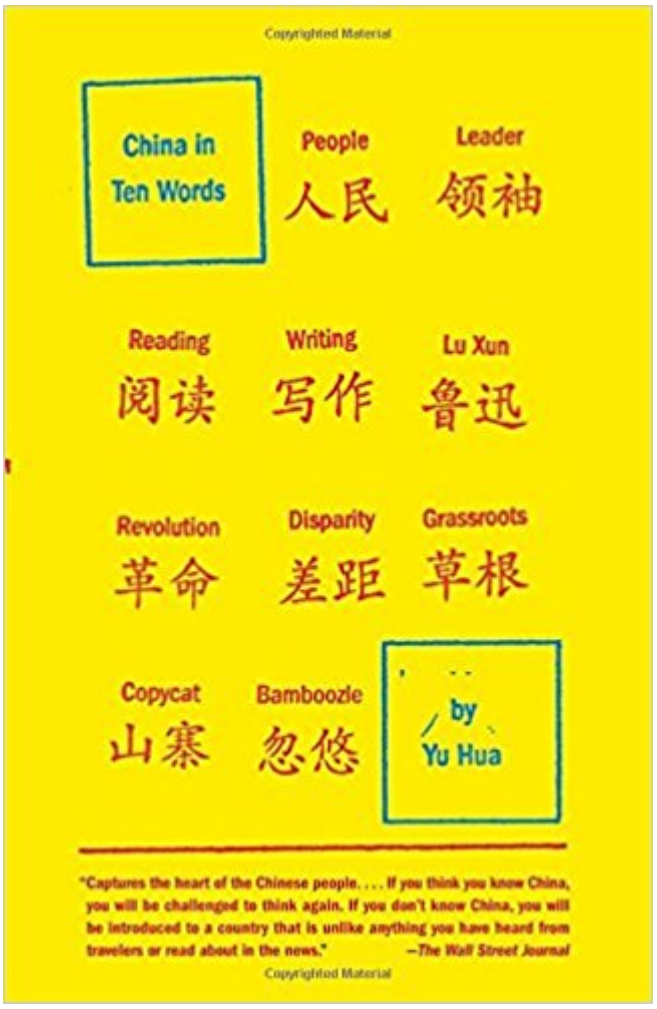
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China In Ten Words



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Synopsis

From one of ChinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most acclaimed writers: a unique, intimate look at the Chinese experience over the last several decades. Ã Â Framed by ten phrases common in the Chinese vernacular, China in Ten Words uses personal stories and astute analysis to reveal as never before the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most populous yet oft-misunderstood nation. In "Disparity," for example, Yu Hua illustrates the expanding gaps that separate citizens of the country. In "Copycat," he depicts the escalating trend of piracy and imitation as a creative new form of revolutionary action. And in "Bamboozle," he describes the increasingly brazen practices of trickery, fraud, and chicanery that are, he suggests, becoming a way of life at every level of society. Witty, insightful, and courageous, this is a refreshingly candid vision of the "Chinese miracle" and all of its consequences.Ã Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“Captures the heart of the Chinese. . . . If you think you know China, you will be challenged to think again. If you don’t know China, you will be introduced to a country that is unlike anything you have heard from travelers or read about in the news.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Wall Street JournalÃ¢â ¬Å“An outstanding set of essays on the general topic of why modern China is the way it is, each essay centered on a Chinese word or phrase. . . . Very much worth reading.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •James Fallows, The AtlanticÃ¢â ¬Å“Yu has a fiction writerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s nose for the perfect detail, the everyday stuff that conveys more understanding than a thousand Op-Eds. . . . Perhaps the most bewitching aspect of this book is how funny it is. . . . He comes across as an Asian fusion

