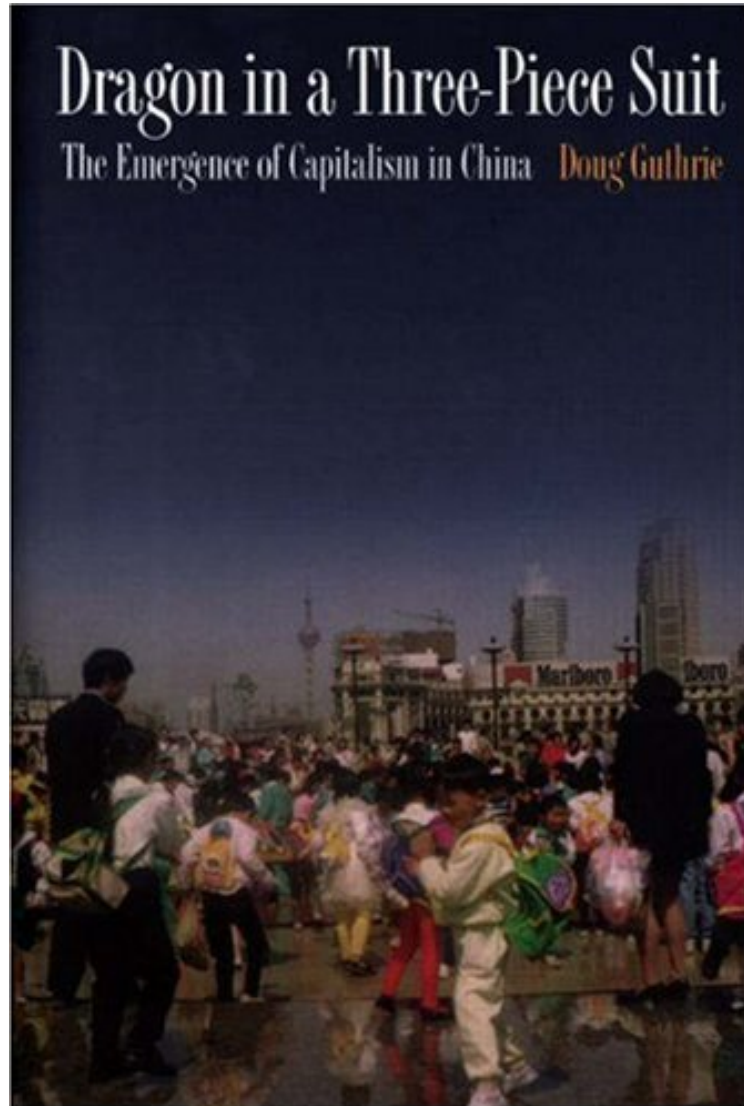


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Dragon in a Three-Piece Suit: The Emergence of Capitalism in China

Doug Guthrie

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Doug Guthrie : Dragon in a Three-Piece Suit: The Emergence of Capitalism in China before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dragon in a Three-Piece Suit: The Emergence of Capitalism in China:

6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. reader friendly By A Customer Finally, an academic who puts it into words so the rest of us can understand! Dragon in a Three Piece Suit tackles difficult issues in a way that is easily understandable to those of us who don't study economic systems full-time but are interested in learning about them. Guthrie manages to write a compelling work that is simply eloquent - a book that appeals to both academics and the

regular-Joe. I appreciated his insights and predictions regarding Chinese economic reform.

Dragon in a Three-Piece Suit is an innovative sociological examination of what is perhaps the main engine of economic reform in China, the large industrial firm. Doug Guthrie, who spent more than a year in Shanghai studying firms, interviewing managers, and gathering data on firms' performance and practices, provides the first detailed account of how these firms have been radically transformed since the mid-1980s. Guthrie shows that Chinese firms are increasingly imitating foreign firms in response both to growing contact with international investors and to being cut adrift from state support. Many firms, for example, are now less likely to use informal hiring practices, more likely to have formal grievance filing procedures, and more likely to respect international institutions, such as the Chinese International Arbitration Commission. Guthrie argues that these findings support the de-linking of Western trade policy from human rights, since it is clear that economic engagement leads to constructive reform. Yet Guthrie also warns that reform in China is not a process of inevitable Westernization or of managers behaving as rational, profit-maximizing agents. Old habits, China's powerful state administration, and the hierarchy of the former command economy will continue to have profound effects on how firms act and how they adjust to change. With its combination of rigorous argument and uniquely rich detail, this book gives us the most complete picture yet of Chinese economic reform at the crucial level of the industrial firm.

"[Guthrie] provides an admirably clear and detailed exposition of who runs what in reformera industry in China, complete with diagrams. . . . This book is essential reading for anyone interested in China's economic reforms and in transition economies more generally, and it will stand comparison with anything else in the field."--Jackie Sheehan, *The Times Higher Education Supplement* "A splendid book. . . . *Dragon in a Three-Piece Suit* provides a comprehensive examination of an important and timely phenomenon. The question is important. The data are not only unique, they are also remarkably comprehensive. . . . [It is] likely to stimulate both discussion and additional research."--Lisa A. Keister, *Contemporary Sociology* From the Back Cover "How have Chinese enterprises responded to the opening of the economy? Doug Guthrie surveyed Chinese managers, finding that many copied Western techniques, in labor markets, product markets, and inter-firm relations. Yet new practices retain the stamp of Chinese tradition. Guthrie uses the case of China to brilliant advantage to show that business practices are shaped by sociological as much as by economic imperatives."--Frank Dobbin, Princeton University "Dragon in a Three-Piece Suit brings state-of-the-art institutional analysis together with a brilliant empirical study of the real world of economic reforms in China. Combining fieldwork, interviews, and unique quantitative data sources, Guthrie offers the clearest account available of how China's reforms translate into concrete organizational practices. His study is among the best at illuminating how markets and firms work in transitional economies."--Craig Calhoun, New York University "Guthrie offers a sustained and intelligent treatment of an important topic using new data. The book will be of interest to China specialists (in sociology, political science, and anthropology) and to people who study comparative political economy. Guthrie also goes outside his specialization and draws connections with the literature on organizations and with economic sociology."--Bruce Carruthers, Northwestern University "Guthrie brings new insights and fresh perspectives to the study of organizational change in China during the process of economic reform. The book is exceptionally well written and moves easily between organizational theory and 'big questions,' on the one hand, and the particularities of Chinese experience on the other."--Barry Naughton, University of California, San Diego About the Author Doug Guthrie is Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of Global Activities, Office of the Provost, at New York University.