New Urban Space in China: 
Towns, Rural Labour and Social Inclusion

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### Abbreviations

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOLSS</td>
<td>Bureau of Labour and Social Security</td>
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<td>CASS</td>
<td>Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</td>
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<td>CCP</td>
<td>Chinese Communist Party</td>
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<td>CMS</td>
<td>Cooperative Medical System</td>
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<td>EBR</td>
<td>Extra-Budgetary Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
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<td>GVIO</td>
<td>Gross Value of Industrial Output</td>
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<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<td>HPF</td>
<td>Housing Provident Fund</td>
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<td>HRS</td>
<td>Household Responsibility System</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAL</td>
<td>Land Administration Law</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MOH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>NBS</td>
<td>National Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>NHSS</td>
<td>National Health Services Survey</td>
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<td>NSSF</td>
<td>National Social Security Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAYG</td>
<td>Pay-as-you-go pension system</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army</td>
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<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<td>PSU</td>
<td>Public Service Units</td>
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<td>SARS</td>
<td>Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome</td>
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<td>SOE</td>
<td>State Owned Enterprise</td>
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<td>TSS</td>
<td>Tax Sharing System</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVE</td>
<td>Township and Village Enterprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Value-added Tax</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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Glossary of Chinese terms

baojia zhidu 保甲制度 system of mutual community supervision used in late Imperial China
baomu 保姆 women working as nannies and cleaners in private homes
baoxianfei shouru yanglao nianjin 保险费收入养老年金 The old age pension insurance fund

chengguanzhen 城关镇 city-based-town
chengjian ju 城建局 Urban Construction Department

Dahuaishu genjizuyuan 大槐树寻根祭祖园 Dahuaishu ‘Ancestral Park’
danwei 单位 work unit
dazhuan 大专 college degree
dingti 顶替 position replacement scheme used mainly during the Maoist period
diqu 地区 district

ganbu 干部 cadre
gangwei zerenzhi 岗位责任制 cadre responsibility system
geren suodeshui 个人所得税 personal income tax
getihu qiye 个体户企业 individually owned enterprise
gongban laoshi 公办老师 public teacher
gongshang baoxian 工伤保险 work injury insurance
gongye xiangzhen qiye 工业乡镇企业 industrial TVE
gu cheng 古城 old part of the town
guanxi 关系 interpersonal relations
gufen qiye 股份企业 share holding enterprise
Guhui 古槐 old scholar tree
guotu siyuan chu 国土资源处 Department of Land and Natural Resources
Guowuyuan yanjiujigou 国务院研究机构 State Council Research Organization
guoyou danwei renyuan 国有单位人员 state sector employees

jianzhizhen 建制镇 administrative or statutory towns
jimao shichang 集贸市场 trade markets
jingji shiyong fang 经济使用房 ‘affordable’ or ‘economy’ housing
jinxiu xiao 进修校 training school
jizhen 集镇 market towns

huanbao fei 环保费 fee to protect the environment
hukou 户口 household registration booklet
hutong 胡同 narrow dirt alleyways

keji gongzuoren yuan 科技工作人员 professional staff
laodong he shehui baozhangju 劳动和社会保障局 Labour and Social Security Department
laoshuì 老乡 fellow native
litu bulixiang 离土不离乡 leave the land but not the countryside
lixishui 利息税 interest tax

meikuang anquan jiancha ju 煤矿安全监察局 Coal Mine Security Supervision Department
minbān jīngjì 民办经济 society-run economy
minbān láoshi 民办老师 community teacher (village teacher)
minyìng qiéyè 民营企业 people-run enterprise
mùbào zàorénzhì 目标责任制 target responsibility system

nóngcūn jīngyìng guǎn lǐ zhōngxīn 农村经营管理中心 Centre for Rural Management and Administration
nóngcūn shèhuì yānglǎobàoxiān 农村社会养老保险 The rural old age insurance scheme
nóngjī fāzhǎn zhōngxīn 农机发展中心 Centre for Agricultural Mechanization Development
nóngyè Xìnyǒng Hézhùo Shè 农业信用合作社 Agriculture Credit Cooperative
nóngzhízhé zhōngxué 农职业中学 vocational junior secondary school

píkùn zhígōng 贫困职工 impoverished staff and workers

rénkǒu suǒzhì 人口素质 population quality

shāng píng fāng 商品房 commodity housing
shèhuì bāoxiān chúzhī bǔzhì 政策 社会保障补助支出 social insurance system subsidy
shèngyù bāoxiān 生育保险 childbirth insurance
shì 市 city/prefecture
shì yè dānwéi 事业单位单位 public service units [PSU]
shì yè bāoxiān 失业保险 unemployment insurance
shìyě bāoxiān guānlìfúwù zhōnxīn 失业保险管理服务中心 Unemployment Insurance Service Centre
sīlǎishuǐ gōngsī 自来水公司 Urban Water Company
sìyīng qiéyè 私营企业 enterprise privately owned by more than one person
Susan qījié 苏三起解 ‘Susan under escort’ (Peking Opera)

wài yù suàn 外预算 extra-budgetary revenue
wáidìrén 外地人 outsider
wéishēng fěi 卫生费 public health fee
wéishēngyuàn 卫生院 public health centre

xiāng 乡 townships
xiǎochéngzhèn 小城镇 small town
xiāngzhèn zòngrénkǒu 乡镇总人口 total population
Laid-off Workers Re-employment Centre

rurbanization

county gazetteer

all-round well-off society

pension insurance for public servants

old-age pension insurance

one factory, two systems’ campaign intended to channel those workers employed in the TVE sector holding urban registration to the old age insurance scheme for urban workers, and those with a rural registration to be incorporated into one of the local rural pension schemes

medical insurance

business tax

Re-employment Service Centre

fee on street vendors

town

enterprise within the town’s urban built up area

China Life Insurance Company Limited

Department for Small and Medium Enterprises

technical degree

grasp the large and release the small

housing provident fund [HPF]

self-built housing

minimum living standard insurance fund
Abstract

Since the late 1970s internal migration has become a fundamental feature of economic and social change in the People’s Republic of China. So has rapid urbanization as the rural population moves to the cities and towns in search for work. In the process, new urban spaces have been created that not only provide the springboard for economic development but also present challenges for social coherence and stability. Considerable attention has been focussed on the impact of this migration on the larger cities and on the migrants to those cities; processes that inevitably highlight the difficulties of China’s socio-economic transformation. Nonetheless, the experiences of those cities represent but one of the country’s urban realities. In fact, the majority of China’s urban population live in a highly dispersed system formed by thousands of small cities and towns.

Through the examination of a county in North China (Hongtong County, Shanxi Province) and its county town (Dahuishu Town) this study suggests that outside the larger cities there may be alternative accounts of urban social change and the integration of rural migrant workers. Empirical findings point to greater openness and flexibility in the incorporation of rural workers. Though shortcomings are still observed, there is also considerable governmental and social awareness of the problems brought by rural-urban migration and urbanization processes; a willingness to act and a capacity to promote and deliver greater social inclusion. Dahuaisu Town’s distinct development experience has allowed for the construction of a more inclusive social environment, one which provides all inhabitants, including rural workers with a platform towards advancing their economic and social well-being.

Impossible as it is to be representative of town development throughout China, this study provides an example of and a guide to alternative development processes to those documented in large urban centres. Small town urban development in Hongtong County is not a resolved issue, but it suggests that China’s transformation may not necessarily result in dysfunctional and socially polarized urban environments.