



Global Chinese Cinema: The Culture and Politics of 'Hero' (Media, Culture and Social Change in Asia Series)

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The film *Hero*, directed by Zhang Yimou and released in 2002, is widely regarded as the first globally successful indigenous Chinese blockbuster. A big expensive film with multiple stars, spectacular scenery, and astonishing action sequences, it touched on key questions of Chinese culture, nation and politics, and was both a domestic sensation and an international hit. This book explores the reasons for the film's popularity with its audiences, discussing the factors which so resonated with those who watched the film. It examines questions such as Chinese national unity, the search for cultural identity and role models from China's illustrious pre-communist past, and the portrayal of political and aesthetic values, and attitudes to gender, sex, love, and violence which are relatively new to China. The book demonstrates how the film, and China's growing film industry more generally, have in fact very strong international connections, with Western as well as Chinese financing, stars recruited from the East Asian region more widely, and extensive interactions between Hollywood and Asian artists and technicians. Overall, the book provides fascinating insights into recent developments in Chinese society, popular culture and cultural production.

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