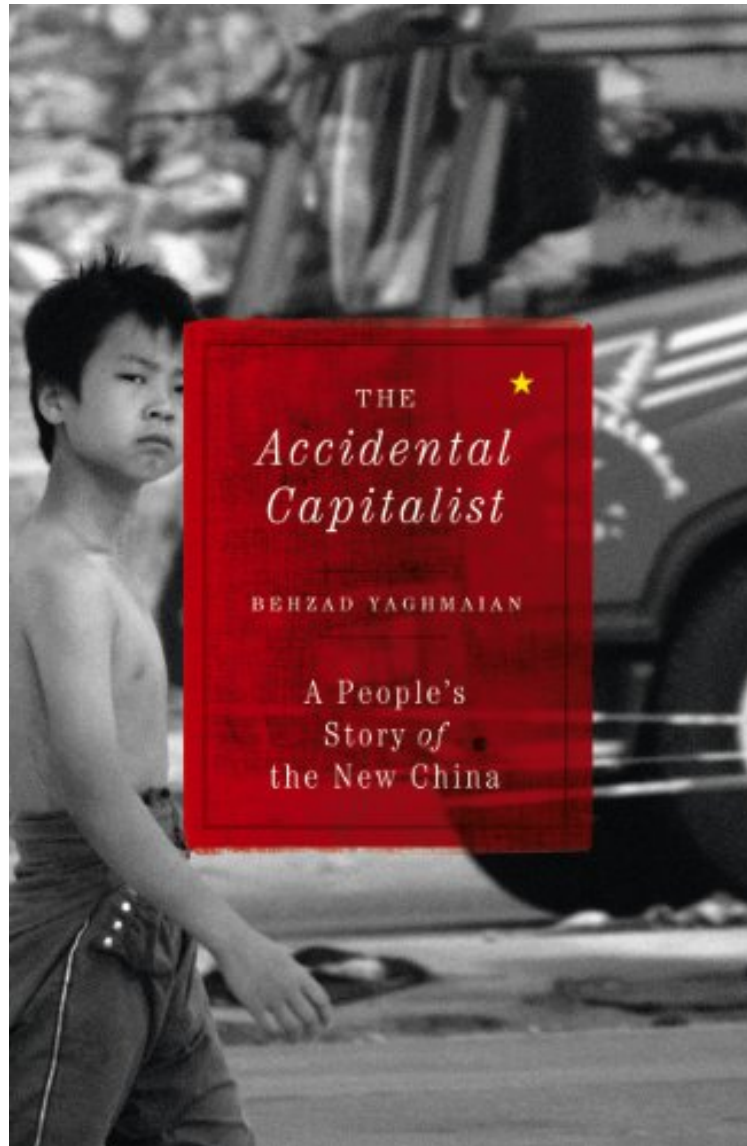


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The Accidental Capitalist: A People's Story of the New China

Behzad Yaghmaian

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Behzad Yaghmaian : The Accidental Capitalist: A People's Story of the New China before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Accidental Capitalist: A People's Story of the New China:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Human Face of CapitalismBy Jillian T. WeissProfessor Yaghmaian's book, The Accidental Capitalist: A People's Story of the New China, is redolent with the flavors coming from the small fire in the hut, the odors wafting from the industrial center, the human faces filled with triumph, despair and the cares of daily living. His background as a political economist brings a perspective on the grand scale, but

calibrated to the stories of the people he met on his travels. The more one reads, the more one realizes the connection between "them" and "us." The Western myth of the "mysterious Orient" fades away to reveal people, much like you and me, living through an awkward resurgence of capitalism, trying to do their best to create a decent life for themselves and their families, in a country where authorities rule with an iron grip that is slowly loosening, but which may tighten again at any time without warning. A fascinating read.² of 2 people found the following review helpful. Behzad Yaghmaian struck again with his new book *The Accidental Capitalist*. At a time when the media forcefully reports on the inhumane practices in China's factories, Yaghmaian takes the reader into the homes, minds, and hearts of those who power this industrial engine. The life stories of these men and women shed light on the economic forces that push them to act the way they do. Yaghmaian's insightful work turns the labeling of the Chinese entrepreneur as the abusive businessman and the worker as his victim into an oversimplified account of a multilayered reality. This tour de force is conveyed in a very simple language and through stories that I guarantee will make the reader smile and sad. A MUST READ!¹ of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Portrait in Motion* By Topcat3 This is a very interesting portrait of a nation moving forward. It is sad to see the struggle of the people Behzad met, but it emphasizes that fact that the individual is not paramount in China. While our own capitalistic existence appears very different, I do feel we are very similar, because nowadays we find many people struggling just to put food on the table and survive.

In the last three decades China has experienced the largest population movement in human history. Millions have left behind homes to find work and new opportunities in the emerging mega-cities. Through months of sustained interpersonal contact with migrant workers and factory owners, Behzad Yaghmaian paints a unique portrait of a country experiencing the turmoil of rapid development. His close listening has produced an intimate look at the hopes, hardships, triumphs and tragedies of those behind the Chinese 'economic dragon'. *The Accidental Capitalist* reveals the human reality behind China's rise to global-superpower status. Yaghmaian articulates the collective narrative of a people which will resonate with anyone living under capitalism and provide valuable material to students and scholars.

“A modern Alexis de Tocqueville, the author lived among his subjects in Shenzhen, the heartbeat of the rising China, while scouring the metropolis for stories... Casting off polemics and opting instead to address China's development anecdotally, Yaghmaian crafts a moving portrait of the diverse individuals behind the ubiquitous label 'Made in China.' - Publishers Weekly” This remarkable book paints intimate portraits of some of the faceless millions of migrant workers who have made China's economic miracle possible. Through their stories of hope and heartbreak, Yaghmaian takes readers beyond the statistics to show the revolutionary changes of the last generation. From his grungy apartment in the deliciously named Beautiful Rose Garden housing complex, Yaghmaian introduces us to a fascinating cast of characters: the village girl who moves to the big city with dreams of becoming a 'white color worker,' and the factory boss who admits to exploiting his workers and using child labor to make Spiderman bubble-bath for American markets." - Ivan Watson, CNN Foreign Correspondent "Unskilled migrants have been central to China's rapid industrialisation, but their life stories and voices have been missing from previous accounts of that process. Behzad Yaghmaian fills that gap in this new account of China's epic transformation, told through the personal biographies of men and women working in factories and construction sites. A fascinating, moving and highly readable book." - Jeff Crisp, Head, Policy Development and Evaluation Services, UNHCR "Like Ian Johnson's *Wild Grasses* or Leslie Chang's *Factory Girls*, *The Accidental Capitalist* takes us to the epicenter of China's world-changing transition through a series of portraits of the men and women who make that change possible. Living among them, Yaghmaian trains his political economist's eye on China's throes of export-led commercial expansion ... He vividly conveys his acquaintances' sense of excitement and even optimism." - Professor James Millward, History, Georgetown University