

will challenge the ruling party. She is right to assert that the regime's maintenance of a balance between liberalization and control has helped sustain its grip on power. Liebman examines the changing political environment for China's rule of law. While rule of law has become the target of China's reform, not all leaders appreciate it. Liebman analyses why the rule of law was de-emphasized during Hu Jintao's leadership, and points to the fundamental problem of China's responsive authoritarianism.

No doubt, China faces mounting challenges. As the authors suggest, institutional changes are required to cope with these challenges. However, all institutional changes take time. What is urgent for China is for it to have a high-quality leadership which is capable of introducing institutional changes. While many have had high expectations of the Xi leadership, we have to wait to see whether it can meet such expectations. From this book, one can hardly be optimistic.

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China's Foreign Political and Economic Relations: An Unconventional Global Power

SEBASTIAN HEILMANN and DIRK H. SCHMIDT

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Entire forests have been chopped down to produce the paper needed for the many books that have been published over the last two decades on China's economic rise and her growing political clout in the international sphere. One is therefore inclined to ask whether the world needs yet another book on China's rise to great power status? Apparently, Sebastian Heilmann and Dirk Schmidt thought so and set out the goal of complementing the existing literature on China's rapidly growing international importance with a text that offers an alternative to the, in their view, often "one-sided depictions and interpretations in Western debates" (xvi). To this end, they go beyond the standard (Western) macro theories of international relations and highlight "distinctive, nonstandard Chinese approaches, such as the combination of long-term strategic priorities with multilevel policy experimentation and informal business activities, to facilitate China's global expansion" (xvi). In the preface to their book *China's Foreign Political and Economic Relations: An Unconventional Global Power* – essentially a translation of their book that was originally published in German in 2012 – Heilmann and Schmidt emphasize that their text was written from a "European perspective" from which "there is nothing intrinsically wrong with a transition to the multipolar world to which Chinese foreign policy makers obstinately adhere" (xv).

Heilmann and Schmidt's clear and objective style makes this book indeed a welcome addition to a literature where authors often tend to make sweeping judgments and where the global economy is presented as a zero-sum game. The book provides a concise and comprehensive overview of China's international relations that is accessible to non-expert readers. It covers an impressive scope of topics ranging from traditional foreign policy issues over security policy and international economic relations to the challenges of climate change. The book is divided into 12 chapters, including chapters on China's foreign policy decision making and the reorientation of China's foreign policy, China's security policy, China's role in the world economy, China's

role in international environmental and climate policy, and the country's international human rights policy. In addition, it also comprises chapters dedicated to the Taiwan issue, Sino-American relations, China's relations with Japan and Korea, and China's relations with Europe. The individual chapters can be read independently, making the book a useful handbook on the issues concerned.

The broad coverage of all these various aspects of China's foreign relations is noteworthy, yet at the same time it means that inevitably there are limits regarding the depth with which the authors treat each of these areas. This is particularly true for the economics section of the book, which encompasses only a 28-page-long chapter on "China in the world economy." As an economist I may be biased, but given that China's foreign economic relations are also mentioned in the book's title, one would have hoped for a more extensive treatment of this area. Although the world economy chapter is well written and gives a good overview of China's rise as an export nation after joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, the country's exchange rate regime and foreign exchange accumulation, and China's inward and outward foreign direct investments, a more comprehensive coverage of the economic dimension would have been appropriate given that the Chinese leadership employs trade and financial policies as a means of foreign policy. Topics that would have deserved coverage include China's efforts to shape international commerce through trade and investment agreements, the globalization of Chinese banks as an instrument of financial statecraft, and the internationalization of the Renminbi that Chinese authorities have been working on since 2010.

Given the country's speedy economic and social change, China's role and status in the international arena has also been evolving quickly. Inevitably, like anyone writing on China, the authors faced the challenge of analysing a rapidly moving target. In the economic sphere, for instance, China has been prominently involved in various international initiatives since the authors submitted their final manuscript to the publisher, including the launch of the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Yet even though China continues to change rapidly, Heilmann and Schmidt ably identify and describe the long-term trends in China's foreign political and economic relations, and that makes the book more than a mere snapshot. The authors clearly know what they are writing about and present a balanced assessment of the state of China's foreign affairs. Overall, this is an excellent reading to familiarize oneself with the major trends in China's foreign political and economic relations. The book provides a wealth of information and references that will make it a worthwhile read also for those who consider themselves "China experts."

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China and Global Nuclear Order: From Estrangement to Active Engagement

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China's elaborate September 2015 military parade marking the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War allowed Beijing to showcase some of its newest high-tech weapons, including some of China's most advanced nuclear missiles. This