

Beneath the China Boom: Labor, Citizenship, and the Making of a Rural Land Market. By Julia Chuang. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2020. \$85.00 hardcover, \$29.95 paperback.

In this book, Julia Chuang develops an impressive, analytically astute, and deeply engaging ethnographic account of the social systems that underpin China's massive construction industry, particularly the circular system of migrant labour and household farming on which it depends. Among the excellent scholarship on China's construction workers, who make up the largest contingent of the country's huge migrant labour force, Chuang's account stands out, as it adds an in-depth understanding of the household economy and social relations that underpin this labour force. Most of the research about migrant construction workers has focused on urban construction sites and the male workforce; Chuang, in contrast, provides a village-centred account that is as much about the women who stay at home as it is about the men who go out to work. The chapters develop a detailed, on-the-ground analysis of three different systems: (1) The split household system based on farming and seasonal migration, (2) the labour brokering system that connects rural workers to construction contractors, and (3) the land brokering system, through which local governments expropriate village land for urban construction projects and transfer land to large agribusiness operations.

Chuang describes these three systems and the dynamic relationship among them through narratives about the dramatically different trajectories of two villages. In Faming (in Sichuan province), village households have adjusted to a difficult but fairly stable system of family reproduction based on married women staying home, farming, and taking care of children and grandparents, while married men going out to do seasonal construction work in distant cities. Chuang describes with analytical precision and rich ethnographic detail the split household system—which depends on households having access to land—that makes migrant construction work possible. The system enriches a handful of labour brokers, who provide a flexible supply of labour for the construction industry, and exploits the migrant-farming households, but it offers fairly reliable conditions for the reproduction of village families.

In the chapters about Landing (in a rural district of Chongqing), Chuang tells the story of a village being destroyed. A similar split household system is breaking down after village farmland is expropriated and village homes are razed to make way for large-scale economic endeavours involving a mix of agribusiness and tourism. Although Chuang's analysis of the state-promoted shift to large-scale agriculture—a trend that is transforming China's countryside—is minimal, her description of the impact on village households is poignant and disturbing. While these households have become even more dependent on migrant construction labour, without the stable income and subsistence that had been provided by farming, the precariousness of

migrant construction work becomes untenable. Even the local labour brokers abandon the villagers, as they seek new sources of labour in other villages that still have land.

Chuang develops a highly convincing thesis about the centrality of land to the household economies in both villages. While some of her analysis is particular to the construction sector, much of what she describes is common to the lives of many of China's 260 million rural households, most of which depend on both migrant labour and farming. She writes well, and the moving stories she tells about individuals draw in the reader like a good novel.

Chuang's book is a major contribution to the literature on migrant labour and agrarian change in China. It should be read widely by people in the fields of contemporary China and East Asia studies, development studies, labour studies, and agrarian studies. It is accessible to undergraduates and could be used in a variety of graduate and undergraduate courses in these fields. It will also appeal to a wider audience because it is well written, deals with a critically important topic, develops an intelligent analytical narrative, and tells compelling personal stories.

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Buddhism after Mao: Negotiations, Continuities, and Reinventions. Edited by Ji Zhe, Gareth Fischer, and André Laliberté. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019. Pp. vii + 355. \$72.00.

There has been a rapid and extensive revival of all forms of religion in China in the decades after the Cultural Revolution. Challenging standard social scientific theories about the inevitability of secularization and raising many important policy questions, this development deserves much more academic attention. So far, in the West, there has been some good research on Chinese Christianity, but not much on Buddhism, which has more adherents than Christianity and overall more influence on Chinese society than Christianity. This book, a collection of essays by some of the best social scientists in the world (but none from Mainland China) working on Chinese Buddhism, is an important first step in addressing the gap.

The book is almost exclusively concerned with Han Chinese, Mahayana Buddhism. There is nothing on Tibetan Buddhism or the Theravada Buddhism of some ethnic minorities in southwestern China. The chapters are based on a combination of documentary analysis and on-the-ground fieldwork, mostly among institutional leaders rather than ordinary laity. The book points toward important agendas for further research.