

Two Stories in One: Urbanization and Rural Restructuring in South China

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Abstract: China has been urbanizing rapidly since the late 1980s due to economic growth and social changes. The new urbanization and rural problems have gained their popularity in academics. However, there is a lack of interdisciplinary studies on the interaction and relationship between new urbanization and rural restructuring. This project chooses several villages in Guangdong as case study areas, tells the stories of two contradictions induced by the “rural-urban dichotomy”, and sheds light on the interaction and relationship between the process of urbanization and the persistence of rurality in China, as well as to discuss the questions that how urbanization vanish peasants and villages, how the rural traditional patterns have been revived, and why there are two completely opposite results of Chinese urbanization in similar geographical areas. Research methods include mixed-method combining quantitative and qualitative analyses including statistical analysis, field observation, interviews and questionnaires, personal life history and discourse analysis. It tends to enrich the existing literature of rural geography from the highlight of qualitative analysis and adoption of interdisciplinary studies and institutional analytic framework, and provides fundamental understanding of “urbanization with Chinese characteristics”.