

China, readers can further develop the complex dimensions of interpreting the rich data provided in this book. The authors are encouraged to provide their data for open access and further research. To enhance the book, contextualizing its data reports and engaging with scholarship for a deeper analysis with multiple theoretical dimensions would benefit readers such as undergraduate students. Additionally, the book should have explained the puzzle of what contributes to the rise of radical feminism amidst the state's increasing control over all aspects of Chinese society. Furthermore, *Weibo Feminism* does not explicitly outline its methodology. The book relies on critical discourse analysis of rich text data fetched from Weibo, including content quickly deemed censored.

Considering the above-mentioned features and potential improvements, I recommend *Weibo Feminism* to researchers and postgraduate students in the fields of China studies, gender and sexuality, cultural studies and media studies.

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## Feminisms with Chinese Characteristics

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*Feminism with Chinese Characteristics* is a well-edited volume consisting of original research, translated work, interviews and reprinted articles by a wide range of scholars, writers and activists from multiple locales. The hybrid form is appropriate given both the plurality of feminisms and the multiplicity of Chineseness, as the editors, Ping Zhu and Hui Faye Xiao, emphasize. They set the tone of the volume in the introduction, describing the book's objective as the deconstruction of binary structures in the study and understanding of both feminism and Chinese characteristics. They forcefully argue for "a broader use of 'feminisms' ... to contest and open up 'Chinese characteristics' as a notion constrained by racism, traditionalism, nationalism, or hierarchical spatialization and biopoliticization in different historical periods" and a view of "the ensemble of Chinese feminisms ... as a transnational product that seeks to situate the imaginary notion of Chineseness in the global context" (pp. 3–4). Zhu and Xiao organize the 12 articles into three sections that address three overlapping themes: the ways in which Chinese feminisms are understood beyond the global–local binary structure, the ways in which Chinese feminists theorize and practise plural feminisms, and the production and representation of contemporary Chinese feminisms in creative forms.

The first part, "Chinese Feminisms in the Age of Globalization," includes two essays, an interview and a talk transcript. To begin with, Nicola Spakowski examines various responses by Chinese feminists to the notion of gender imported from transnational exchanges, and Li Xiaojiang, in a talk given at the Women's Institute of Spain in Madrid in 2008, challenges the ethnocentric Western notion of "gender equality" by accounting for plural understandings and practices of this notion in gender relationships in China. Both scholars point to important "Chinese characteristics" that serve to conceptualize gender, identity and equality and, thereby, destabilize the essentialized view of the influence of imported Western theories on Chinese feminism, and they describe various efforts by Chinese feminists to construct theories grounded in specific contexts. Two chapters in



this section – Xueping Zhong’s analysis of the role of gender and class in China’s political consciousness from 1949 onward and Wu Haiyun’s interview with Dai Jinhua that sketches Dai’s diagnosis of contemporary “gender troubles” in China – reference the coalition of transnational capitalism and patriarchal hierarchies that condition women’s liberation. In particular, Dai sharply describes the problematic features of “New Confucianist” expressions of, and popular media frenzy over, polygamy, a subject that haunts public imaginations of familial and gender relations when resurrected through the combined efforts of patriarchal power and transnational capital. The free flow of capital and patriarchy, ultimately, dehumanizes both women and men, these scholars’ arguments suggest, so it is time to re-evaluate Chinese socialist legacy of women’s liberation and move beyond a reductionist view of the liberal logic of Western feminism.

The second part, “Chinese Feminisms on the Ground,” includes the work of three feminist scholar-activists. Wang Zheng combs through the history of Chinese feminism and women’s movements since the early 20th century to provide an overview of feminist NGOs and the generations of feminist activists who came of age after the 1995 World Conference on Women. Li Jun’s essay delineates the tension between liberal intellectuals, the majority of whom are men, and feminists or feminist movements in China, where the liberal intellectuals prioritize “human rights” over “women’s rights” as the elites’ panacea for political freedom. Her analysis echoes the sentiments expressed in the interview with Dai in terms of viewing both transnational capital and patriarchal heteronormativity as upholding the male-dominated liberals’ social, economic and political privileges, which blind them to the messy intersection of class, gender and the cultural perceptions of the public, and prevent them from acting as strong allies with feminists for a feminist agenda. Lastly, Ke Qianting examines the creative adaptations of Eve Ensler’s *The Vagina Monologues* to showcase the multiplicities of Chinese feminists’ knowledge production, mobilization, practices and visions of the future.

