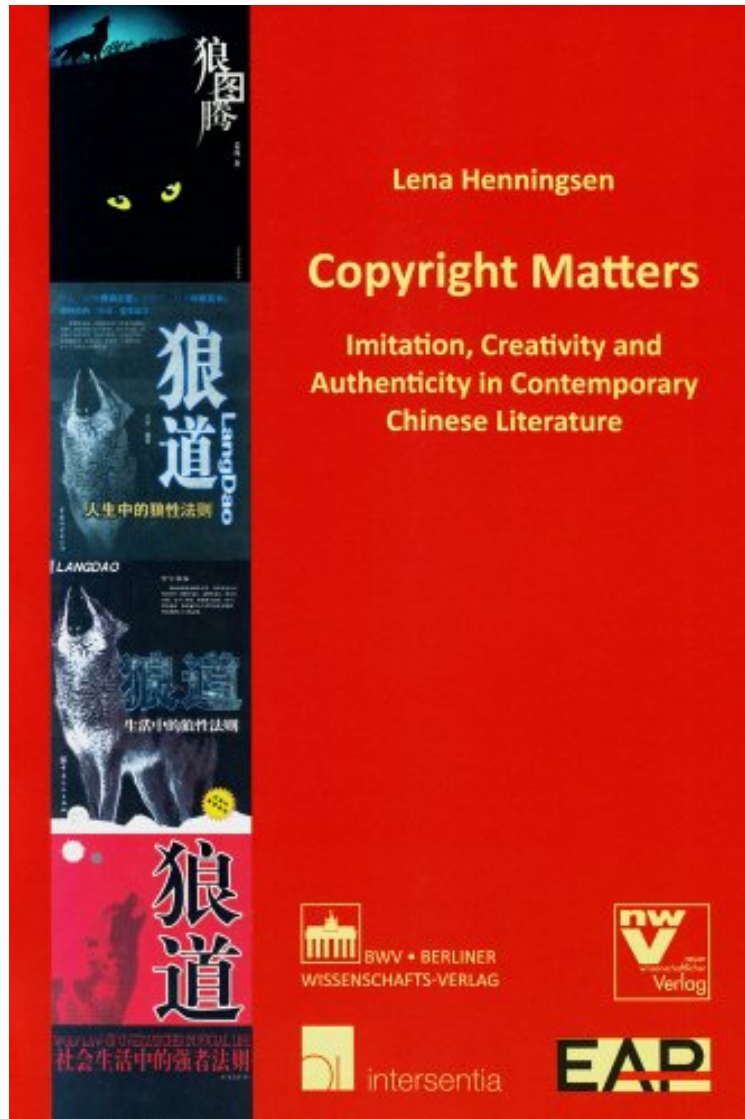


Copyright Matters: Imitation, Creativity and Authenticity in Contemporary Chinese Literature

Lena Henningsen

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Lena Henningsen : Copyright Matters: Imitation, Creativity and Authenticity in Contemporary Chinese Literature before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Copyright Matters: Imitation, Creativity and Authenticity in Contemporary Chinese Literature:

Copyright Matters offers five studies that challenge the wide-spread prejudice among the Western press that China is an empire of plagiarism, sometimes even referred to as the "People's Republic of Cheats." By analyzing cases - of convicted plagiarist Guo Jingming, the victim of plagiarism Han Han, the follow-up publications to Jiang Rong's Wolf Totem, the Harry Potter fakes and fan fiction, as well as discussions of academic plagiarism - the book proves that copyright increasingly matters to Chinese writers. Confronted with instances of copyright infringements on their own works, they voice their opposition and fight for their rights, be it through legal action or their writing. At the same time, the book demonstrates that a text that is commonly considered to be "plagiarized" or "imitated" may turn out to be a highly creative work in its own right, for example when Harry Potter appears as a timid exchange student in China. Therefore, Copyright Matters opts for a literary reading of these "derivative" works and argues that imitation may, at times, be a creative tool. While these two central arguments appear to be contradictory, the book shows that they represent two sides of the same coin: the emergence of a new self-conception among Chinese authors as they struggle to recast their relationship with society and state.