



# The Chinese State's Retreat from Health: Policy and the Politics of Retrenchment

*Jane Duckett*

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Over the post-Mao period, the Chinese state has radically cut back its role in funding health services and insuring its citizens against the costs of ill health. Using an analytical framework drawn from studies of state retrenchment in industrialized democracies and in post-communist Eastern Europe, Jane Duckett argues that the state's retreat from health in China was not a simple consequence of economic policies and market reform. Just as important were the influences of health policies, reform era political institutions, communist party ideology, and bureaucratic stakeholders.

Through her analysis, Duckett maintains that by studying retrenchment in China, the world's most populous nation and now a major global economic power, we can better understand international transformations in the role of the state, and the politics that shape that role.

The Chinese State's Retreat from Health both extends research on retrenchment politics to a major authoritarian state and contributes to piecing together understanding of the Chinese state's changing role across the economy and other social policies, including housing and education. It will be of interest to students and scholars of Chinese politics, social policy and the Chinese health care system, as well as to those with a comparative interest in health, welfare states and the politics of retrenchment.

Jane Duckett is Professor of Chinese and Comparative Politics at the University of Glasgow, UK.

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