

CHINA

A NEW HISTORY

John King Fairbank



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John King Fairbank

CHINA

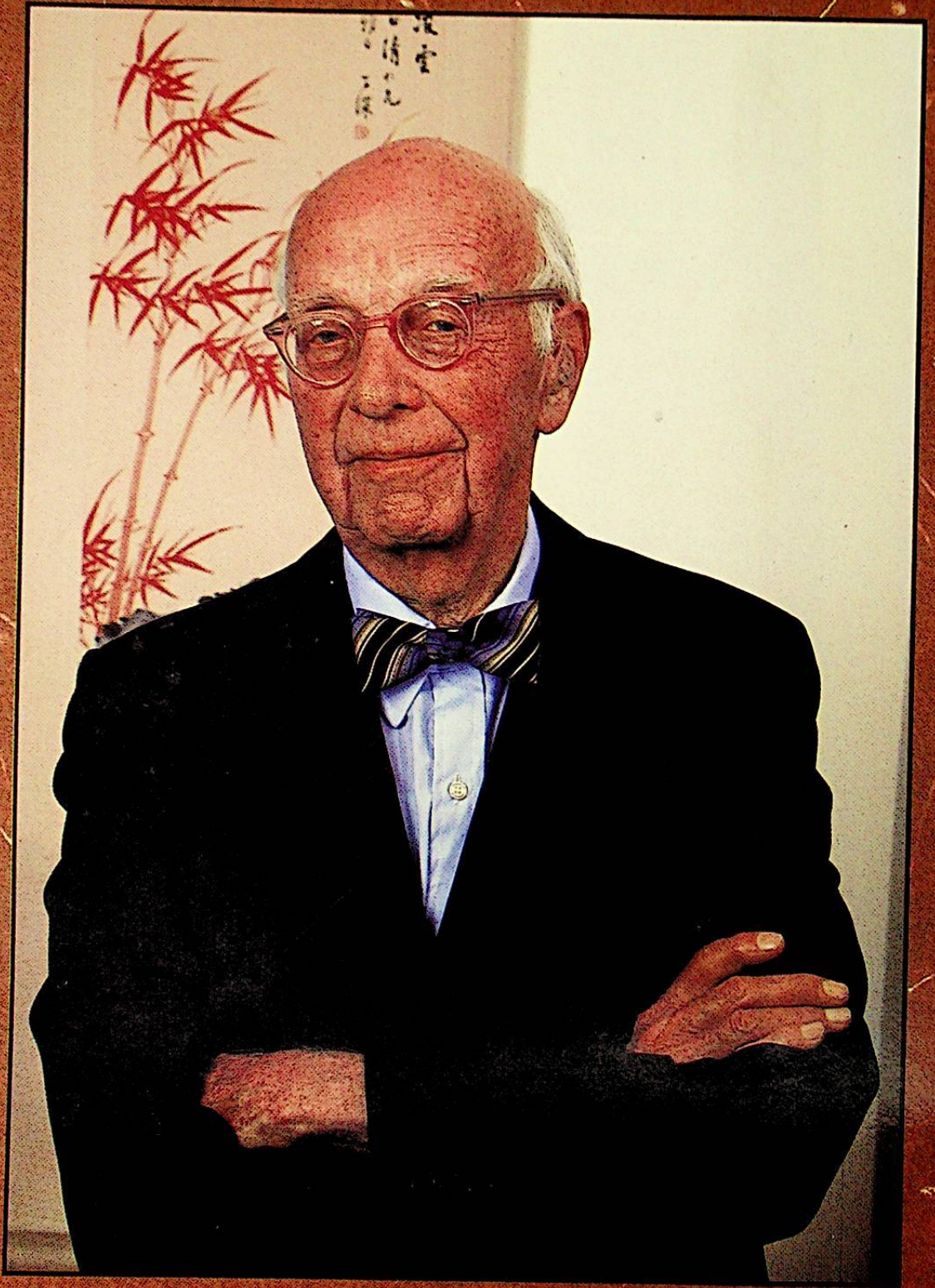
A NEW HISTORY

Recognized for decades as the West's doyen on China, John King Fairbank here offers the full and final expression of his lifelong engagement with this vast, ancient civilization. Fairbank's masterwork, *China: A New History* is without parallel as a concise, comprehensive, and authoritative account of China and its people over four millennia.

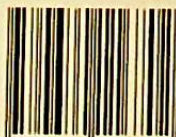
Bringing to bear sixty years of research, travel, and teaching, Fairbank weaves a richly detailed history that reaches from China's neolithic days to its troubled present. With a deft hand, he depicts a country ever-changing and yet constant in its effort to achieve a cohesive identity, an enormous and enormously complex nation perpetually balancing between the imperatives of force and the power of ideas. Here are the Chinese autocrats in their various times and guises, maintaining Confucian civility and order through — paradoxically — the perpetual threat of irrational imperial violence. Here is the intellectual class, revered for its wisdom and counsel and yet — as events from the Cultural Revolution to the massacre in Tiananmen Square demonstrate — eminently expendable. And here are China's farmers engaged in a never-ending, backbreaking attempt to tame their temperamental countryside only to face repeated famine as China's agrarian-based economy fails to develop. At the center of all stands the Chinese family, until recently the model for both obedience and tyranny in society at large.

Fairbank traces the growth of a civilization that could embrace so many contradictions and disruptions and yet retain a strong sense of its identity.

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