Everyday rural urbanisation in Huangyan – Taizhou
黄岩 – 台州

Evolving socio-spatial configurations for dwelling at the urban-rural interface
Statement of authenticity of material

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institution, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, the research contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text of the thesis.

Ava Lynam, 2 February 2019
For my parents, thank you for your endless support and encouragement.

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Abstract

The shift toward a predominately urbanised world is a topic of global concern that generates new social, economic and environmental challenges and complexities. In this context, traditional binary categorisations of rural and urban conditions are increasingly redundant. Agglomerating regions require new understandings to capture the complex socio-spatial restructuring of this planetary urbanisation. Furthermore, most current research focuses on mega-cities and overlooks the ‘ordinary’ cities in which most of this urbanisation and growth will take place.

In China, with urbanisation rates predicted to reach 60% in 2020, top-down rural urbanisation programmes attempt to address national concerns of food security and the country’s historic urban-rural polarisation. One such policy is the Characteristic Town. Following the ‘one town, one characteristic industry’ model, the policy aims to generate localised rural economic development, promote tourism, and foster innovation. Some key examples are being implemented in Zhejiang province, situated in the mega-urban Yangtze River Delta coastal corridor. In the hinterland of Huangyan-Taizhou, the Smart Moulding Town is leading the local moulding industry’s industrial upgrading processes on a regional and global scale, epitomising the visions of politicians, planners and developers.

However, Characteristic Towns have been criticised as only superficially addressing local challenges, and instead, impose tabula-rasa development plans that often exclude vulnerable groups. In many cases, urbanisation is simply extended into rural areas without a sustainable view of regional development. At urban-rural interfaces in particular, these rural urbanisation processes are having profound impacts on lifestyles, living and working patterns, and family structures. This is also the case in Huangyan, where despite the promises of the Smart Moulding Town, surrounding villages once shaped by agriculture are undergoing a dramatic and fragmented transition toward industrialisation. In response, villagers are adapting their local economies and everyday practises, generating new socio-spatial spatial typologies for dwelling.

The research employs an inductive approach to understand and highlight the significant role of these villagers in shaping, and being shaped by, top-down rural urbanisation programs like the Characteristic Town. These interacting levels were addressed through a multi-scalar theoretical framework, structured around the private, collective, and institutional layers of everyday dwelling practises. The interface between these various scales and actors was interrogated through the application of Lefebvre’s three-tiered understanding of spatial production, in terms of its social physical, and mental dimensions.

The empirical findings illustrate that these micro-scale tactics are deeply embedded in the trans-local industrialisation processes driven by the moulding industry. Villagers’ socio-spatial experimentations are redefining rural identity and defying the top-down compartmentalisation of space, by negotiating and re-negotiating informality with a wide range of actors. Thus, through uncovering diverse actor networks and hybrid urban-rural qualities, this research demonstrates the potential for providing more effective platforms for co-constructing urban-rural integration.

Key words
extended urbanisation, urban-rural interface, rural urbanisation, the practise of dwelling, Characteristic Town, China
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<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Characteristic Town 特色小镇</td>
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<tr>
<td>HKTDC</td>
<td>Hong Kong Trade Development Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Interpretive phenomenological analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRD</td>
<td>Pearl River Delta</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<tr>
<td>PGZP</td>
<td>People’s Government of Zhejiang Province</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIRI</td>
<td>Prospective Industrial Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>Smart Moulding Town</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMPG</td>
<td>Taizhou Municipal People’s Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>URA</td>
<td>Urban Rural Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>YRD</td>
<td>Yangtze River Delta</td>
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<td>ZPUPA</td>
<td>Zhejiang Provincial Urban-Rural Planning Academy</td>
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1 Introduction
1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. Context and relevance

In recent decades, new and profound social, economic, and environmental complexities have emerged as a result of the shift toward a predominately urbanised world (Brenner and Schmid 2014; Soja 2011). With the majority of the global population and wealth concentrated in cities, the challenges posed by this extended urbanisation are shaping global discourses and cross-cutting disciplines (ibid.). New conditions are arising out of ongoing processes of planetary urbanisation, in which age-old, binary categorisations of ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ are becoming increasingly irrelevant (Brenner and Schmid 2014, p.160-163). Ever-expanding, agglomerating and globalising regions require new understandings that better capture this complex socio-spatial restructuring, in which rural and urban areas have become deeply interconnected (Soja 2011, p.7).

