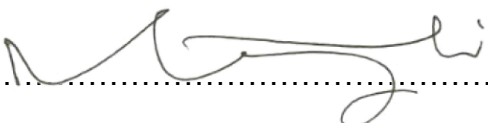


# China, Pariah Status and International Society

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# China, Pariah Status and International Society

## Abstract

Pariah status in international society denotes an international social hierarchy and differentiation of states caused by power differentials between state groups along the material and normative spectrums. From the late Qing era to the present day, China's engagement with international society has largely been marked by a sharp fall from the 'Middle Kingdom' to a pariah, followed by a recent rise to great power status. This thesis traces and analyses China's experience as a pariah in international society since 1839, and explains China's responses to the normative boundaries and behavioural standards set by members of international society. To this end, this thesis addresses two themes.

Theme One (Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4) provides an account of the sociological history of pariah state, on which basis it conducts an empirical study on China's pariah past. Theme Two (Chapter 5) brings in a sociological account of status to understand the fall and rise of states (particularly that of China), and to explain state responses to the normative boundaries alongside their status change in international society. Moreover, it challenges the material-power based power transition theory on China's rise and destiny, and argues for an alternative status-led account. In general, this thesis resonates greatly with English School theorists and social constructivists in terms of the understanding of and approach towards international relations. In a broad sense, it adopts a combined sociological and historical approach towards the study of the international, specifically that of pariah and status.

The main contentions of this thesis are: first, pariah is a social, relational and historically contingent term. Pariah states are socially made through a process of rule making, rule-application, and behaviour-judging, with the rule-makers being those who are positioned at the higher ends of both material and normative power spectrums. The criteria for pariah are not fixed, but subject to change as they are conditioned by the changing international normative/material structures and dynamics among actors. Second, state status has both material and social implications in international society. It derives from the internal/domestic attributes of the state as well as the external/international. The attainment of status hinges upon material power capacity, state identity, behavioural legitimacy, and international perception thereof. Third, empirically, the fall and rise of China in international society is not merely a process of China's material power decline and elevation relative to others, but was also accompanied by its social mobility downward and upward. China's responses to the international normative boundaries are not purely determined by material power incentives. Instead, it is the complex interplay between the material and the social that accounts for China's constant struggle between compliance with the standardised behavioural codes prescribed in the standard of civilisation, and attempts to contest them by inserting its own civilisational values.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

AI	Amnesty International
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CPC	Communist Party of China
CRHRP	US Country Report on Human Rights Practice
FRUS	Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States
HRiC	Human Rights in China
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KMT	Kuomintang, aka Nationalist Party
NHRAP	National Human Rights Action Plan
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PRC	People's Republic of China
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### **UN Human Rights Bodies**

CAT	Committee against Torture
CCPR	Human Rights Committee
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CPD	Commission on Population and Development
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
HRC	Human Rights Council
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

### **International Human Rights Law**

CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP1	Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICCPR-OP2	Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

- OP-CRC-SC Optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- OP-CRC-AC Optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict