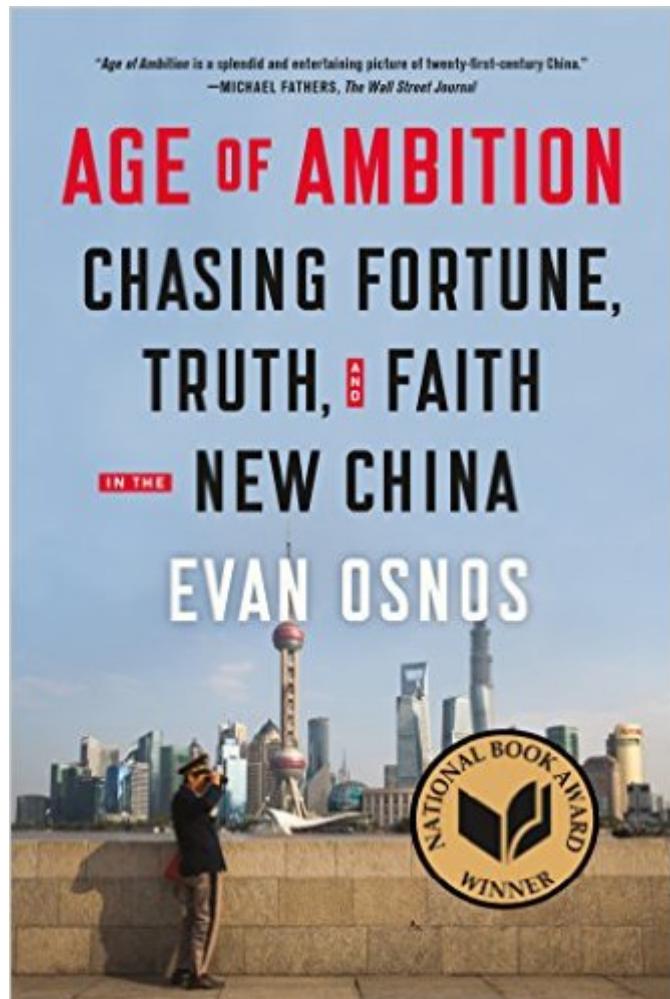


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Age Of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth, And Faith In The New China



Synopsis

Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction finalist Winner of the 2014 National Book Award in nonfiction An Economist Best Book of 2014 Winner of the bronze medal for the Council on Foreign Relations' 2015 Arthur Ross Book Award A vibrant, colorful, and revelatory inner history of China during a moment of profound transformation From abroad, we often see China as a caricature: a nation of pragmatic plutocrats and ruthlessly dedicated students destined to rule the global economy—or an addled Goliath, riddled with corruption and on the edge of stagnation. What we don't see is how both powerful and ordinary people are remaking their lives as their country dramatically changes. As the Beijing correspondent for *The New Yorker*, Evan Osnos was on the ground in China for years, witness to profound political, economic, and cultural upheaval. In *Age of Ambition*, he describes the greatest collision taking place in that country: the clash between the rise of the individual and the Communist Party's struggle to retain control. He asks probing questions: Why does a government with more success lifting people from poverty than any civilization in history choose to put strict restraints on freedom of expression? Why do millions of young Chinese professionals—fluent in English and devoted to Western pop culture—consider themselves "angry youth," dedicated to resisting the West's influence? How are Chinese from all strata finding meaning after two decades of the relentless pursuit of wealth? Writing with great narrative verve and a keen sense of irony, Osnos follows the moving stories of everyday people and reveals life in the new China to be a battleground between aspiration and authoritarianism, in which only one can prevail.

Book Information

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Reprint edition (May 5, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374535272

ISBN-13: 978-0374535278

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (263 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #19,790 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in Books > History > Asia > China #24 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Asian

Customer Reviews

Huge congrats to Evan Osnos! Age of Ambition won this year's National Book Awards!! I have been a loyal reader of Evan's articles in New Yorker and his blog. When I learned he planned to bundle these articles and some blogs together as a non-fiction book, I knew that it would be one of the best books about the NOWADAY China. However, I want to start with shortcomings of this book. I am not so satisfied with the treatment of Justin Lin (the defector from Army of Taiwan, the powerful economist and professor in Beijing Univ., the former chief economist of World Bank). I would try not to spoil too much. Evan used him to set the fundamental tone of the whole book, which is "Ambition", as the title suggested. Why did Justin Lin, a political star in Taiwan Army, risk his life to swim over the sea to come to Mainland China? Evan hinted that it was because of Ambition. Sure, ambition is important for Justin Lin. But I think Evan missed another very important factor - the social responsibility of a traditional Chinese intellectual (a 'Shi4' in Chinese). This becomes obvious in Lin's letter to his cousin in Japan. Evan actually cited many sentences from that letter in the book. But I don't know why Evan did not cite the most important paragraph, in which Justin Lin described how excited he was when he visited Dujiang Great Dam. Dujiang Great Dam was built two thousands years ago and still serves the millions of people in the basin. The chief engineer Li Bin and his son were still remembered and admired today. In the letter, Justin continued to say (forgive my awkward translation): "standing by the river, listening to the roaring waves, I cannot help thinking that if I couldn't devote myself into building happy lives for our future generations, I will regret when I am old.

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