

In conclusion to these final chapters Goldstein, resorting to his analytical framework, comes up with a tentative prediction on how Beijing's recycling dynamic might unfold in the future (p. 261–63). While I leave it to you to read the *Remains of the Everyday* and its conclusive assessment, it is worth noting the high quality of source materials on which this finding rests. Apart from newspaper articles, leaflets and secondary literature, the work includes and gains much from Goldstein's close engagement with archival documents, documented oral histories from personal contacts interviewed repeatedly over a decade – notably the couple Ms. and Mr. X (pp. 175–265) – and his personal research collected over 20 years from the field in Beijing, Wen'an (Hebei) and Guiyu (Guangzhou). Through the unique analytical engagement with so-far unseen materials, *Remains of the Everyday* significantly contributes to the state of research on Beijing's modern history, urban governance, environmental policy, formal–informal economic dynamics and resource recovery. This broad topical coverage hence renders the book appealing to scholars of modern China leaning towards human geography, urban historiography and political economy.

BENJAMIN STEUER

[bst@ust.hk](mailto:bst@ust.hk)

*Claiming Homes: Confronting Domicide in Rural China*

CHARLOTTE BRUCKERMANN

New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2020

247 pp. \$135.00; £99.00

ISBN 978-1-78920-357-8 doi:10.1017/S0305741022000170

There are now a number of scholarly works on the demolition and relocation (*chaiqian*) of residents' houses in urban areas, most notably Beijing and Shanghai. Based on long-term ethnographic research, extensive reading of the relevant secondary and theoretical literature, Bruckermann's book is the first full-length treatment of related issues to focus on a rural area. This in itself makes it extremely welcome.

Bruckermann's analysis centres on Sweeping Cliff, a small village in the spectacular loess landscape of the Shanxi mountain range. Through long years of villagers' conflictive negotiations with the local government and property companies, the old village, with its courtyard houses and cave-style dwellings (*yaodong*) built into the hillside, has been transformed into a tourist site celebrating the area's entrepreneurial spirit, while most villagers have been rehoused in the uniform apartment blocks of the adjacent "new village." In diverse ways, distinguished by class, generation and gender, the local population has largely benefitted from the resulting increased income and employment opportunities, but has also had to confront dispossession and dislocation in the form of the destruction of the physical and affective loci of their homes – of "domicide."

The book opens with an account of travelling in a van along a bumpy road across the dry, yellow landscape of north China's loess plateau. It was summer and swelteringly hot, as the passengers got on and off, with sacks of red sorghum and watermelons. Bruckermann's conversation with a fellow traveller reminded her of Fangdi, a Shanxi tour guide she knew, in Sweeping Cliff. Fangdi was employed in

a newly established tourist development company. He came from a relatively affluent family who lived in a city apartment. Fangdi himself had studied at university before becoming a rural tour guide. Although he was officially designated a peasant (*nongmin*) under the household registration system, he had never worked the land, and described himself as one of a new brand of workers “leaving the land but not the countryside” (*li tu bu li xiang*). Despite his relative affluence and social status, Fangdi’s heavy local dialect and “earthy” (*tu*) demeanour revealed a keen bodily and emotional attachment to the land. His and his family’s participation in the ranks of China’s “red capitalists” was an effect of their aspirations to gain from the benefits of identifying with the local bureaucratic and managerial elite, as much as of their entrepreneurial nous. Nevertheless, this did not signify an affective break with their rural home.

This ethnographic vignette encapsulates many of the major themes of the book. Chapter one of the first of three parts, “History, Politics, Place,” situates villagers’ claims to home in the context of their relationship with the past of Sweeping Cliff, including the architectural and social legacy of its pre-revolutionary entrepreneurial tradition and the complex legacy of the transformative collectivist policies of the Mao era. Come the market reforms of the post-Mao period, the commodification of the village economy under the tourist development plan’s appropriation of the village’s former collectivist resources brought immense benefits to some at the same time as it contributed to growing inequalities between households. As villagers’ homes, some of them in beautiful former courtyards, were increasingly targeted by the designs of the village committee and the tourist development plan, so homeowners responded with individual claims for compensation. These claims are then addressed from a different angle in chapter two, which examines the genealogical and ritual bases of villagers’ claims to home, through their evocations of the relationship between kinship and place. It traces how family genealogies detailing historical deeds to house ownership were hidden away during the Cultural Revolution years of stringent political surveillance and Red Guard destruction of cultural objects. Remaining objects and genealogies were then brought out in the post-Mao era, ironically displayed alongside posters of the Chairman that memorialized the sacrifices made during the years of violence, thus inversely reasserting claims to ancestral home.

Part two, on “Gender, Generation, Kinship,” focuses on the reproduction of home through the gendered and generational evaluation of labour and care. This weaves fascinating ethnographic details about senior men’s behaviour at the birthdays of their grandchildren into arguments about the devaluation of agricultural work and the erosion of grandparents’ influence over the childrearing and employment decisions of their offspring. It argues that the single-child policy may be seen as a form of dispossession of the older generation. It added to an amalgam of policies – increasing income generating opportunities for younger generations away from the land, and the bestowal of legal powers to parents over their single child – that augment the parents’ authority over that of the grandparents, despite the unremunerated contribution of the latter (particularly the grandmothers) to reproduction through their care work for their grandchild. Many of the older women’s histories of childbirth included painful experiences of infant mortality. The pressure they sometimes put on their daughters to have a child, even in conditions in which the daughter prioritized her employment away from the village, may be seen, Bruckermann argues, as compensation for their losses. Hence, rather than seeing the unremunerated care of their grandchild as part of an intergenerational contract safeguarding their own future, it may be seen as affective recognition

