



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Habitat International

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/habitatint

Territorialization of urban villages in China: The case of Guangzhou

Xiaowei Liang^a, Qifeng Yuan^b, Xiaohong Tan^{c,*}, Zhigang Li^d

^a School of Geography and Planning, Sun Yat-sen University, China

^b School of Architecture, South China University of Technology, China

^c School of Architecture and Urban Planning, Guangdong University of Technology, China

^d School of Urban Design, Wuhan University, China

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Urban redevelopment
Urban village
Territorialization
Rural collective organization
Market developer
Coalition

ABSTRACT

In the context of rapid urbanization, land has become the most valuable scarce resource, and the regeneration of urban villages is related to urban land supply for urban redevelopment. The redevelopment of urban villages can promote the efficient use of land resources and contribute to the sustainable development of the city. This paper examines the redevelopment of an urban village in Guangzhou from the perspective of territorialization and finds that urban villages ultimately become territories dominated by the coalition formed by the market developers and the rural collective organization of the urban village. When the local government attempts to redevelop the village, the coalition fights against the government and defends the territory, leading to the predicament of urban redevelopment. By exploring the territorialization process and the dynamics of spatial production, this paper argues that territorialization is a means of reifying and reinforcing power in a geographical space and represents a significant attempt to achieve urban redevelopment. Both the local government and the coalition can contribute to the redevelopment of urban villages. Although territorialization is an efficient way to achieve urban redevelopment, it may solidify an area and cause the straitened circumstances of city government to implement the new city strategy. This paper thus calls for a focus on the value of bottom-up territorialization and the ingenious combination of city planning and territorialization to achieve effective urban redevelopment.

1. Introduction

The urbanization of China's population and economy has been astonishing (Hsing, 2010). In 2016, the urbanization ratio was 57.35% (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2017), which is above the average urbanization level of developing countries. In the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region, rapid industrialization and urbanization resulted in the loss of valuable agricultural land (Wu, 2004; Yeh & Li, 1999). Large amounts of urban land are used inefficiently, and new construction of land resources has been exhausted. In this context, many villages that were previously located on the periphery of a city have been engulfed by urban development (Tian, 2008). These villages are urban villages.

Urban villages are a special by-product of the rapid urbanization process and the complicated dual-track land ownership system (Hin & Xin, 2011; Ho & Lin, 2003). They have a heterogeneous population and land use and are encircled by an inner city, but the ownership of the land is retained by the rural collective organization (RCO) (Tian, 2008). Urban villages have been a controversial subject for many years (Wang, Wang, & Wu, 2009), and the profiles, environment and resultant effects

of urban villages have been discussed for decades. The government, media and scholars often condemn urban villages as problematic areas, claiming that urban villages are associated with physical and social problems and that their existence suppresses the land value of both their sites and neighbouring areas (Chen & Jim, 2010; Gransow, 2001; Hao, Sliuzas, & Geertman, 2011; Liu & Yang, 2004; Tian, 1998; Zheng, 2000). However, by providing affordable and accessible housing to rural migrants (Hao, Geertman, Hooimeijer, & Sliuzas, 2013; Song, Zenou, & Ding, 2008; Zhang, Zhao, & Tian, 2003) and low-cost informal working spaces to informal manufacturing sectors (Xia, Zhao, Ouyang, & Liu, 2012), urban villages also allow peasants to earn their livelihoods as landlords (Tian, 2008).

As the new construction of land resources has been exhausted, the shortage of land resources has become a bottleneck restricting the sustainable development of the economy. To improve land-use efficiency, the governments of many big cities have proposed that urban land should be intensively used and that urban stock land located in the core of the city should be redeveloped. In this context, urban regeneration has become an important topic in China. The redevelopment

* Corresponding author. School of Architecture and Urban Planning, Guangdong University of Technology, China.

E-mail addresses: 48712436@qq.com (X. Liang), qfy510060@scut.edu.cn (Q. Yuan), tanxh9@gmail.com (X. Tan), zhigangli@whu.edu.cn (Z. Li).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2018.05.009>

Received 9 January 2018; Received in revised form 6 May 2018; Accepted 9 May 2018
0197-3975/ © 2018 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

of urban villages has attracted significant attention (Hao et al., 2011; Lin, De Meulder, & Wang, 2011). Governments have enacted numerous policies to redevelop urban villages. For example, to promote the redevelopment of the land, the government of Guangdong Province enacted a policy in 2009 called ‘Some opinions on promoting three old transformation and promoting intensive use of the land’, which proposes to redevelop the ‘three olds’ (i.e., old towns, old factories, and old villages) during the three-year policy experimental period. According to the policy ‘Opinions on speeding up the “three old” transformation’, which was enacted by the Guangzhou government, 52 of 138 urban villages in Guangzhou should be completely demolished in 3–5 years. The government encourages the ‘three old’ transformation and provides many preferential policies and facilitation measures for the urban villages. To upgrade the villages’ environment and obtain higher incomes, many urban villages in Guangzhou such as Liede Village and Pazhou Village are actively involved in redevelopment. These two villages have been regarded as two of the successful cases of urban village redevelopment in China (Li, Lin, Li, & Wu, 2014). The success of these two villages implies that a collaborative partnership among the three powerful stakeholders (including the local government with strong administrative power, the indigenous villagers as landowners, and the developers with capitals and professional skills) was the key to the successful implementation of regeneration (Hao et al., 2011; Zhou, 2014). Through this collaboration, these three stakeholders benefited from the regeneration project in either economic or political terms (Zhou, 2014). For real estate developers, tearing down urban villages with comparably lower floor-area ratios for relatively low compensation, building large mansions and selling them at a higher price results in large economic profits. Regarding the landlords, the RCO can transform temporary low-level properties into permanent advanced properties through redevelopment. Indigenous villagers can benefit through both one-time compensation in the form of a lump sum of money and apartment units in the new buildings (Hao et al., 2013). Thus, landlords can achieve lucrative growth with the redevelopment compensation. Meanwhile, to upgrade the urban environment and attract more investments, the local government relies on urban redevelopment to convert suburban rural land into urban land (Hao et al., 2011). Therefore, in most cases, the redevelopment of urban villages can obtain support from these three stakeholders. However, the redevelopment project cannot be promoted in certain urban villages in Guangzhou.

