



Splendidly Fantastic: Architecture and Power Games in China

Julia Lovell

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Mao once called the Chinese "a blank sheet of paper", and the modernising that came with the Cultural Revolution treated cities much the same. But Mao's destructive impulses were as nothing compared to the liberalised policies of his recent successors. China has undergone urbanisation on a scale never seen before - much of it speculative, some of it a brazen display of power. In this incisive analysis by the acclaimed Sinologist Julia Lovell, we get inside the politics of architecture and city-making in China. There is a colourful cast, from the Western starchitects rushing into the land of opportunity, to political dissidents such as Ai Weiwei, to rebellious residents singing defiantly as the bulldozers advance. In this trenchant critique of urban policy, Lovell wonders what good all this thrusting ambition will have been if the property bubble bursts.

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