

The Chinese Enlightenment

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it is widely accepted both inside china and in the west that contemporary chinese history begins with the may fourth movement vera schwarcz's imaginative new study provides china scholars and historians with an analysis of what makes that event a turning point in the intellectual

spiritual cultural and political life of twentieth century china

rarely does a reviewer or publisher encounter a milestone this is it it is the first major study of the development of chinese feminism in what is arguably the most formative period in the history of modern china in its women centered approach the book challenges the official women s history authored by the chinese communist party and long accepted by euro american scholars this book will set the agenda for future scholars researching the relationship between feminism and nationalism in china dorothy ko author of teachers of the inner chambers

what is enlightenment wei zhang brings together the fabled consideration of enlightenment by kant his contemporaries and modern respondents such as habermas and foucault with the question what is chinese enlightenment kant and his peers began a discussion of the notion of enlightenment in the pages of the *berlinische monatsschrift* when that newspaper s editor posed the question *was ist aufklärung* in 1784 chinese intellectuals began a similar consideration in the wake of the may fourth cultural movement of 1919 which marked a self conscious break from the feudal past and a new engagement with the west zhang asks to what extent european enlightenment can be regarded as purely philosophical and isolated from political events and alternately to what extent the chinese enlightenment can be split into separate political and intellectual discourses her work yields a new set of conceptual questions and practical issues and provides new energy to the dialogue on political and cultural modernity in cross cultural context zhang finds the answers to the question what is enlightenment are multiple pluralistic dynamic and self renewing

over the course of the eighteenth century european intellectuals shifted from admiring china as a utopian place of wonder to despising it as a backwards and despotic state that transformation had little to do with changes in china itself and everything to do with enlightenment conceptions of political identity and europe s own burgeoning global power china in the german enlightenment considers the place of german philosophy particularly the work of leibniz goethe herder and hegel in this development beginning with the first english translation of walter demel s classic essay *how the chinese became yellow* the collection s essays examine the connections between eighteenth century philosophy german orientalism and the origins of modern race theory

studies of the reaction of european thinkers of the enlightenment leibniz wolff hegel kant et al to chinese culture and ideas from the late sixteenth century on with the sending of jesuit missionaries to china the west had the fortune of receiving first hand reports about china from educated persons trained in the philosophy and sciences of the day what these men said and wrote stirred some leading minds in europe among them leibniz wolff and kant the essays in this volume studies of what western thinkers in the enlightenment said and wrote about china are important for everyone interested in east west intellectual exchanges for the ideas and prejudices of the shapers of the western mind continue to the present day to influence western relations with china contributors walter w davis knud lundbaek arnold h rowbotham david e mungello daniel j cook henry rosemont jr donald f lach johanna m menzel r c bald arthur f wright

china in early enlightenment political thought examines the ideas of china in the works of three major thinkers in the early european enlightenment of the late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries pierre bayle gottfried wilhelm leibniz and the baron de montesquieu unlike surveys which provide only cursory overviews of enlightenment views of china or individual studies of each thinker which tend to address their conceptions of china in individual chapters this is the first book to provide in depth comparative analyses of these seminal enlightenment thinkers that specifically link their views on china to their political concerns against the backdrop especially of the jesuit accounts of china which these philosophers read bayle leibniz and montesquieu interpreted imperial china in three radically divergent ways as a tolerant atheistic monarchy as an exemplar of human and divine justice and as an exceptional but nonetheless corrupt despotic state the book thus shows how the development of political thought in the early enlightenment was closely linked to the question of china as a positive or negative model for europe and argues that revisiting bayle s approach to china is a salutary corrective to the errors and presumptions in the thought of leibniz and montesquieu the book also discusses how chinese reformers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries drew on enlightenment writers different views of china as they sought to envisage how china should be remodeled

a study of a time when europeans sought to learn from china s successful model of political economy

the may fourth period

harper s informs a diverse body of readers of cultural business political literary and scientific affairs

eighteenth century europe commonly referred to as the age of enlightenment witnessed a growing interest in china on the part of many great thinkers inspired by reports of the jesuit missionaries the german philosophers gottfried wilhelm leibniz 1646 1716 and christian wolff 1679 1754 were among the admirers of chinese thought and civilization leibniz contribution to the western understanding of china was mainly metaphysical and religious his younger contemporary and friend wolff focused on chinese ethics concentrating on the practical morality and political ideals of confucius julia ching and willard g oxoby present english translations of important texts related to china by leibniz and wolff accompanied by two introductory essays on the philosophical and historical context the epilogue sketches the reversal of the european opinion on china in the succeeding centuries as reflected in the writings of kant and hegel

although the last half of the twentieth century has been called the age of democracy the twenty first has already demonstrated the fragility of its apparent triumph as the dominant form of government throughout the world reassessing the fate of democracy for our time distinguished political theorist ralph ketcham traces the evolution of this idea over the course of four hundred years he traces democracy s bumpy ride in a book that is both an exercise in the history of ideas and an explication of democratic theory ketcham examines the rationales for democratic government identifies the fault lines that separate democracy from good government and suggests ways to strengthen it in order to meet future challenges drawing on an encyclopedic command of history and politics he examines the rationales that have been offered for democratic government over the course of four manifestations of modernity that he identifies in the western and east asian world since 1600 ketcham first considers the fundamental axioms established by theorists of the enlightenment bacon locke jefferson and reflected in america s founding then moves on to the mostly post darwinian critiques by bentham veblen dewey and others that produced theories of the liberal corporate state he explains late nineteenth century asian responses to democracy as the third manifestation grounded in confucian respect for communal and hierarchical norms followed by late twentieth century postmodernist thought that

views democratic states as oppressive and seeks to empower marginalized groups ketcham critiques the first second and fourth modernity rationales for democracy and suggests that the asian approach may represent a reconciliation of ancient wisdom and modern science better suited to today s world he advocates a reorientation of democracy that de emphasizes group or identity politics and restores the wholeness of the civic community proposing a return to the jeffersonian universalism that which informed the founding of the united states if democracy is to flourish in a fifth manifestation the idea of democracy in the modern era is an erudite interdisciplinary work of great breadth and complexity that looks to the past in order to reframe the future with its global overview and comparative insights it will stimulate discussion of how democracy can survive and thrive in the coming era

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