As the first city of reform in China, Guangzhou is among the most important cities in China. Due to the prosperous economy, numerous rural collective lands and urban villages exist within the city. According to the government report ‘Opinions on speeding up the “three old” transformation’, which was published in 2010, there are 138 urban villages in Guangzhou, with an area of 500,000 acres. Among these 138 urban villages, 52 villages were planned to be completely demolished within 3–5 years, while the other 86 villages were planned to undergo comprehensive improvement. However, urban villages near a wholesale market were not demolished and did not undergo any comprehensive improvements. These urban villages are very common in Guangzhou, such as Sanyuanli Village, Yaotai Village, Shipai Village, Dongfeng Village, and Kangle Village. These villages already receive steady and sustainable income from their cooperation with market developers. Recently, many scholars have paid attention to the profiles and impact of urban villages and the redevelopment policies, strategies and results of the urban village redevelopment programme. However, although some studies have claimed that there was a self-organization system in urban villages, few studies consider urban villages special territories. Furthermore, few studies investigate the predicament of the redevelopment of urban villages and research on the process and the underlying dynamics of their spatial production. There is a lack of studies examining why redevelopment projects have not been successfully adopted in these urban villages.

For a long time, the economic growth of urban villages relied on

certain informal sectors, such as small factories, and warehouses. In addition to the small informal sectors, many large enterprises that are sensitive to land prices prefer to be established in urban villages. For example, wholesale market developers prefer establishing their businesses in the urban villages of Guangzhou. These developers operate successfully due to the collective land. Several developers even made great contributions to the area’s industry development and economic improvement. These developers are the most significant cause of the prosperity of the rental market in the urban villages’ rural collective land. Therefore, these developers are highly influential in the development of the village, are ones of the key stakeholders in the development of urban villages.

Many scholars have studied the relationship among the stakeholders in the redevelopment programme. According to those scholars, the redevelopment of urban villages is a complex process in which the three main actors involved—the government, developers and landlords (RCO and the local villagers)—compete for their own benefit (Hao et al., 2011). They form a collaborative partnership to maximize their benefits. The core of the successful cases is the redistribution of interests derived from land appreciation among main stakeholders. As an example, we use Liede Village, which is a successfully redeveloped village. The Liede project also involved these three stakeholders. Different stakeholders have different demands in the regeneration project and adjust their strategies over time under the changing economic, social, environmental and political circumstances (Zhou, 2014), affecting the compliment of the project: the compensation demanded by landlords influences the cost of the project; a new policy introduced by the government can affect the prospects of the landlords; and the negotiation between the developers and the government determines the details of the redevelopment plan such as the floor-area ratio and the standard amenity provisions, both of which directly impacts the project’s profitability. At the end of the Liede project, it seemed that all key stakeholders benefited. The city government can acquire more revenue, and each village household has one or more apartments with an area of 200 square metres in the CBD and can acquire more dividends from the collective properties in the future (Lin, De Meulder, & Wang, 2012). However, the success of the redevelopment of the urban villages led to the extremely high floor-area ratio (FAR) of the area. In contrast to the average FAR of 3.0 in Central Guangzhou, the FAR of Liede was 5.2, the FAR of Yangji was 5.9 and the FAR of Linhe village was 6.2. Because of the high FARs in these neighbourhoods, the government would then have to make a massive investment in their infrastructure and facilities (Zhou, 2014). Therefore, many scholars found that the satisfaction of all the parties involved in the regeneration scheme would impose great pressure upon the city and be unsustainable (Li et al., 2014).

While many studies have researched the stakeholders and the power relations in urban village redevelopment, few studies have investigated the predicament of redevelopment and concern about the power relation of these urban villages. Unlike the regeneration programme, some scholars found that the development of urban villages included three stakeholders: the local government, the market and the society. The partnerships of these three key stakeholders have interacted (Lin et al., 2012). Some studies found that the relationship among the stakeholders resulted in different modes of governance (Lin, Hao, & Geertman, 2015). Although several recent studies on urban villages have studied power relations on the redevelopment process, there is a lack of studies on how power relations are formed in the development process and how they influence the redevelopment process. However, these power relations are important factors in the spatial development of urban villages, can explain the reason for the dilemma of redevelopment, and are the keys to whether redevelopment strategies and policies will be effective. This dilemma leads to the following questions: Why do these urban villages encounter the predicament of urban redevelopment? Did the entry of market developers lead to this situation? How do market developers enter urban villages? What is the relationship between market developers and the RCO? How do urban villages develop, and

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7454927>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7454927>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)