The last section, “Chinese Feminisms in Women’s Literature, Art, and Film,” consists of four essays and an interview. Liu Jindong’s interview with the Chinese writer Wang Anyi and Ping Zhu’s literary criticism of Wang’s novel *Fu Ping* are representative of the intertextuality in the volume as a whole. Wang stresses that her women-centred literary work represents her aesthetic choices and reflects the situation of women in Chinese historical contexts. Zhu offers a compelling reading of the novel, showing how Wang carefully weaves the themes of gender, labour and class to showcase an alternative form of feminine labour and community in Shanghai that resists capitalism and consumerism. Next, Hui Faye Xiao investigates an emerging grassroots network within the feminist literary tradition through a reading of migrant worker writer Fan Yusu’s autobiographical work. Shuqin Cui presents a psychoanalytical assessment of a massive sculpture installation titled *Over 1.5 Tons* which illustrates Chinese artists’ feminist practices as well as their response to the call for global feminism from the West while rejecting attempts to read them as feminist and label them as such. Gina Marchetti analyses Hong Kong screen culture, in particular, women filmmakers’ contribution to a cosmopolitan vision of gender politics and to women’s movements in the city. These discussions share a common theme in that most of the subjects of analysis – the writers, the migrant workers, the artist and the women filmmakers – are not “feminists,” in that they explicitly deny or reject such an identity or fail to articulate it. This theme, again, manifests the tension between Western notions of feminism and feminists and the plural feminist practices in China.

*Feminisms with Chinese Characteristics* can thus serve as a comprehensive and cohesive resource for general readers and researchers alike, particularly thanks to the editors’ effort to assemble a diverse range of articles written and recorded in various styles, languages and academic practices. I particularly applaud the translation of Chinese-language research as a necessary account of “feminisms with Chinese characteristics” to illuminate the multiple positionalities of scholars, writers and activists, and reveal the nuances of and fissures in the theorization and practice of feminisms. I am, however, somewhat ambivalent about the placement of Xueping Zhong’s chapter in the section on globalization and Chinese feminisms; since the analysis engages with a set of cultural texts, including films and

literature, it might better have appeared in the third section on creative productions and representations of feminisms to serve as a comparison with the other chapters there. I am similarly ambivalent about the placement of Ke Qianting's examination of Chinese adaptations of *The Vagina Monologues*. Alternatively, the first and the second parts might have been merged since all the chapters therein touch on the influence of transnational cultural flows, capitalist market expansion and patriarchal structure on Chinese feminist theorization and practices. Nonetheless, exactly because patriarchy, capitalism, socialism, power and gender politics are already so intricately intertwined and are addressed in every chapter in this volume, it is hardly possible to organize them into neat categories. Overall, *Feminisms with Chinese Characteristics* significantly enriches contemporary discourses on feminism and China by showing the importance of Chinese cultures, histories and traditions in the discussion of plural feminisms. The volume is, accordingly, well suited for graduate seminars as well as upper-level undergraduate courses in gender and feminist studies, China studies and Asian studies.

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## The Space of Religion: Temple, State, and Buddhist Communities in Modern China

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The first three decades of the People's Republic brought tremendous loss to Buddhism in China, particularly the destruction of physical temples and the decimation of the sangha. The restoration of both has been a weighty challenge for post-Mao Buddhist development. Through this ethnography of the historically prominent Nanputuo Temple, Yoshiko Ashiwa and David Wank examine the dramatic revival of Chinese Buddhism after the Chinese Communist Party restored the policy of religious tolerance in 1982. The two authors adopt multiple methods, including interviewing, observation, survey and archival research. Their 26 months of fieldwork in Nanputuo Temple extended over three decades between 1989 and 2018 (although their account of the temple's restoration concludes in 2004), allowing them to record its recovery and reform over two terms of temple leadership. In addition to published state media coverage, gazetteers and commemorative volumes, their archival data includes unpublished materials such as diaries, letters of correspondence between state and temple officials, and temple epigraphs.

Ashiwa and Wank's major contribution lies in their elaboration of religion as an integrated space of three dimensions: physical, institutional and semiotic. Accordingly, the physical space contains religion's tangible existence, including buildings, landscapes and monuments; the institutional space comprises policies and regulations, mainly as devised by the Chinese state; the semiotic space centres on the symbols and actions that give meanings to those who share the same belief system. A temple is thus a nexus where the physical, institutional and semiotic spaces interact to reproduce the space of Buddhism. This analytical framework allows the authors to address such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon as the Buddhist revival in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution. They further introduce two concepts in their analysis of Nanputuo Temple's