

Kunshan, Dongguan and Shenmu (which are mentioned in this book), have enacted their own, unique local health insurance policies. This could imply that China's welfare system is potentially even more fragmented and diverse than the one discussed in this book. Would an analysis of cities and counties have yielded more theoretical insights on China welfare system and revealed more information on other types of welfare states? Over the last two decades, China has expanded its welfare state, including health insurance programmes, to ensure regime survival. Has growth in the welfare state enhanced regime legitimacy, thus strengthening authoritarian resilience? And how have the "masses" viewed the persistence of stratification even after the establishment of a nearly universal welfare state?

These questions aside, this is a highly recommended book. Its theory and argumentation are persuasive, and it does an exceptionally good job in integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods. Insights drawn from fieldwork make this study rich and nuanced. This book will greatly benefit researchers interested in comparative welfare politics and comparative authoritarianism, as well as China specialists working on the politics of central–local relations.

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## Queering Chinese Kinship: Queer Public Culture in Globalizing China

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In the context of post-socialist China, the state has been progressively withdrawing from private sectors, thereby creating more discursive space for emerging forces of familization and marketization. Against this backdrop, blood kinship has returned to its essential role in the order of stratified closeness in traditional Chinese societies and cultures, and it has become the mediator between state/social regulation and queer individuals. As crucial minor social institutions, family and blood kinship have regained discursive power, embodying moral and normative values. Simultaneously, they possess the potential to foster new negotiations and imaginative possibilities for queer communities and social movements through the discursive mobilizations of parenthood, Confucian filial values, kinship bonds, affective connections and material ties. *Queering Chinese Kinship* is an important and timely contribution to the field that captures and reflects on the transforming role of family and kinship in the Chinese-Sinophone context. In so doing, it also sheds light on the Western theorizations in queer kinship studies.

This book rectifies the neglect of blood kinship in Euro-American-dominated studies on queer kinship and family discourses. It answers an important question of whether a progressive and alternative queer culture landscape can be imagined through blood kinship in a politically and socially conservative context where liberalist and culture pluralist logics of queer kinship do not apply well. By focusing on the specific mobilization of blood kinship in queer public cultural production in post-socialist China, the author convincingly presents a non-Western lens for reimagining the oversimplified and sometimes unproductive dichotomy between queer and normative. Song draws

scholarly attention to thinking beyond the liberal pluralist model of queer kinship, a model that can be blind to class, race, gender and national disparities. The book emphasizes the construction and negotiation of queer identities and kinship in publicly accessible media, revealing the instability and elasticity of blood kinship. Both the discussions of self-made coming-out videos on the Bilibili platform in chapter five and online talk-show production in chapter six probe into the complex discursive formation of illiberal homonormativity through the queering of Chinese kinship.

Another significant contribution Song makes is rethinking of the ways and effects of queer culture going public in a conservative state. The book critically analyses various forms of queer public culture, defined by the author as publicly accessible, popular and commercial media products, including documentaries, cinema and musicals. This is well discussed in chapter two, where the author examines Chinese queer documentaries as a means of socializing queer identification and as audiovisual extensions of PFLAG China's social activism. Song explores the social negotiation between queer filmmakers and audiences, which is facilitated by the *xianchang* (liveness) aesthetics of queer documentaries produced and consumed as a counterpublic culture. Chapter three employs one of the most famous Chinese queer films, *Spring Fever*, as a case of transnational Chinese film production that negotiates Chinese queer visibility and storytelling, not only with the state media censorship but also with the Western-dominated international audienceship and queer cinema critics. In chapter four the book offers an intriguing analysis of the imported and translated Broadway musical *Q Dadao*, highlighting its role as a publicly accessible platform for conveying a progressive queer manifesto to a diverse audience. Through this case analysis, the author effectively illuminates the paradoxical forces at play in the production and consumption of public queer culture.

Employing a queer methodology, this book uncovers and showcases various facets of queer public culture that are otherwise hidden or erased. More importantly, by queering the methodology this book shapes the contour of the Chinese queer culture landscape and makes make legible all forms of queer cultural production as public and intelligible. In other words, Song goes beyond the unearthing of queer culture but instead performatively engages in the construction and reconfiguration of the very queer public culture he argues for through critical interpretation.

*Queering Chinese Kinship* also offers significant theoretical contributions to kinship studies, which have been dominated by anthropology and sociology, from the perspectives of cultural studies and Chinese-Sinophone queer studies. The book highlights the significance of queer culture production becoming an accessible part of Chinese public culture, a growingly visible process in which family plays a vital role as a legitimate source for queer social recognition and meaning remaking. Throughout the book, Song does a great job depicting the dialectical relationship between blood kinship and queerness in the multifaceted production and reception of various forms of Chinese queer popular culture. Chinese queerness attains intelligibility and legibility as a part of public culture via the mediation of kinship discourses. In turn, integrating blood kinship into the queer worldmaking in public culture production serves as a strategic negotiation and reconciliation for queer people with their blood kin, as the latter play a pivotal role in queer living and self-identification within the Chinese context.

A recurring theme in the book is the non-essentialist understanding of queerness, Chineseness and the glocal (global–local) features of Chinese queer culture production. What this book prompts and leaves the readers to reexamine is the concept of the public *per se*, considering the changing political economy that commodifies and repoliticizes the public visibility of queerness. Furthermore, it urges reflection on the evolving role of public culture in envisioning a future political landscape for queerness in China.