



A Chinese-American's Journey During the Cold War

Ox Horn Bend

牛角湾

Roy Cheng Tsung

PRAISE

Ox Horn Bend is an exquisitely-written, fascinating account of Roy Cheng Tsung's search for answers about his father's past. Much of it reads like a detective story as he tries to discover why this Chinese Nationalist diplomat would return to a Communist China in the early 1950s, and why he apparently made it difficult for his son subsequently to return to the country of his birth, the United States. Along the way, Tsung provides remarkably detailed and colorful reminiscences of his schoolboy days in New York City during the Korean War; his years in China, reaching adulthood in Beijing and enduring the throes of the Cultural Revolution, which claimed his father's life; his and his mother's miraculous escape to Hong Kong in the mid-1970s; and their eventual return to America. Against the backdrop of momentous events in world history, *Ox Horn Bend* is a case study in how international politics has affected the lives of seemingly ordinary (but actually quite extraordinary) individuals. In the process, the reader learns much about the story of China and its tumultuous relations with the West.

RON PURVER, OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Roy Cheng Tsung continues the story of his life from the point of his return to the United States after twenty years in Communist China. Born in New York City in 1941 to diplomatic parents in the service of the Chinese Nationalist government, Roy was an American citizen but, in Chinese law, also an “Overseas Chinese.” This proved to be a dubious status when his father decided in 1953 to move the family to the new People’s Republic of China. There Roy was educated in schools established specifically for “returned Overseas Chinese.” Though he tried to conform to the ideological teachings of the Communist Party, his future was limited by the Party’s suspicion of his family background. But his boyhood in New York had imbued him with the values and norms prevalent in the post-World War II U.S., which seemed to him the polar opposite of what he was experiencing in China. When suspicion of the family became outright persecution during the Cultural Revolution of the mid-1960s to mid-1970s, and after his father admitted his regret at having brought his wife and son to China, Roy resolved somehow to return to the U.S. and reclaim his American citizenship. This is the story of how he accomplished that and realized his American dream. His story reminds us that our American ideals and the institutions we devised to effect them have inspired generations around the world. It is also a cautionary tale of what can happen to a country without them.

GENEVIEVE DEAN, SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Memoir Traces Chinese-American's Escape from Communist China and His Search for Answers About His Father's Choices

Passager Books announces the publication of the memoir *Ox Horn Bend* by Chinese-American Writer Roy Cheng Tsung. Much of the book reads like a detective story, as Tsung searches for answers about his father's past, the reasons he moved his family back to Communist China in the early 1950s and made it so difficult for his son to leave China and return to the country of his birth, the United States.

Forty-five years after his return, he recounts that story for his daughters "who grew up in sunny California and had no clue about what it was like to live in a totalitarian country and the sacrifices that came with our freedom."

"Roy Tsung is a serious student of history," said Passager co-editor Kendra Kopelke. "His dedication to the quest to

uncover his father's motives for moving the family back to China provides a model for all of us wanting to learn how we came to be here and why."

Tsung's first book, *Beyond Lowu Bridge*, also published by Passager Books, tells the story of his family's move back to China, his life under Communist rule, and his 1974 escape back to the United States.

China scholar Genevieve Dean says of *Ox Horn Bend*, "It's a story that reminds us how our American ideals and the institutions we devised to effect them have inspired generations around the world. It is also a cautionary tale of what can happen to a country when those institutions break down."

Passager Books is a not-for-profit press dedicated to publishing the work of older writers, encouraging the imagination throughout life, and creating beautiful and welcoming publications. Its literary journal, *Passager*, founded in 1990, has featured work by nearly 1000 poets, fiction writers and memoirists, many in their 80s and 90s. Passager's mission is to "bring attention to older writers and encourage imagination throughout our lives."

Ox Horn Bend is available from www.passagerbooks.com

FROM *OX HORN BEND*

Armored vehicles rumbled into Beijing's Tiananmen Square (天安门广场) and smashed through barricades. It was June 4, 1989. Relentless army boots pounded the concrete pavement; PLA troops took aim at the massive crowd of peaceful demonstrators for democracy. "You are the People's Liberation Army! We are the people!" cried the defenseless students and workers. A moment of eerie silence . . . Suddenly, the unmistakable cracking sound of automatic weapons shattered the peace. My mother and I froze, as bloody images of carnage filled our Sony television screen. "It is difficult not to use the word 'massacre' to describe what happened," reported ABC's Sam Donaldson on the evening newscast.

It was calm in the San Francisco Bay Area where we had finally settled down to a peaceful life in 1978. My 76-year-old mother was just getting ready to turn in when the horrifying news came on the air. "Thank God we are no longer in Beijing," she sighed. I nodded, but my chest tightened; the very thought of the brutal dictatorship brought back memories of our miraculous escape fifteen years ago . . .

[Listen to the full prologue at passagerbooks.com](http://passagerbooks.com)



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I knew my father was a storyteller when he improvised elaborate bedtime stories when we were growing up, magically weaving in his favorite American and Chinese superheroes. His passion for world history was evident in his hand-drawn illustrations of the international superpowers and he would stress the importance of knowing the tensions between countries. I never understood why until I became an adult. Now that I have seen for myself the integrity of our democracy challenged, I am thankful that my father rigorously preserved critical family anecdotes of overcoming persecution.

LAUREN TSUNG

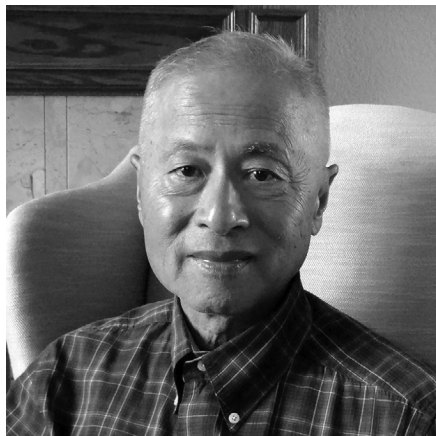


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My dad began writing his story when I was in the third grade. He researched facts, interviewed people, collected old photos, and pieced together the past. But his story never really came alive for me until I was in middle school, struggling to fit in. In the evenings, after a long day of work, my dad would open up to me about his experiences living in mainland China during the Cultural Revolution as a Chinese American. When he was my age, he too felt out of place. However, as a middle schooler, his experience was far more adverse than mine. In America, I still had freedom. Because of the sacrifices he made to come to America, I was able to have a comfortable life in California. I still had my privacy, the right to believe, dream, or say what I wanted. I had opportunities, education, resources, and economic stability. By sharing his story with me during my roughest times, my dad helped me to persevere and to continue to keep my hopes and dreams alive.

KRISTINE TSUNG

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



photograph by Kristine Tsung

The son of a Chinese Nationalist diplomat, Roy Cheng Tsung was born in New York City in 1941. After the downfall of the Nationalist regime in 1949, his father resigned from the Consular service and moved his family to Beijing at the height of the Cold War, hoping to help build the New China. In 1974, Roy and his mother escaped to British Hong Kong and returned to the U.S., where he worked for Stanford University and Stanford Medical Center for thirty years before retiring in 2009. The author of *Beyond Lowu Bridge* (Passager Books 2014), Tsung is married with two daughters and a son-in-law, and lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with his wife. He is working on a third memoir about his mother, Julia Liao Tsung, a remarkable woman of strength who was born on a tiny, peaceful island in Southern China. She traveled the world as the wife of a diplomat for twenty years, and for another twenty years endured the harsh conditions of Northern China.

ORDERING INFORMATION

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