



# **Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms: Cultural Fever, Avant-Garde Fiction, and the New Chinese Cinema (Post-Contemporary Interventions)**

*Xudong Zhang*

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Blending history and theory, *Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms* offers both a historical narrative and a critical analysis of the cultural visions and experiences of China's post-Mao era. In this volume, Xudong Zhang rethinks Chinese modernism as a historical genre that arose in response to the historical experience of Chinese modernity rather than as an autonomous aesthetic movement. He identifies the ideologies of literary and cultural styles in the New Era (1979–1989) through a critical reading of the various “new waves” of Chinese literature, film, and intellectual discourse.

In examining the aesthetic and philosophical formulations of the New Era's intellectual elites, Zhang first analyzes the intense cultural and intellectual debates, known as the “Great Cultural Discussion” or “Cultural Fever” that took place in Chinese urban centers in the mid- and late 1980s. Chinese literary modernism is then explored, specifically in relation to Deng Xiaoping's sweeping reforms and with a focus on the changing literary sensibility and avant-garde writers such as Yu Hua, Ge Fei, and Su Tong. Lastly, Zhang looks at the the making of New Chinese Cinema and films such as *Yellow Earth*, *Horse Thief*, and *King of the Children*—films through which Fifth Generation filmmakers first developed a style independent from socialist realism. By tracing the origins and contemporary elaboration of the idea of Chinese modernism, Zhang identifies the discourse of modernism as one of the decisive formal articulations of the social dynamism and cultural possibilities of post-Mao China.

Capturing the historical experience and the cultural vision of China during a crucial decade in its emergence as a world power, *Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms* will interest students and scholars of modernism, Chinese literature and history, film studies, and cultural studies.



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