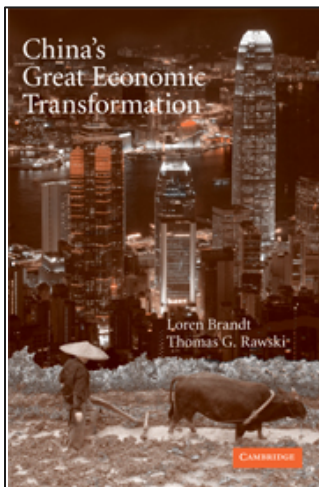


## Recommendations from Mary's Bookshelf

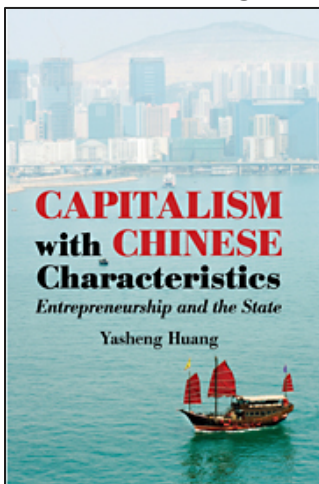
### Great Books about China's Economic Transition

**China's Great Economic Transformation**, edited by Loren Brandt and Thomas G. Rawski, Cambridge University Press, 2008



This volume includes magnificent surveys of many dimensions of China's economic transition. It is an essential reference for economists studying China. The wealth of details and analysis on China's changing economic institutions provides valuable background for anyone working with Chinese data. This volume is worth every penny.

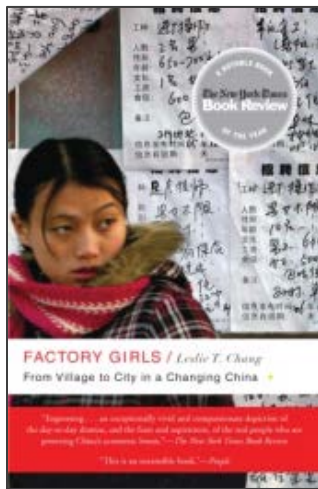
**Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State**, Yasheng Huang, Cambridge University Press, 2008.



As in his earlier book, Yasheng Huang offers a definite and provocative point of view, backed up with copious data and pointed case studies. Huang is not content for us to sit back and soak up the received wisdom on the nature of China's

economic miracle. His intent is to inform us and make us think and he succeeds royally on both fronts. While many view China's rapid growth as the result of strategic liberalization and foreign investment, Huang argues that private entrepreneurship in rural China, facilitated by access to capital and markets, was at the heart of China's economic takeoff. Reversals in private sector liberalism and a bias toward state-controlled urban enterprises in the 1990s are to blame for a growing urban-rural income gap over the past decade, in Huang's view, and democratic reforms are needed for both continued growth and a fair distribution of its benefits. A fascinating and challenging read.

**Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China**, Leslie T. Chang, Spiegel and Grau, 2008.



Over 130 million people have moved from rural villages to urban centers within China. This narrative recounts the experiences of young rural women as they take fate into their own hands in Guangdong's export factories. The book provides a close look at the labor market as experienced by China's migrant workers as well as working conditions within domestic and multinational factories. Although many critics disliked the way the author, Leslie Chang, interweaves the life of her factory girls with her own tale of leaving home, I found the book compelling and heart felt. For me the most interesting parts of this book are those that describe the process of finding and keeping a job in the "world's factory" and the strategies used by clever migrants to improve their work conditions and salaries. Through the stories of Chang's factory girls, we see the migrants as active agents rather than passive victims in the new China.