



Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory: Reimagining a Field (Asia- Pacific: Culture, Politics, and Society)

Rey Chow

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These groundbreaking essays use critical theory to reflect on issues pertaining to modern Chinese literature and culture and, in the process, transform the definition and conceptualization of the field of modern Chinese studies itself. The wide range of topics addressed by this international group of scholars includes twentieth-century literature produced in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China; film, art, history, popular culture, and literary and cultural criticism; as well as the geographies of migration and diaspora.

One of the volume's provocative suggestions is that the old model of area studies—an offshoot of U.S. Cold War strategy that found its anchorage in higher education—is no longer feasible for the diverse and multifaceted experiences that are articulated under the rubric of “Chineseness.” As Rey Chow argues in her introduction, the notion of a monolithic Chineseness bound ultimately to mainland China is, in itself, highly problematic because it recognizes neither the material realities of ethnic minorities within China nor those of populations in places such as Tibet, Taiwan, and post-British Hong Kong. Above all, this book demonstrates that, as the terms of a chauvinistic sinocentrism become obsolete, the critical use of theory—particularly by younger China scholars whose enthusiasm for critical theory coincides with changes in China's political economy in recent years—will enable the emergence of fresh connections and insights that may have been at odds with previous interpretive convention.

Originally published as a special issue of the journal *boundary 2*, this collection includes two new essays and an afterword by Paul Bové that places its arguments in the context of contemporary cultural politics. It will have far-reaching implications for the study of modern China and will be of interest to scholars of theory and culture in general.

Contributors. Stanley K. Abe, Ien Ang, Chris Berry, Paul Bové, Sung-cheng Yvonne Chang, Rey Chow, Dorothy Ko, Charles Laughlin, Leung Ping-kwan, Kwai-cheung Lo, Christopher Lupke, David Der-wei Wang, Michelle Yeh

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