Invisible China: How the Urban–Rural Divide Threatens China's Rise
SCOTT ROZELLE and NATALIE HELL
Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2020
248 pp. £27.50
ISBN 978-0-2267-3952-6 doi:10.1017/S0305741021000631

Scott Rozelle and Natalie Hell's remarkable book represents the culmination of four decades of research carried out by Rural Education Action Plan's (REAP) teams in China's poor rural hinterlands, which the authors call "Invisible China." The book provides compelling reasons why, beyond humanistic sympathies, readers should care about an education crisis besetting children in "Invisible China." Rozelle and Hell explain that in 2015 approximately 30 per cent of China's labour force aged 25 to 64 years had completed high school (p. 5). Meanwhile, in the 2010 census only 11 per cent of the rural labour force had completed senior high school compared with 44 per cent for the urban labour force (p. 8). Pertinently, this situation of an undereducated labour force looks set to continue, because over 70 per cent of China's children has a rural household registration (*hukou*) (p. 9). As China specialists know, the *hukou* system codifies rural–urban inequalities in law, confining most rural *hukou* holders to education and health services and living standards significantly inferior to those of their urban counterparts.

An undereducated labour force matters because China's economy is rapidly transforming. Four decades ago, most rural individuals had the skills necessary for their lives as subsistence farmers. After the mid-1980s, with the rise of export-led manufacturing and intensified infrastructure construction, tens of millions of rural individuals transferred into low-skilled off-farm work in the cities. In recent years, though, wages have been rising because of shortages of lower-skilled labour resulting from previous decades of fertility decline and the prior transfer of labour into off-farm sectors. Capital has been responding to wage rises by offshoring labour-intensive manufacturing and automating production. Jobs for low-skilled labourers are therefore disappearing. Meanwhile, China lacks the skilled labour force necessary to sustain higher-value economic sectors.

The prospect of economic stagnation and destabilization is so sensitive that Xi Jinping banned China's media, policy makers and scholars from using the phrase "middle income trap," instead requiring that commentators talk about a "new era of modern economic development" (p. 28). Nevertheless, Rozelle and Hell contend that China could well become "trapped" like countries such as Mexico, Thailand, Turkey and South Africa. These middle-income countries resemble China in that less than half their labour force has senior high-school education. Meanwhile, in the absence of a national pivot to high value economic sectors, these countries have experienced increased informalization and crime.

In rendering visible the factors that derail education in "Invisible China," this book offers new understandings of both education and middle income. The analysis reveals that education is more than attainment; it is how much children are learning. Meanwhile, educational reform requires more than investment in facilities. It requires teaching students how to learn across their life course. The capability of millions of children in "Invisible China" to learn is impaired by invisible endemic afflictions, namely, anaemia, poor vision and intestinal worms, which make them tired and unable to concentrate. Furthermore, millions of children are raised by caregivers who have no idea how to interact with them in their early years, leading to severe cognitive delays from which they never recover. The core message of this book is

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741021000631 Published online by Cambridge University Press

that "the urgent task" facing middle income is "moving from visible to invisible (but still deeply significant) problems" (p. 118).

This book's contributions are so insightful because Rozelle and his REAP team are deeply embedded in "Invisible China." Rozelle is far from an armchair analyst. He has traipsed across hundreds of villages, visiting homes and schools, and following his interlocutors to the cities – to mobile phone (p. 34) and electronics factories (p. 52) – and back. He is intensely curious, forever observing and respectfully listening. He listens to the fifth grader who wears glasses for the first time (p. 123), to the parents who only give their child one out of two of a course of worming tablets because "everyone needs some [worms]" for their digestion (p. 113), to the primary school headmaster who observes that his students sleep during break rather than play (p. 105), to the vocational school drop-out who like so many others had learnt absolutely nothing in his classes (pp. 87–92). Rozelle's conversations with the inhabitants of "Invisible China" and with his collaborators generated the many innovative research questions and experimental research designs pursued by REAP, while also underpinning the tremendous empathy of the analysis and the vividness of this book's narration.

Rozelle and Hell make the enormity of rural children's deprivations intelligible to the reader on multiple levels, linking the neglect of individual children and the hopes and hardships of their families to the strategic concerns of the nation and to the global future. The lessons this book synthesizes could help to catalyze the political will for the just treatment of the invisible in China and other middle-income countries. However, even as rendering the invisible visible is an important precursor of change, political will does not always follow. *Punishing the Poor* by Loïc Wacquant (Duke University Press, 2009) and *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis* by Robert Putnam (Simon & Schuster, 2015) provide rich evidence-bases for new policies in Western countries, but their messages seem largely unheeded. Hopefully, this book's messages will fare better – already promising interventions have followed in REAP's wake. Musings about impact aside, this book is a must-read for China specialists for its new perspectives on the intransigent problems of "rampant poverty, undereducation, undernutrition and undertreated health issues" (pp. 7–8) that lie beyond the China of PISA tables, skyscrapers and international students, and for its illuminating comparisons with other countries.

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The End of the Village: Planning the Urbanization of Rural China
NICK R. SMITH
Minneapolis, MN, and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2021
324 pp. $27.00
ISBN 978-1-5179-1094-4 doi:10.1017/S0305741021000886

How did China's party-state plan the largest urbanization project in world history? What are the terms of the new social contract under China's plan for urban–rural coordination (*chengxiang tongchou*)? How did coordinated planning practices originate through local "experiments"? And how is coordinated planning shifting urban–rural relations and the prospects for rural people living on the urban edge? These

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