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ABSTRACTS

China: a subsistence take-off? -- During Mao Zedong's lifetime, the Chinese food policy was aimed at securing minimum for everybody: in the countryside, "basic rations" were distributed by the collective teams, and in the cities, grains and edible oils were strictly rationed. Rural collectivization and state monopolies, set up to implement this policy, had unfortunate side-effects: less efficient agricultural production, depressed sales from peasants, and the stagnation of average food consumption. Post-Mao policies of decollectivization and the reintroduction of market economics in the countryside have had the opposite effects. For the first time, a subsistence take-off has really occurred. Will it be sustained? The fate of rural modernization in China depends on the answer.