



# **Troubadours, Trumpeters, Troubled Makers: Lyricism, Nationalism, and Hybridity in China and Its Others (Asia-Pacific: Culture, Politics, and Society)**

*Gregory B. Lee*

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How have the lyrics of poets and songwriters, traditionally voices of protest against domination and exploitation in Chinese society, responded to the forces of cultural imperialism and nationalistic ideology that have accompanied the modernization of Chinese society in the last half of this century. Gregory B. Lee suggests that the response can be seen in a proliferation of hybrid lyric forms and cultures—from both within China and beyond—and that China's "culture of lyricism" contributes in powerful, significant, and often resistant ways to the nation's sense of itself and its encounter with modernity.

Lee's broad definition of lyric includes the work of poets, amateur versifiers, and all manner of popular songwriters, and his inclusive sense of nation refers to all Chinese communities regardless of geographic location. Whether examining the globalized consumption of satellite-broadcast pop music or the heroic efforts of little-known poets on the margins of the Chinese diaspora, he finds a questioning and contesting of both the Orientalist construction of a mythic monolithic China invented by the West and the Chinese obsession with ideas of authenticity and purity of nationhood. Lee explores the lyrical transgression of these ideological boundaries in China, in the Chinese communities of America and Britain, and in other marginalized communities, before using the examples of Hong Kong and other non-nationalistic sites to discuss the creative possibilities of hybrid cultures and societies.

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