for their past suffering, even if it shores up the naturalization of structures sustaining the uneven gender and generational distribution of labour. Chapter four examines how these uneven structures and practices are maintained, even exacerbated, by shifting marriage practices, including the payment of bride wealth. Relatively well-educated young women increasingly seek opportunities for employment in the tourist service sector rather than remain in the village engaged in the exhausting physical labour of agricultural work subject to the demands of a mother-in-law. In contrast with former practice, it is they, not their parents, who negotiate the bride wealth, but rather than seeing their demands for house, car and money as the expression of their character as “gold-diggers,” as the popular press often portrays them, they may be understood as a gendered response to the precarities of working and living as young women in a society that still privileges male wealth and male prestige, despite the immense shifts taking place. It thus demonstrates how in the context of increased labour migration to the cities, young women attempt to assert control over their own futures as wives and mothers.

Finally, in part three, on “Labour, Location, Precarity,” Bruckermann reveals the nexus of labour, land and bodies as the connecting tissue of villagers’ sense of belonging to the village. Villagers inscribe a kind of moral hierarchy into different kinds of labour as forms of care, both physical and affective, and as markers of degrees of intimacy with, concern for, distance from or indifference to others. Food and crops (growing of domestic crops with or without pesticide), become new ways of creating morally loaded distinctions between those “inside” the village, and those “outside.” Shared labour within kinship groups becomes a form of consolidating those “inside” kin ties. Younger people leave the village in search of more lucrative opportunities in the service industries. Yet even though they find themselves in an uncomfortable in-between place, neither urban nor fully rural, the tourist and heritage celebration of the rural experience draws them into romanticizing as well as commodifying their ruralness.

Claims to home do not necessarily depend on inhabiting the physical place of home. Villagers’ contestation of the threat of domicide takes many forms, including the creation of new rituals and affective ties, producing new forms of kinship, yet also cementing a shared sense of belonging across the immense intersecting changes of the political economy, generation and gender. I should add that Bruckermann’s analysis clearly demonstrates that despite the considerable shifts in changing marriage and fertility practices, women’s unremunerated reproductive labour remains as – and possibly more – crucial to the commodified rural economy as it was to the collective agricultural economy.

A short review like this cannot hope to do justice to the rich ethnographic detail and the arguments of this book. And I do not wish to detract from the evident strengths of this monograph. However, in ending I would like to add that I would have appreciated a more emic approach to the analysis of class and sociality across gender and generational difference, as a way of giving the narrative a stronger sense of the comings and goings of everyday village and family life. Such an approach might also shed light on another question about the status of the Cultural Revolution in villagers’ everyday sense of home. It is narrated as a key episode of later memorialization in chapter two, yet the major events associated with the protection of home during the Mao era in subsequent chapters refer more to the nexus of food shortages and labour during the famine years of 1959–1962. Finally, at the risk of sounding somewhat curmudgeonly, more rigorous copy-editing would have been able to iron out a number of very convoluted sentences.

These criticisms aside, this is an important book for all scholars and students interested in rural responses to official programmes threatening domicile of locals' homes.

HARRIET EVANS

[evansh@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:evansh@westminster.ac.uk)

*Beyond Tears and Laughter: Gender, Migration, and the Service Sector in China*

YANG SHEN

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019

215 pp. \$44.99

ISBN 978-981-13-5816-6 doi:10.1017/S0305741022000066

*Beyond Tears and Laughter* is a timely study on how migrant men and women work and live in China's expanding service sector in metropolitan Shanghai. Built on research traditions on structural inequality and individual agency from a gender perspective, Yang Shen contributes to migration studies and China studies by providing a vivid picture of migrant workers' workplace, private life and social circles as shaped by the interaction of gender, class and *hukou* systems. Different from existing studies that focus on China's female-dominated service sector, in which women are often nimble, feminine, empathetic and subordinated workers, this study examines a more mixed-gender service workplace. In the restaurant setting under investigation, women and men are similarly disadvantaged because of their rural and migrant backgrounds, and due to their entry-level jobs in the service sector. Shen uses a combination of interviews, participant observation and questionnaire surveys, and examines the data within a comprehensive theoretical framework that connects structural constraints (including those of family and patriarchy) and individual agency (not only resistance but also coping strategies) (chapters one and two). The findings shed light on how men and women, as members of the so-called new urban underclass, negotiate and navigate their work and life in gendered ways.

Chapters three and four focus on both male and female migrant workers in the restaurant under study and describe how their motivations and experiences vary in gendered ways. Unlike previous studies showing that women are suppressed by the glass-ceiling effect and men are promoted more quickly than their female colleagues, this book presents the unique gender dynamics in the restaurant whereby men may feel more deprived. Given their rural origin and poor education, men are trapped in entry-level jobs just like their female counterparts and have even fewer opportunities to move upwards given the nature of their jobs (pantry helpers vs. table servers), while social expectations continue to push men to achieve economic success. These migrant men find their service work to be in conflict with the mainstream bread-winning or enterprising masculinities due to their low wages and feminized workplace, but they have no better options. On the contrary, such low-end service work is more endurable for women. However, the seemingly female advantage in the restaurant workplace does not mean that these women face less gender inequality in the public and private spheres.

Previous studies on gender and service work have tended to focus on the triangular relationship between workers, employers and customers; this book offers a fresh perspective by examining the interaction among workers. Some of the labour division, as related to essentialized gender traits, such as women's empathy or sensitivity,