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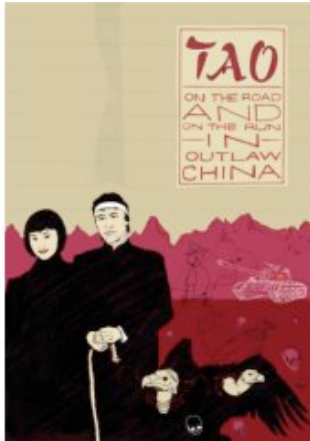
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**Publisher:** Portobello Books (October 2007)

**Language:** English

**ISBN-10:** 1846270243

**ISBN-13:** 978-1846270246

**Product Dimensions:** 8.4 x 6.1 x 1.5 inches

**Shipping Weight:** 1.5 pounds ([View shipping rates and policies](#))

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★★★★★ **An Enthralling, Adventurous & Currently Relevant Memoir**, April 18, 2008

By [flourchild "flourchild"](#)  (Dublin, OH USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

I have to admit that I wasn't really looking forward to reading this book which was given to me as a gift. Although I waited for the perfect time to read it, it isn't my usual taste. We need that sometimes, though. When I belonged to a book club, I read a lot of things that I really enjoyed but otherwise never would have picked up at a bookstore. When I procrastinated long enough, and had space to read it thoughtfully, I finally began. I have to say, honestly, that after about 50 pages I was hooked enough to be unable to put it down for long. That rarely happens. I can count the books that have done that to me... Life of Pi, Poisonwood Bible, Kite Runner... but I had no such expectation from this book and was thoroughly delighted. I have no interest in China, no interest in art. With Tibet and China in the news so much lately, and with the drama the Olympic torch passing has created, it was a timely read. I have a much more thorough understanding of the reality of life for Chinese citizens. It was not in the format of a lecture on world affairs, however, which I would have found dry and boring despite its current relevance. It was the background upon which the story of two people in love, of different nationalities, unfolded. Their desire for both

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freedom to be together and artistic expression lead them to try to escape. This memoir by Aya Goda, a Japanese woman who fell in love with artist Cao Yong, is an exciting ride and documents their escapes, failed attempts, and roadblocks. The fact that Cao Yong is an celebrated artist now and has supported this book gives it much in the way of credibility.

It was a bestseller in Japan, but only after many years has an English translation finally emerged. The Australian translator, Alison Watts, has done a great job, and has given us a book of such fluidity that I never got a sense of it ever having been written in any language but English. I understand a paperback version is due out in July. I hope you will find it as intriguing as I did and recommend it to any and all.

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