



Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity

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When did China make the decisive turn from tradition to modernity? For decades, the received wisdom would have pointed to the May Fourth movement, with its titanic battles between the champions of iconoclasm and the traditionalists, and its shift to more populist forms of politics. A growing body of recent research has, however, called into question how decisive the turn was, when it happened, and what relation the resulting modernity bore to the agendas of people who might have considered themselves representatives of such an iconoclastic movement. Having thus explicitly or implicitly 'decentered' the May Fourth, such research (augmented by contributions in the present volume) leaves us with the task of accounting for the shape Chinese modernity took, as the product of dialogues and debates between, and the interplay of, a variety of actors and trends, both within and (certainly no less importantly) without the May Fourth camp.

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Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity From Lexington Books Bibliography

- Rank: #2730778 in eBooks
- Published on: 2008-04-18
- Released on: 2016-03-24
- Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

Review

The contents of this volume go beyond the usual range of scholarly assessments and reassessments of May Fourth culture and literature. In widening the horizons of the May Fourth movement and its implications to include such diverse topics as language and printing, gender and family, as well as the larger issues of science, religion, nation, and modernity, this book has made a seminal contribution to scholarship in modern Chinese intellectual and cultural history. Highly recommended for both specialists in the field and interested lay readers... (Leo Ou-fan Lee, The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

This volume significantly contributes to the decentering of the May Fourth movement as the defining moment in modern Chinese history. Focusing on the complex interplay between that movement and a rich array of often little-explored trends such as science and Buddhism, it deftly sketches the contours of a historically embedded and culturally layered Chinese modernity. (Joan Judge, York University)

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A collection of well-researched, well-written, and insightful essays.... *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm* is an excellent collection of essays that offers many insights and stimuli on how to rethink the complex and contradictory nature of China's modern intellectual and cultural scene. (*China Review International*)

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