of David Sedaris and Charles Kuralt.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Laura Miller, SalonÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“This is a tale told by a raconteur, not an academic. . . . The most powerful and vivid sections reach back to Yu Hua's childhood during the Cultural Revolution. . . . It is a cautionary tale about the risks of subterfuge, of trying to sneak something past one's fatherÃ¢â ¬â •or, perhaps, one's ever vigilant government." Ã¢â ¬â •The New York Times Book ReviewÃ Â "If Yu Hua never wrote anything else, he would rate entry into the pantheon of greats for Ã¢â ¬ËœReading,Ã¢â ¬â„¢ an essay in his new collection China in Ten Words. Nothing I've ever read captures both the power and subversive nature of youthful reading as well. . . . For American readers curious about the upheavals of China, this may be the right moment to discover Yu Hua." Ã¢â ¬â •Jim Higgins, Milwaukee Journal-SentinelÃ Â "It's rare to find a work of fiction that can be hysterically funny at some points, while deeply moving and disturbing at others. It's even more unusual to find such qualities in a work of non-fiction. But China in Ten Words is just such an extraordinary work." Ã¢â ¬â •Los Angeles Review of Books blogÃ Â "At times humorous, at times heartbreaking, and at times fierce, these ten moving and informative essays form a small kaleidoscopic view of contemporary China. . . . Written with a novelist's eye and narrative flair, China in Ten Words will make the reader rethink "the China miracle." Ã¢â ¬â •Ha Jin, National Book Award-winning author of WaitingÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A collection of 10 quietly audacious essays that blend memoir with social commentary. Yu Hua, who resides in BeijingÃ¢â ¬â •a significant detail, given how many important Chinese authors live in exile, where they can write more freelyÃ¢â ¬â •builds each piece on the foundation of a familiar Mandarin term. The approach is smart literary politics: The Chinese adore their language and consider devotion to it an act of cultural patriotism. . . . The insight it offers and the force and authority it packs is of a kind that few, if any, of those louder, more attention-seeking must-read books can even pretend to match.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The National PostÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A discursively simple series of essays explaining his countryÃ¢â ¬â„¢s recent history through 10 central terms. . . . Caustic and difficult to forget, China in Ten Words is a peopleÃ¢â ¬â„¢s-eye view of a world in which the people have little place.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Pico Iyer, Time (Asia)Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“One of ChinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most prominent writers. . . . In his sublime essay collection, Hua explores his often spartan childhood during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s and the rampant corruption of modern China.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Newark Star-LedgerÃ Â "In this era of the China Boom when Communist Party officials are so inclined to erase the travails of their country's past from public consciousness, Yu Hua's insistence on "remembering" comes as an almost shocking intrusion into a willful state of amnesia. His earthy, even ribald, meditations on growing up in small-town China during Mao's Cultural revolution remind us of just how twisted China's progress into the present has been and how

precariously balanced its success story actually still is." Ã¢â ¬â •Orville Schell, Director of the Center on US-China Relations, The Asia Society

Yu Hua is the author of four novels, six collections of stories, and three collections of essays. His work has been translated into more than twenty languages. In 2002, he became the first Chinese writer to win the James Joyce Award. His novel Brothers was short-listed for the Man Asian Literary Prize and awarded FranceÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Prix Courrier International. To Live was awarded ItalyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Premio Grinzane Cavour, and To Live and Chronicle of a Blood Merchant were ranked among the ten most influential books in China in the 1990Ã¢â ¬â„¢s by Wen Hui Bao, the largest newspaper in Shanghai. Yu Hua lives in Beijing.Ã Â Ã Â

