

social, economic, and political context in which housing policies are formulated in the PRC. Chapters three to seven describe the development of urban housing provision and reform in clearly defined stages, from the foundation of the PRC in 1949, the "Socialist Transformation" (*shehuizhuyi gaizao*) in the 1950s until the 8th Five-Year Plan (1991–1995). In each chapter the historical background is briefly outlined, giving the necessary information to readers not familiar with the Chinese setting. Chapter eight presents an overall view of rural housing conditions and developments. The last chapter provides a sound assessment of the Chinese housing system in relation to the social and economic process of modernization. In their conclusion, the authors stress the multiple implications of the newly established "Socialist Market Economy" for the future of housing policies in the PRC in terms of commercialization and privatization. Though published in late December 1999, the book unfortunately does not include the major shift in housing policy since the inauguration of Prime Minister Zhu Rongji in March 1998. In sum, the main emphasis of this study lies on the comprehensive and detailed analysis of the historical context and the changes in housing policies in the PRC until 1995. The authors succeed brilliantly in describing the changes and continuities of policy implementation within the ideologically legitimized boundaries of Communist rule in a historical perspective. However, the reader mainly interested in the concrete practice of housing investment and management will be disappointed to find no up-to-date information or advice for doing real estate business in present-day PRC.

Martin Kittlaus

SUSANNE WEIGELIN-SCHWIEDRZIK, DAGMAR HAUF (eds.), *Ländliche Unternehmen in der Volksrepublik China*. (Schriften zu Regional- und Verkehrsproblemen in Industrie- und Entwicklungsländern, vol. 64) Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1999. 255 pages, with appendix, DM 124,-. ISBN 3-428-09635-5

In keeping with its importance for the transformation of economy and society in China the industrialization of the Chinese countryside has been of growing concern in Western studies of contemporary China. This book presents the findings of a field research project on enterprises in Shanghai's Qingpu county, which the editors (S. Weigelin-Schwiedrzik holds a chair for Contemporary Chinese Studies, D. Hauff is her assistant), together with advanced students of the Institute for Chinese Studies of Heidelberg University, carried out in cooperation with Shanghai International Studies University. The aim of the project was to demonstrate the multiple – not only economic and fiscal, but also social and political – significance of rural industrialization

for socio-economic change in present-day China, and the specific circumstances of this change. In October 1996 the research group visited five enterprises interviewed managers, party secretaries and staff as well as members of the local government (the interviews are listed in the annex of the book), and, together with its Shanghai partner, held a symposium on the subject. The two contributions by Chinese colleagues appear now as the first part of this book: Dou Hui on "The Emergence of Rural Enterprises and its Function for the Development of the PRC" and - more substantial - Liu Rongzong on "Problems and Perspectives of Rural Enterprises". In the second part ("Rural Enterprises and Political Economy") Weigelin-Schwiedrzik discusses the influence of rural enterprises on the relations between rural and urban areas, the central and local level of the state as well as between state and society, whereas Hauff scrutinizes the political, administrative and fiscal "Role of the State in the Industrialization of the Chinese Countryside". These more general and comprehensive studies are complemented by five case studies on specific aspects of rural enterprises: Sascha Klotzbücher describes "The Cooperative Based on Shares (*gufen hezuo qiye*) as a Form of Ownership of Rural Enterprises", Johanna Maute explains the growing "Foreign Trade Orientation of Rural Enterprises", Patricia Schetelig demonstrates "The System of Social Security and its Application in Enterprises in Qingpu County", Simone Griebmayer discusses the question whether "welfare enterprises (*fuli qiye*) are a kind of last remnants of the Chinese welfare state or a paying idea to overcome financial weakness in the social sector", finally, Michael Lüdke looks at the further development of rural enterprises from the perspective of the central state, dealing with the question whether the central government should regard rural enterprises as a promotor of local social stability or rather fear their contribution to growing local self-assertion and autonomy.

As a whole, these studies draw a detailed and vivid picture of rural enterprises and their socio-political environment. The annex of the book contains a readable German translation of the 1996 Law on Town and Village Enterprises, which is often referred to in the studies. Finally, the book is an impressive, rare example of a creative joint venture by academic teachers and their students.

Robert Heuser