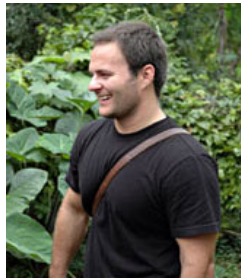


**No Ancient Wisdom, No Followers: The Challenges of Chinese Authoritarian Capitalism by James McGregor**



Review by: Steve Wanta

This was a very interesting read when looking at the often over simplified, very polarizing image of China. There are many images that are conjured of China when discussing manufacturing, trade, human rights but what is so astonishing is the rapid ascent of a formerly nonexistent middle class.

The book details the “China Model”, authoritarian capitalism that has fueled the rapid growth of the economy and turned China in a major global power. The iron hand of the Communist Party has driven to government and continues to control the path of a country.

Do the ends justify the means? China is proving that societies are dynamic and that the “ends” change, and in order to continue to evolve so do the “means” need to evolve. In the conclusion, the author writes, “The Twelfth Five-Year Plan changes the previous slogan of ‘Strong State, Wealthy People’ to ‘Wealthy People, Strong State.’” It is clear that China’s current model will eventually run out of steam. The corruption and general inefficiencies of the State Owned Enterprises will not be able to keep up.

In the meantime, the global cry to trade with China on a level playfield appears to be a fight the rest of the world has been unable to win. Like microcredit, real and lasting development comes from the bottom up. Real reform will need to be driven by the people of China. The new middle class will demand greater transparency and not stand for the corruption that the books cites as come place in Chinese politics.

In today’s interdependent world, the success and failure of the Chinese experiment will affect all of us.