

Chinese Kinship

Contemporary Anthropological Perspectives

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The essays in this volume present contemporary anthropological perspectives on Chinese kinship, its historical complexity and its modern metamorphoses. The collection draws particular attention to the reverberations of larger socio-cultural and politico-economic processes in the formation of sociality, intimate relations, family histories, reproductive strategies and gender relations – and vice-versa.

Drawing on a wealth of ethnographic material from the late imperial period and from contemporary Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, from northern and southern regions as well as from rural and urban settings, the volume provides unique insights into the historical and spatial diversities of the Chinese kinship experience. This emphasis on diversity challenges the classic 'lineage paradigm' of Chinese kinship and establishes a dialogue with contemporary anthropological debates about human kinship reflecting on the emergence of radically new family formations in the Euro-American context.

Chinese Kinship will be of interest to anthropologists and sinologists, as to historians and social scientists in general.

Selected Contents:

INTRODUCTION: Chinese kinship metamorphoses

PART 1: MOTION, MIGRATION AND URBANITY

1. 'Families we create': Women's kinship in rural China as spatialized practice 2. Living a single life. The plight and adaptations of the bachelors in Yishala

3. Practicing connectiveness as kinship in Urban China

PART 2: INTIMACY, GENDER AND POWER

4. The ties that bind: Female homosociality and the production of intimacy in rural China 5. The 'stove-family' and the process of kinship in rural South China 6. Actually existing Chinese matriarchy 7. The gender of work and the production of kinship value in Taiwan and China

PART 3: STATE, BODY AND CIVILIZATION

8. Becoming a mother in Late Imperial China: maternal doubles and the ambiguities of fertility 9. Education and the governing of child-centred relatedness

10. Disruption, commemoration and family repair

AFTERWORD

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