

Lena Kaufmann

Rural-Urban Migration and Agro-Technological Change in Post-Reform China

How do rural Chinese households deal with the conflicting pressures of migrating into cities to work as well as staying at home to preserve their fields? This is particularly challenging for rice farmers, because paddy fields have to be cultivated continuously to retain their soil quality and value. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork and written sources, *Rural-Urban Migration and Agro-Technological Change in Post-Reform China* describes farming households' strategic solutions to this predicament. It shows how, in light of rural-urban migration and agro-technological change, they manage to sustain both migration and farming. It innovatively conceives rural households as part of a larger farming community of practice that spans both staying and migrating household members and their material world. Focusing on one exemplary resource - paddy fields - it argues that socio-technical resources are key factors in understanding migration flows and migrant-home relations. Overall, this book provides rare insights into the rural side of migration and farmers' knowledge and agency.

BIOGRAPHY

Lena Kaufmann is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of History and an associate lecturer at the Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, both at the University of Zurich.

"Meticulously researched, the book brings together labour migration, economic transformation and agricultural knowledge transmission. With solid empirical details and innovative angle, the book makes rare contributions to understanding socioeconomic changes in China and beyond."

- Biao Xiang, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Oxford, and Director of Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology

"Kaufmann's wonderful study of China's migrant worlds is a must-read for anyone interested in the multiple material skills and resources that underprivileged rural populations marshal in their quest for the good life."

- Francesca Bray, Edinburgh University



New Mobilities in Asia
March 2021
306 pages, 13 b/w illustrations
Hardback
156 x 234 mm
€105.00 / £96.00 / \$124.00
Open Access

ISBN 9789463729734
e-ISBN 9789048552184
BISAC SOC007000 / SOC055000 / TEC003000
BIC JFFN / 1FPC / TV

KEYWORDS

China, Rural-Urban Migration, Knowledge and Skill, Rice Farming, Migrant-Left-Behind Nexus

To order this book visit www.aup.nl

Distribution Rest of World via Ingram Publisher Services UK (formerly NBNI Ltd.) | www.distribution.nbni.co.uk
Distribution North America via Baker & Taylor Publisher Services | www.btpubservices.com

Amsterdam University Press
Nieuwe Prinsengracht 89
1018 VR Amsterdam

T +31 (0)20 420 00 50
info@aup.nl
marketing@aup.nl

www.aup.nl
facebook.com/AUPAcademic
twitter.com/AmsterdamUPress

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

INTRODUCTION

Arguments and aims of the book

Agriculture and migration

From 'migrant worlds' to 'community of practice' worlds

Knowledge, repertoire, and agency

Accessing the rural-urban community of practice

Structure of the book

References

1. HOW THE PREDICAMENT AROSE

Modern agriculture in Anren County

De-collectivization and marketization

Abolition of the collective welfare system

The new urban economy and increased migration

References

2. RICE KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN TRANSITION

Transformation of agricultural knowledge transmission

Transformation of the repertoire of knowledge

Agricultural deskilling and extended knowledge repertoires

References

3. REFERENCE MODELS FOR TRANSMITTING KNOWLEDGE

Transmitting farming knowledge through proverbs

Educating the masses

Textualizing vernacular knowledge

Negotiating knowledge and farmer-state relationships

References



To order this book visit www.aup.nl

Distribution Rest of World via Ingram Publisher Services UK (formerly NBNI Ltd.) | www.distribution.nbni.co.uk
Distribution North America via Baker & Taylor Publisher Services | www.btpubservices.com

Amsterdam University Press
Nieuwe Prinsengracht 89
1018 VR Amsterdam

T +31 (0)20 420 00 50
info@aup.nl
marketing@aup.nl

www.aup.nl
facebook.com/AUPAcademic
twitter.com/AmsterdamUPress

4. TECHNOLOGICAL CHOICE IN THE WAKE OF MIGRATION

Tilling with power ploughs and oxen

Harvesting with sickles and combine harvesters

Choosing harvesting technologies

Technological choice from a repertoire perspective

References

5. LAND-USE STRATEGIES

Sustaining intensive rice farming

De-intensifying rice farming

More than linear, more than technical

References

CONCLUSION: A SKILL PERSPECTIVE ON MIGRATION

Agency beyond resistance

Decision making beyond economic reasoning

Technology beyond linear progress

Migration beyond dichotomies

References

Appendix

I. Glossary

II. Solar terms

III. Song of the 24 Solar Terms

IV. Examples of proverbs and encoded knowledge

References

Index



To order this book visit www.aup.nl

Distribution Rest of World via Ingram Publisher Services UK (formerly NBNI Ltd.) | www.distribution.nbni.co.uk
Distribution North America via Baker & Taylor Publisher Services | www.btpubservices.com

Amsterdam University Press
Nieuwe Prinsengracht 89
1018 VR Amsterdam

T +31 (0)20 420 00 50
info@aup.nl
marketing@aup.nl

www.aup.nl
facebook.com/AUPAcademic
twitter.com/AmsterdamUPress