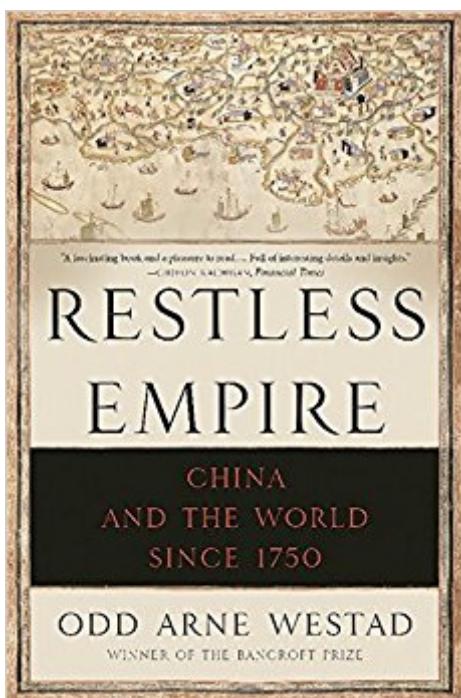


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# Restless Empire: China And The World Since 1750



## Synopsis

As the twenty-first century dawns, China stands at a crossroads. The largest and most populous country on earth and currently the world's second biggest economy, China has recently reclaimed its historic place at the center of global affairs after decades of internal chaos and disastrous foreign relations. But even as China tentatively reengages with the outside world, the contradictions of its development risks pushing it back into an era of insularity and instability—•a regression that, as China's recent history shows, would have serious implications for all other nations. In *Restless Empire*, award-winning historian Odd Arne Westad traces China's complex foreign affairs over the past 250 years, identifying the forces that will determine the country's path in the decades to come. Since the height of the Qing Empire in the eighteenth century, China's interactions—•and confrontations—•with foreign powers have caused its worldview to fluctuate wildly between extremes of dominance and subjugation, emulation and defiance. From the invasion of Burma in the 1760s to the Boxer Rebellion in the early 20th century to the 2001 standoff over a downed U.S. spy plane, many of these encounters have left Chinese with a lingering sense of humiliation and resentment, and inflamed their notions of justice, hierarchy, and Chinese centrality in world affairs. Recently, China's rising influence on the world stage has shown what the country stands to gain from international cooperation and openness. But as Westad shows, the nation's success will ultimately hinge on its ability to engage with potential international partners while simultaneously safeguarding its own strength and stability. An in-depth study by one of our most respected authorities on international relations and contemporary East Asian history, *Restless Empire* is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the recent past and probable future of this dynamic and complex nation.

## Customer Reviews

Kirkus Reviews—An astute, succinct study of modern China emphasizing overarching themes like hybrid identity and foreign influence rather than nationalism and centrality. A fresh look at a confounding nation the West has not yet figured out.—•Publishers Weekly—[A] savvy history. Westad manages to compress a vast and complex history into a well-paced narrative that helps readers understand China's growing centrality in international affairs.—•Booklist, starred review—A superb story of China's historically schizophrenic relationship with the outside world. [A] compelling, expansive account. Westad has provided readers with both a remarkable and timely glimpse behind the curtain

that is required reading for anyone interested in Chinese political history and economic development and the future of China's position in the international community." Martin Jacques, author of *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* John Pomfret, *Washington Post* "[A] wonderful book.... Westad upends, but ever so politely, a slew of misconceptions about China that have been concocted by his academic predecessors both in the West and in Asia.... [He shows] that the foreigners' story in China is not the monochromatic account of malevolent imperialism that has dominated the discourse in U.S. universities but a much richer and more important tale. The brilliance of *Restless Empire* is that while acknowledging the threat to China inherent in its contacts with the West and Japan, Westad also shows that they inspired and amazed the Chinese and played the critical role in the opening of the Chinese mind." Financial Times "Restless Empire is a fascinating book and a pleasure to read. As well as providing a historical framework for understanding the behavior of modern China, it is full of interesting details and insights.... Amid the anecdotes and the broad historical narrative, Westad also offers pointed reassessments of particular episodes in Chinese history.... Another interesting angle to *Restless Empire* is its emphasis on the ambiguous impact of China's collision with imperialism.... The restless reader may want to know what all this history tells us about the modern day. Westad places current developments in an interesting historical perspective."

Odd Arne Westad is one of the world's foremost experts on both the Cold War and contemporary East Asian history. A Professor of International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), he is also co-director of LSE INEAS, a center for the study of international affairs, diplomacy and grand strategy, and author of the acclaimed *The Global Cold War*, among many other books. He has held visiting fellowships at Cambridge University, Hong Kong University, and New York University, and has been the recipient of major grants from the MacArthur Foundation and the British Arts and Humanities Research Council. He has served as the international coordinator of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Advisory Group on Declassification and Archival Access and has been awarded the Bernath Lecture Prize from the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations. Professor Westad lectures widely on China's foreign affairs, on Western interventions in Africa and Asia, and on foreign policy strategy.

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