research for a doctoral dissertation can lead to a splendid contribution to scholarship and to knowledge.

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Past and Present in China's Foreign Policy: From "Tribute System" to "Peaceful Rise"
Edited by JOHN E. WILLS, JR.
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The discussion of China's growing prominence in international life attracts increasing attention from publics, policy-makers and scholars alike. Usually side-lined by the mainstream, such interest towards China's roles and attitudes on the world stage has grown exponentially in the context of the deepening economic crisis across Europe and North America – the traditional locales of powers and influence in world politics. Indicative of the emergent weight and significance of non-Western actors on the global stage, the trend set by China seems to challenge the conventional frameworks of international relations.

In this setting, most commentators suggest a nascent "Sinicization" of global politics – seemingly confirmed by China's extensive involvement in the developing world. According to a number of commentators, backstopping this global drive (primarily for resources) are the perceived and actual aspirations of Beijing's external outlook. Thus, more often than not, the contention in the literature is that regardless of whether China chooses to develop a cooperative or conflictual stance, it will nevertheless have an important bearing on the patterns and practices of world affairs. This

volume edited by John E. Wills, Jr. goes to the heart of this conversation. It suggests that the country's prominence in international life reflects both the transformations in, and the transformative potential of, Chinese foreign policy practice and perceptions.

In this respect, the collection makes a timely contribution to the discussion of this topic by scholars and observers of world politics. By bringing together some of the most prominent China hands in the field, Wills's edited volume not only tracks China's expanding global agenda, but also addresses some important gaps by providing much-needed contextual understanding of how China views and interprets the world. In fact, it is quite rare to encounter analyses as attentive to detail and method, yet as rigorously polemical as the ones included in this collection. By offering sophisticated macro-historical studies of Beijing's current international interactions, the contributions to this volume raise critical questions about China's foreign policy.

The point of departure for the volume is that the bifurcated view which tends to dominate the IR literature on China (by framing it as either a friend or a foe) should not blind observers to the nuances of what is ultimately a much more complex Chinese involvement in the patterns of global politics. Thus, a cornerstone of all contributions is the exploration of the historical evolution of the state China and how this process impacts on contemporary foreign policy. Peter C. Perdue is quite explicit when he states that "the imperial heritage remains a spectral presence" in Beijing's purview (p. 94). Wills elaborates this point further in his contribution:

> From Han times, the Chinese built and often maintained a large single-centred polity, an *empire*, partly on a basis of military power, demographic weight, prosperity, and sophistication of written culture, but also on the basis of *networks* among individuals… Such a network-built empire rarely was in total control of its subjects, and did not elicit an all-consuming devotion and identification in the way a pseudo-kin "we-group" or a religion can. (p. 25)

One of the key legacies of such state-building experience, according to James L. Hevia is "to draw attention to the contingent, variegated, and intentionally constructed aspects of complex entities" such as China (p. 68). At the same time, Harry Harding cautions of the danger plaguing some commentators in trying "to draw too much [and uncritically] from the narratives of the past" in an attempt to glean insight into "China's approach to the twenty-first century – particularly from the dated narratives of a Sinocentric Asia and of national humiliation at the hands of the West – they may produce folly rather than wisdom" (p. 126). Heeding this warning, Alice Lyman Miller intimates that the cognitive grammars of historically informed exploration can actively and effectively contribute to recovering the emancipatory potential of scholarly observation. In particular, she suggests that the "use of China's past to elucidate its present and project its future might benefit from a healthy dose of self-reflection and self-knowledge" (p. 52). Taking this reflexivity seriously, Brantly Womack emphasizes that "sustainable leadership" in the complex patterns of global life – regardless of whether it is China's or anybody else's – is "not primarily a matter of preventing the rise of challengers, but reassuring other countries that the current order is in their interest" (p. 109). Echoing these sentiments, Michael D. Swaine elaborates that thoughtful policy analysts need to develop a "greater appreciation of both Chinese traditional social norms and relationships and rational calculation as they affect Chinese foreign policy behaviour, and also called for less emotional, less ideological, and more realistic interpretations of Chinese policies and actions" (p. 5).

In this way, the contributors' elucidations offer refreshing perspectives on the content, scope and implications of Beijing's external relations. The volume's thoughtful

consideration of China's global roles provides a wealth of solid knowledge and perceptive insights on the evolution, patterns and practices of China's foreign policy. Thus, to the experts on China's international interactions, this collection edited by Wills offers both a comprehensive overview and a much-needed reconsideration of the conceptual and policy outlines of Beijing's nascent global agency. To the beginners, it makes available an accessible, yet rigorous, analytical and empirical engagement with the dynamics of Chinese foreign policy.

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The China Threat: Memories, Myths, and Realities in the 1950s
NANCY BERNKOPF TUCKER
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Winston Churchill reportedly remarked that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was "the only bull I know who carries his own China shop with him." This characterization was understood as applying not only to the dour diplomat's style, but also to the bellicose China policy of the American president whom he served, Dwight D. Eisenhower. For two decades after Eisenhower left office in January 1961, conventional wisdom characterized his China policy as rigid, moralistic, self-righteous and narrow-minded. Eisenhower and Dulles, judged by their public statements, appeared to be slavish followers of the so-called China Lobby, a loose association of pundits, legislators and lobbyists in thrall to Chiang Kai-shek's government on Taiwan and unremittingly hostile to the People's Republic of China. The administration's refusal to recognize, deal with, or countenance trade with China, its belief in monolithic communism, and its military assistance to Taiwan, have all been blamed for a pair of military crises in the Taiwan Straits, strains among US allies, and an atmosphere of unremitting hostility between Beijing and Washington. Eisenhower's critics blamed him for bequeathing to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson a dysfunctional China policy built on fear and contributing to the US misadventure in Vietnam.

Since the 1980s, however, scholars with access to Eisenhower's presidential papers have presented a more nuanced portrait of the administration's foreign policies. Eisenhower, they showed, was no one's fool. While allowing Dulles and other officials to act as the public face of his administration, he made key decisions. A firm anti-communist, he ridiculed many of the most strident Republican anti-communists as partisan ignoramuses. He considered it possible to negotiate seriously with the Soviet Union after Stalin's death and doubted the Kremlin (or the PRC) wanted war any more than did the United States. Ike was not an intellectual and shared many racial prejudices of his era, but he believed strongly in multi-lateral institutions created after 1945, abhorred the idea of nuclear war (even as he built a huge atomic arsenal), and believed that open trade and patience would solve many of the world's problems. However, even many of these so-called Eisenhower Revisionists considered Ike's China policy a bit of a black hole from which little light escaped.

Historian Nancy Tucker has, in this lucid, well-written and thoughtful book shed welcome light on this puzzle. Supplementing US documents with British records, Chinese memoirs, interviews with several key participants, and public opinion data, Tucker shows that Eisenhower had a far more nuanced understanding of China