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978-1-107-11730-3 - Land Bargains and Chinese Capitalism: The Politics of Property Rights under Reform

Meg E. Rithmire

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Land Bargains and Chinese Capitalism

The Politics of Property Rights under Reform

Land reforms have been critical to the development of Chinese capitalism over the last several decades, yet land in China remains publicly owned. This book explores the political logic of reforms to landownership and control, accounting for how land development and real estate have become synonymous with economic growth and prosperity in China. Drawing on extensive fieldwork and archival research, the book tracks land reforms and urban development at the national level and in three cities in a single Chinese region. The study reveals that the initial liberalization of land was reversed after China's first contemporary real estate bubble in the early 1990s and that property rights arrangements at the local level varied widely according to different local strategies for economic prosperity and political stability. In particular, the author links fiscal relations and economic bases to property rights regimes, finding that more "open" cities are subject to greater state control over land.

MEG E. RITHMIRE earned her Ph.D. in Government from Harvard in 2011 and joined the faculty of Harvard Business School as an Assistant Professor in the Business, Government, and International Economy Unit, where she primarily teaches political economy. She was a Fulbright Scholar in China in 2007–8.

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Advance Praise for *Land Bargains and Chinese Capitalism*

“China’s remarkable development in the last two decades has taken place in ways that notoriously confound many Western assumptions about the way that states, markets, and intermediate institutions should relate to one another to produce growth. As Meg Rithmire shows in this fascinating and remarkably well-researched book, an especially important yet utterly counterintuitive area in the political economy of Chinese development has been the problem of property rights, where, despite the fact that the state officially owns all land, enormous, vital, and innovative markets for its use have grown up all over the country. Rithmire’s book lays out the historical peculiarity and broad political and economic significance of landed property governance in China’s transformation since the 1980s. Her general argument for the whole of China is then contextually fleshed out with three detailed studies of property politics in the northern cities of Dalian, Harbin, and Changchun. Anyone wanting to understand the dynamics of growth in contemporary China, or, indeed, anyone interested in shaking up their deepest assumptions about what is possible in the development process, will benefit greatly by consulting this rich and informative book.”

Gary Herrigel,
University of Chicago

“Rithmire’s work tackles the most important socioeconomic–political phenomenon in contemporary China: urban transformation. She combines careful conceptualization and detailed case studies to explain patterns of urban changes that have impacted the lives of hundreds of millions of people. Through a mix of careful documentary research and in-depth interviews, Rithmire offers convincing and engrossing historical institutional accounts of urban transformation in some of China’s most important cities. For any student of contemporary China, this is a must-read.”

Victor Shih,
*School of International Relations and Pacific Studies,
University of California, San Diego*

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For my parents, Maxine Rithmire and Jack Bertram

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Meg E. Rithmire
Boston, Massachusetts

Abbreviations

BLPM	Bureau of Land Planning Management
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CNR	China National Rail Corporation Ltd.
DDA	Dalian Development Area
DRC	Development Research Center of the State Council
ETDZ	Economic and Technology Development Zone
FAI	fixed-asset investment
FAW	First Automobile Works
FIE	foreign-invested enterprise
FDI	foreign direct investment
FYP	five-year plan
GRP	regional GDP
GVIO	GDP and industrial output
HMA	Heilongjiang Municipal Archives
KMT	Guomintang
LMB	Land Management Bureau
MBIC	Municipal Bureau of Industry and Commerce
MLR	Ministry of Land Resources
MoC	Ministry of Construction
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission
NIE	new institutional economics
PBoC	People’s Bank of China
PLA	People’s Liberation Army
PRC	People’s Republic of China
PSB	Public Security Bureau
REB	Real Estate Bureau
SEZ	special economic zone

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SOE	state-owned enterprise
SPC	State Planning Commission
TVE	township and village enterprise
UPB	Urban Planning Bureau

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<i>banqian</i> 搬迁	relocation
<i>baoshuiqu</i> 保税区	tax-free zone
<i>beifang Xianggang</i> 北方香港	make Dalian the “Hong Kong of the North”
<i>chai</i> 拆	demolition
<i>chaiqian banqian</i> 拆迁搬迁	demolition and relocation
Chengshi guihua ju, 城市规划局	Urban Planning Bureau
<i>churang</i> 出让	paid transfer, land conveyance
<i>difangzhi</i> 地方志	gazetteer
<i>dingzihu</i> 钉子户	“nail house”
<i>dongbei</i> 东北	the Northeast
<i>gaige kaifang</i> 改革开放	reform and opening
<i>gao xinqu</i> 高新区	high-tech new zone
<i>gaokaifu</i> 高开区	high-tech park
<i>geti</i> 个体	private
<i>geti hu</i> 个体户	individual laborers
<i>guihua</i> 规划	land-use plan
<i>huafa</i> 划发	administrative allocation
<i>hukou</i> 户口	urban citizenship
<i>jiedao</i> 街道	neighborhood
<i>jiedao banshichu</i> 街道办事处	street office
<i>jihua</i> 计划	[economic] plan
<i>jihua danlie chengshi</i> 计划单列城市	central economic city
<i>jingji tequ</i> 经济特区	special economic zone
<i>jingji zhufang</i> 经济住房	economic housing
<i>kaifuqu</i> 开发区	smaller development zone within a city
<i>lao gongye jidi</i> 老工业基地	“old industrial base”

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<i>liudong renkou</i> 流动人口	floating population
<i>nianjian</i> 年检	yearbook
<i>paimai</i> 拍卖	auction
<i>penghu</i> 棚户	slum
<i>penghuqu</i> 棚户区	shanty town
<i>shangpinhua</i> 商品化	commodification
<i>shiqu</i> 市区	urban district
<i>suoyouquan</i> 所有权	ownership
<i>tudi caizheng</i> 土地财政	fiscalization
<i>xiaoqu</i> 小区	residential neighborhood, apartment community
<i>xieyi</i> 协议	negotiation
<i>xinfang shangfang</i> 信访上访	letters and visits
<i>weifang</i> 危房	slum
<i>yanhai kaifang chengshi</i> 沿海开放城市	coastal open city
<i>yi digai cu qigai</i> 以地改促企改	use land reform to encourage enterprise reforms
<i>yitu shengcai</i> 以土生财	make money by developing land
<i>yiqi</i> 一汽	First Automobile Works
<i>youxian gongsi</i> 有限公司	limited liability company
<i>yusuannei shouru</i> 预算内收入	budgetary revenues
<i>yusuanwai shouru</i> 预算外收入	extrabudgetary revenues
<i>zhaobiao</i> 招标	bid invitation
<i>zhengyong</i> 征用	state acquisition
<i>zhenxing Ha'erbin</i> 振兴哈尔滨	“rejuvenate Harbin”
<i>zhuada fangxiao</i> 抓大放小	grasp the large and release the small