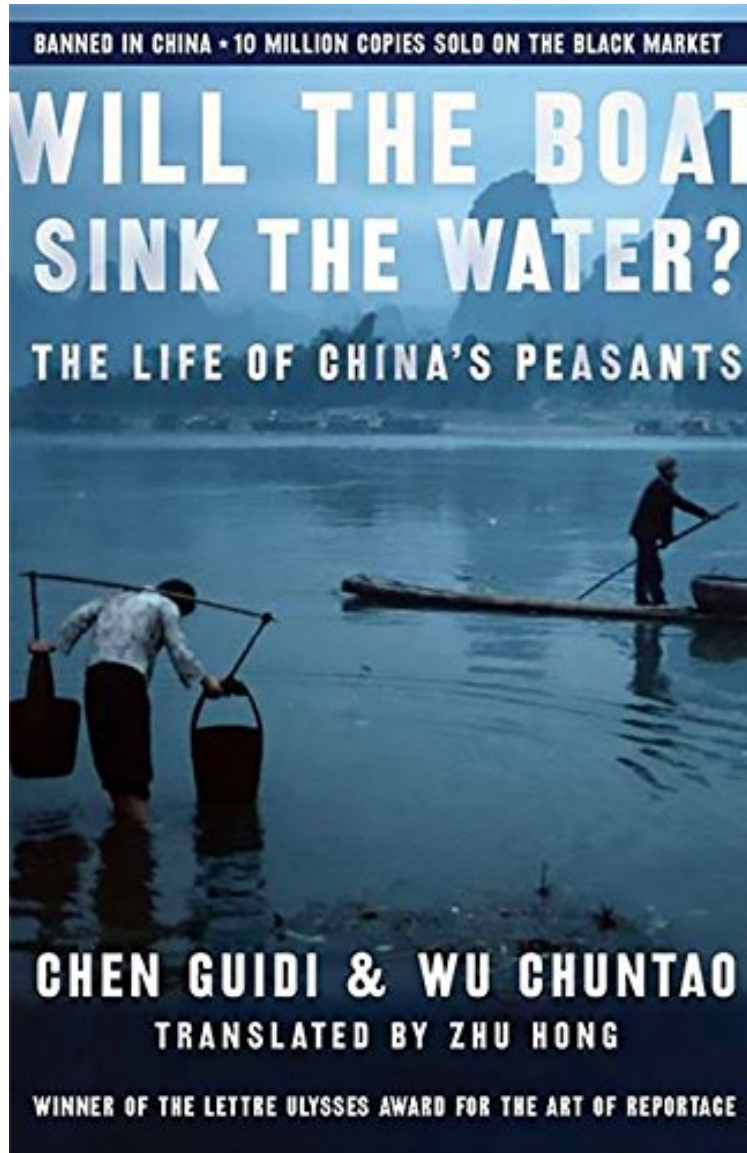


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Will the Boat Sink the Water?: The Life of China's Peasants

Chen Guidi, Wu Chuntao

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Chen Guidi, Wu Chuntao : Will the Boat Sink the Water?: The Life of China's Peasants before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Will the Boat Sink the Water?: The Life of China's Peasants:

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Critical information for the serious China handBy Scott W. GalerI agree with John Pomfret, who concludes that this is one of the most important books to come out of China in a long time. I am a China specialist who regularly spends time in both urban and impoverished rural areas of China. This

book provides excellent anecdotal examples of some of the sacrifices that China is making to modernize. These sacrifices are manifesting themselves in many ways: displaced workers, lost arable land and displaced farmers, corruption, increasing urban-rural income gap, etc. The book was originally published in China under the title *Zhongguo nongmin diaocha* (An Investigation of Chinese Peasants). The book has since been banned in China. This translation will seem somewhat "foreign" to the non-Chinese speaker, but it is accurate and reflects the original language. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Will the boat sink the water By D White This is an amazing book that sheds light a new light on the economic challenges of the world's most populated country. Very good, insightful and masterfully translated. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An eye opener By peter H. calcott was recommended by a friend who knows China very well. What an eye opener. Gives you another perspective on the country.

The Chinese economic miracle is happening despite, not because of, China's 900 million peasants. They are missing from the portraits of booming Shanghai, or Beijing. Many of China's underclass live under a feudalistic system unchanged since the fifteenth century. They are truly the voiceless in modern China. They are also, perhaps, the reason that China will not be able to make the great social and economic leap forward, because if it is to leap it must carry the 900 million with it. Chinese journalists Wu Chuntao and Chen Guidi returned to Wu's home province of Anhui, one of China's poorest, to undertake a three-year survey of what had happened to the peasants there, asking the question: Have the peasants been betrayed by the revolution undertaken in their name by Mao and his successors? The result is a brilliant narrative of life among the 900 million, and a vivid portrait of the petty dictators that run China's villages and counties and the consequences of their bullying despotism on the people they administer. Told principally through four dramatic narratives of particular Anhui people, *Will the Boat Sink the Water?* gives voice to the unheard masses and looks beneath the gloss of the new China to find the truth of daily life for its vast population of rural poor.

From Publishers Weekly What's most surprising about this exposé of the Chinese government's brutal treatment of the peasantry is not that it was banned in China, but that it got past the censors in the first place. The authors a husband and wife team who have received major awards recount how, in the poor province of Anhui, greedy local officials impose illegal taxes on the already impoverished peasantry and cover their tracks through double-bookkeeping. Outraged peasants risk their freedom and sometimes their lives by complaining up the command chain or making the long and costly trip to Beijing, but for the most part the central government's proclamations against excessive taxation don't effectively filter back to the local level. The authors criticize the central government for its own heavy taxation and underrepresentation of the peasantry, though in much more measured tones than they fault the local officials. "Could it be that our system itself is a toxic pool and whoever enters is poisoned by it?" they ask. As Westerners look toward China as the world's next superpower, this book is a reminder that the country's 900 million peasants often get lost in the glitter of Shanghai's Tiffany's. (June) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist China's 900 million peasants continue to toil under a feudalistic system even as the nation enjoys economic prosperity built, in part, at their expense. The authors, husband-and-wife Chinese journalists, spent three years in Wu's home province of Anhui to uncover the poverty of peasants betrayed by Mao's revolution and bullied by petty bureaucrats, their labor exploited and their voices stifled. This expose was banned by the Chinese government, and the journalists were sued for libel by government officials. Drawing on interviews with villagers, the authors offer intimate portraits of the struggles of peasants that read with the ease and familiarity of stories but carry the urgency of news reports of lives about which little has been written. A local peasant who complains of taxing and accounting irregularities that rob the village is killed; peasants resist a corrupt deputy village chief who appropriates their land and public funds. Readers interested in the unseen and unreported lives of Chinese peasants will appreciate this revealing book. Vanessa Bush Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Among the most explosive books in recent years." Banned in China: "A heartbreaking tale of what can happen when ordinary Chinese try to demand justice and accountability from their leaders." "A banned book whose publication is compared to a clap of thunder... delves deeply into the rural conundrum that continues to bedevil China's Communist Party leaders"