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China's Urban Billion: The Story behind the Biggest Migration in Human History (Asian Arguments)

By Tom Miller



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By 2030, China's cities will be home to 1 billion people - one in every eight people on earth. What kind of lives will China's urban billion lead? And what will China's cities be like?

Over the past thirty years, China's urban population expanded by 500 million people, and is on track to swell by a further 300 million by 2030. Hundreds of millions of these new urban residents are rural migrants, who lead second-class lives without access to urban benefits. Even those lucky citizens who live in modern tower blocks must put up with clogged roads, polluted skies and cityscapes of unremitting ugliness. The rapid expansion of urban China is astonishing, but new policies are urgently needed to create healthier cities.

Combining on-the-ground reportage and up-to-date research, this pivotal book explains why China has failed to reap many of the economic and social benefits of urbanization, and suggests how these problems can be resolved. If its leaders get urbanization right, China will surpass the United States and cement its position as the world's largest economy. But if they get it wrong, China could spend the next twenty years languishing in middle-income torpor, its cities pockmarked by giant slums.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Urbanisation will be the great theme of China's trajectory over the next decade and beyond, and Tom Miller is its superb, street-wise guide. He expertly explains the economic, social and environmental consequences of China's expanding cities and shrinking villages, and above all never loses sight of the people at the heart of this transformation. In *China's Urban Billion*, Miller takes what could have been a dry, abstract topic and delivers a vivid and highly readable account of momentous change." - Chris Buckley, Beijing correspondent, *The New York Times*

"This well argued and engaging account could not be better timed. China's recently appointed leaders have tough decisions to make. If they have the guts to listen to their own experts, Tom Miller says, the country could find itself on the cusp of a new land revolution. As this book powerfully illustrates, China needs its mesmerizing urban expansion to stay on course." - James Miles, Beijing bureau chief, *The Economist*

"China's recent prodigious urbanization is complex and often misunderstood. Miller tells an engaging China story that is quite different from what has been narrated by other journalists. Broadly researched, insightful and up-to-date, the book easily stands out. It is a title those who want to understand the country cannot afford to ignore." - Kam Wing Chan, Professor of Geography, University of Washington, USA

"In this book Tom Miller, a longtime Beijing resident and journalist, takes a penetrating look at what has led China astray in its rush to urbanise and what can be done to fix the resulting problems . . . Miller's cogent analysis is buttressed by colourful reportage, a reminder of the human fabric that hangs in the balance. And - no mean feat for a book about a potentially dry topic - it is a consistently good read." - *Financial Times*

"Urbanization is the new hot topic for China's leaders, as they look for renewed sources of growth for the world's second-biggest economy. The choices they make have enormous consequences for everything from rebalancing China's demand toward stronger consumption to determining the future path of energy consumption. Few are better qualified to understand the challenges than Tom Miller, author of a new book called *China's Urban Billion*." - *Wall Street Journal*

"Miller's book [captures] a nation urgently squaring-up to a process that is morphing more rapidly, and with far, far bigger implications, than any urbanisation that has come before. For China's leaders, there is no roadmap on all this because a lot of the roads haven't even been built yet: *China's Urban Billion* is the closest they have." - *The Times*

"This is a lively and readable book about one of the biggest challenges for the mainland's rulers over the next 20 years: how to build well planned and affordable cities for the one billion people who will live in them by 2030?" - *South China Morning Post*

"A lively and eminently readable new book about China's staggering process of urbanisation [that] provides an excellent companion volume to the greatest social transformation the Earth has witnessed - the making of China's cities." - *The Irish Times*

"Miller examines the many facets behind addressing potential problems with rapid urban development and

offers insightful analysis on both land and hukou reform." –“*Caixin*

"Never weighed down by figures and analysis, the book is a great read thanks to Miller's skilled writing and journalistic depictions of the many characters he meets during his travels . . . Well-researched with nuanced analysis." - *Global Times*

"Tom Miller's superbly researched book sketches out the challenges urbanisation poses for the world's most populous country and how the Chinese government is attempting to meet them. Miller delves into the issue in all its daunting complexity and doesn't pull any punches . . . You'll learn a lot from this book." - *Morning Star*

"It's the biggest migration in human history: China's population is moving to cities so fast that by 2030, roughly one in eight people on this earth will be a resident of a Chinese city . . . China expert [Tom Miller] chronicles this urban explosion and its impact on cities." -*The Atlantic Cities*

"For the first time in its history, China [is] now as much an urban as a rural country. But as Tom Miller's neat, elegant book shows, the impact of this shift is going to take decades to work out." - Kerry Brown, Director of the China Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, *Inside Story*

"*China's Urban Billion* captures [the] extraordinary process [of China's urbanization] that is simultaneously impressive and depressing." - *Frontline*

"Book of the week." - *The Globalist*

About the Author

Tom Miller is a senior analyst at Gavekal Research, a global economic research service, and editor-at-large of *China Economic Quarterly*, published by its sister service Gavekal Dragonomics.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Roberta Petty:

Book is to be different for every single grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. To be sure that book is very important usually. The book *China's Urban Billion: The Story behind the Biggest Migration in Human History (Asian Arguments)* has been making you to know about other know-how and of course you can take more information. It doesn't matter what advantages for you. The guide *China's Urban Billion: The Story behind the Biggest Migration in Human History (Asian Arguments)* is not only giving you much more new information but also being your friend when you really feel bored. You can spend your spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship using the book *China's Urban Billion: The Story behind the Biggest Migration in Human History (Asian Arguments)*. You never feel lose out for everything in case you read some books.

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Norma Harrell:

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