

Paper Abstract for
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**Finding One's Own Voice:
Gender Representations in Female Diasporic Chinese Writing**

This paper examines some of the writings produced in English by female ethnic Chinese writers in Australia and other parts of the world, from the following three perspectives.

Firstly, various types of "wrongs", including racism, sexism and colonialism, are represented by these writers as boundaries that their female protagonists struggle to cross. A particular type of "wrong" emphasized by female writers from China is the constraining effect of the country's collective political system on female subjectivities. In both cases, those oppressed women are portrayed as now trying to re-claim a voice that they can call their own.

Secondly, linguistic and cultural gaps are represented by female diasporic Chinese writers as boundaries that separate generations of Chinese women. In the cases of those born and raised outside the Chinese-speaking world, their self-reflective awareness of the gaps between themselves and their mothers is significant. Attempts to cross these gaps are portrayed as personal endeavors to pursue a sense of belonging.

Finally, there appears to be a cultural boundary between these female diasporic Chinese writers and their English readers in the West. Chinese females are so often portrayed, promoted and/or recognized as being exotic and erotic, that English readers in the West enjoy reading about what they already assume to be the "Chinese" difference that they encounter in works produced by these writers.