Fantastic book! I have now read 3 "popular" style books written about China, this is by far the best one. (The others were Dreaming in Chinese by Fallows- pretty good from a linguistics angle and Lost on Planet China by Troost - not horrible, but there’s a lot better out there i’m sure). The author of this book, Yu Hua, is a prominent Chinese author who lives in Beijing/Hangzhou. He has written a number of very successful Chinese novels. This one, is ten essays on various parts of China. It is banned in China. It’s a chinese person being honest about the Chinese government and history. This is a gold mine.Reading and Copycat were probably my two favorite essays. In the first, he talks about growing up in the cultural revolution and scrounging around for books to read. He almost never gets past Mao’s little red book and Lu Xun’s various writings. He does find some books that have been extremely battered, often only partially surviving to feed his literary desires.In copycat he talks about the chinese mentality behind making copycat products. A couple of times he has had fictitious interviews of him published and he will confront a reporter on it and the reporter simply says "it’s copycat" and in the chinese culture, that justifies it.There are many good things for him to say about China as well. This book was well written, engaging and so helpful for someone living in China to understand it a bit more. I enthusiastically recommend it to anyone looking for a thoughtful, accessible, historical and contemporary read on modern China.

Great writing, great story-telling, and insightful commentary on contemporary cultural events of China through the use of ten essays on the meaning of ten words. The author uses his own life history and his brilliant skills to bring the meaning of these words to life, in the context of his life and the lives of Chinese citizens. He uses his sharp mind and warm heart to analyze political policy and human interaction. I learned so much about the life of the author, but also gained a much deeper

understanding of the rapidly changing Chinese culture and political landscape. I recommend this book to anyone interested in China's history or culture, or to anyone interested in how the meaning of one word can change radically when used in a different cultural context, or to anyone interested in reading a fascinating life story. A marvelous read on so many fronts.

Equal parts autobiography and social commentary, Yu Hua's _China in Ten Words_ makes explicit much of the underlying commentary in Yu Hua's corpus of fictional works. In treating China's past as he experienced, its tumultuous present and uncertain future, Yu Hua lays bare many of the experiences from his own life and draws on that insightful eye that fueled novels like _To Live_, _The Chronicle of a Blood Merchant_, and _Brothers_.One of the most interesting things about the book is how Yu Hua is able to trace common threads from China's extremist communist past into the present climate of breakneck paced development and economic growth. While this is quite apparent in the words Yu Hua picks that have only emerged within the last few decades, it is even more so in the terms that have changed dramatically in the move from Cultural Revolution China to the present.This is a great book for any China fan. Yu Hua's commentary on modern China, as always, brings to life, in vivid ways, the different social ills facing contemporary society and the myriad ways people adapt to face their new environment. Additionally, for fans of Yu Hua himself, this book provides priceless background information to his fictional work. It was be a little much for those new to China, but it is well worth it.

Yu Hua grew up in the Cultural Revolution and has seen China's transition from a pitifully poor communist country to a rampantly capitalist country with vast inequality. This series of ten essays each takes a theme based on a word and expounds on Chinese society, weaving the past forty years into the present. As a student of Chinese language and frequent business traveler to China, this book deepened my understanding of Chinese society and individual Chinese people's thinking.

This was one fo the top 5 best books I read last year and the best book I have ever read by a Chinese author. I currently live in China and this book opened a world which I formerly did not have access to. People do not talk about the Cultural Revolution here in China, especially not to foreigners. My Chinese friends are too young to remember it, and my in-laws were far away enough from Beijing that they didn't experience too much of anything. When I have been told of these events by Chinese people that I am close to, it was always in hushed tones and whitewashed for my ears. This book opened China to me. China in Ten Words took me on a splendid narrative journey

through time and gave me a deeper, more meaningful view of the place in which I live. I could have lived in China all of my life and never discovered one tenth of the amazing information covered in this book. The Cultural Revolution is given a new individual perspective by Yu Hua; any and all interested even a little bit in China should read this book immediately.

Although much has been written about China, particularly by those who have not studied its history looking for some kind of DNA that characterizes what China is all about, this book does a good job to focus on what I would like to think of as the essential nature of the Chinese people. Many will disagree, especially Sinologists, which I am not. However, Yu Hua has captured certain characteristics that seem imbedded in the nature of what it means to be Chinese, and has shown how these characteristics have adapted to an evolving society, especially one in which the central government has taken a central role in so much of daily life. For the uninitiated, this is a good introduction, and easy read, and worth the time to think reflectively on what the author has written.

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