



The International Voice  
for Book Publishing  
and Bookselling



April 11, 2011



Nonfiction

## ★ *Web Exclusive* **My Two Chinas: The Memoir of a Chinese Counterrevolutionary**

*Baiqiao Tang, with Damon DiMarco, foreword by the Dalai Lama. Prometheus, \$26 (350p) ISBN 978-1-61614-445-6*

Tang uses the Tiananmen Square massacre in his beautifully written book to expose the Chinese government's unyielding resolve to quell free speech and action. Tang (*Anthem of Defeat: Crackdown in Hunan Province 1989-1992*), a well-known activist and chair of the China Peace and Democracy Federation, paints a portrait of youth, his father's idealism, and an awakening to the horrors of the regime. He was encouraged by university authorities to "be happy that life in China had gone from hellish to merely atrocious" and declares: "Among people of good character, some instincts always prevail. One of them is the outright refusal to compound darkness with darkness." After his imprisonment and torture (guards laughed on cue for their superiors; "small apes mimic the big ones"), Tang fled to Hong Kong, then the U.S., desperate to stay involved and defend the voiceless (many in China saw him as a pariah). Looking back, he says, "We didn't plan to be dissidents...We were caught up in the maelstrom, riding the vortex...We hadn't much time for vision or plans." Tang fully embraces the poetry and stories of China; "My country's. My own. The world's." His book is both a history lesson and a heart-wrenching read. (Mar).