



Irony, Cynicism and the Chinese State (Routledge Contemporary China Series)

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Unprecedented social change in China has intensified the contradictions faced by ordinary people. In everyday life, people find themselves caught between official and popular discourses, encounter radically different representations of China's past and its future, and draw on widely diverse moral frameworks.

This volume explores irony and cynicism as part of the social life of local communities in China, and specifically in relation to the contemporary Chinese state. It collects ethnographies of irony and cynicism in social action, written by a group of anthropologists who specialise in China. They use the lenses of irony and cynicism - broadly defined to include resignation, resistance, humour, ambiguity and dialogue - to look anew at the social, political and moral contradictions faced by Chinese people. The various contributions are concerned with both the interpretation of intentions in everyday social action and discourse, and the broader theoretical consequences of such interpretations for an understanding of the Chinese state.

As a study of irony and cynicism in modern China and their implications on the social and political aspects of everyday life, this book will be of huge interest to students and scholars of social and cultural anthropology, Chinese culture and society, and Chinese politics.

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