Asia is projected to experience this urbanisation most dramatically, with rates of 60% predicted in China in 2020 (Meyer-Clement 2016; Wu et al 2013). Amid food security concerns, the urban-rural question underpins the majority of current policy in China, in which urbanisation remains designated as a national priority and a top-down tool to drive forward development (ibid.). A recent policy specifically aimed at addressing the country’s historic urban-rural polarisation is the Characteristic Town (CT). Each CT specialises in one core industry, with the intention of stimulating localised economic development and generating employment in rural areas (Liao and Yi 2018, p.17; Wenfang 2018, p.449). Some key examples are being implemented in Zhejiang, an affluent coastal province in Eastern China (ibid.). In the midst of one of the largest regional conurbations in the world, the Yangtze River Delta (YRD), lies the industrialising rural hinterland of the prefecture-level city of Taizhou. Epitomising the CT’s top-down rural urbanisation visions, the Smart Moulding Town (SMT) is leading the regional upgrading processes of the local moulding industry from Huangyan district’s urban-rural interface. As a result, the formerly rural villages surrounding the SMT are undergoing a profound socio-spatial restructuring, creating a hybrid and fragmented landscape of agriculture and industrial production. In response, villagers are adapting their local economies and everyday practises, resulting in new typologies for dwelling (Gui et al 2009; Xia 2011).

1.1.2. Problem statement and contributions: a multi-scalar approach

In highlighting the critical role of the social production of space within extended urbanisation, urbanist Neil Brenner (2000, p.375) argued that “multi-scalar methodologies are now absolutely essential for grasping the fundamental role of cities as preconditions, arenas, and outcomes of the current round of global capitalist restructuring.” The path toward sustainable development, and the local implementation of global policy frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also requires a trans-disciplinary and actor-centric understanding of urban-rural dynamics. Thus, this research applies a multi-dimensional theoretical approach to reveal the interdependent interactions of villagers’ micro-scale survival tactics within macro-scale top-down urbanisation programs like the SMT. To more deeply understand the local impact of these transformation dynamics, this study is structured around the following interacting levels: policy-driven extended urbanisation at the macro-scale, the practise of dwelling at the micro-scale, and the SMT and its surrounding villages as a case study at the meso-scale.

Macro-scale: contemplating extended urbanisation through new categories of analysis

Globally, and particularly in China, the scale and pace of urban expansion is resulting in uneven socio-spatial development and polarising inequalities between the city and countryside (Soja 2011, p.8,9; Wu et al 2013). As sites of constantly expanding trans-local networks, the impacts of these processes are most exaggerated at urban-rural interfaces. These hinterlands are important and rich areas to study- yet only minimal research has focused on these conditions, and the majority of policies still contemplate the city in a dualistic manner (Brenner and Schmid 2014, p.162; Soja 2011, p.1,9). Furthermore, most current knowledge production on urbanisation dynamics is positioned within globally significant mega-cities. This holds true in China, where the planning discourse largely remains focused on constructing new regional-scale urban areas, and urbanisation is equated with economic prosperity and poverty alleviation (Fokdal and Herrle 2019). As the primary sites of current rapid growth and urbanisation, secondary cities do not yet receive adequate critical attention (ibid.). While this research also aims to shed light on local experiences of transformation along the Chinese coastal urbanisation corridor, it is
focused on contributing to a wider understanding of the impact in a broader range of ‘ordinary’ cities like Taizhou. Thus, this study aims to play a role in comprehending contemporary extended urbanisation processes through new ideological frameworks and categories of analysis.

**Meso-scale: a case study to reveal the interface between different scales and actors**

Many state-promoted policies like the CT only superficially address local sustainability challenges, and instead simply extend urbanisation into rural areas (Jiang and Li 2018). It is argued that, despite promises of sustainable urban-rural integration, the SMT project has in reality embodied a dominance of top-down governance, imposing plans on existing areas with a tabula-rasa approach that often results in the exclusion of vulnerable groups and damaging social and environmental impacts. This is demonstrated in Huangyan which, in relation to other districts in Taizhou, remains underdeveloped and fragmented despite the promises of the SMT. Thus, the existing villages surrounding the SMT are taken as an exemplary meso-scale case study, from which to interrogate this typical situation arising out of interactions between top-down policy and bottom-up responses in China. In studying these complex, diverse, and sometimes contradictory transformation dynamics playing out on the ground, this research aims to analyse the emerging socio-spatial practises, diverse actor networks, and hybrid-urban qualities that could offer potential for more inclusive instruments for Chinese rural-urban integration.

**Micro-scale: an empirical study into the practise of dwelling**

Interpreting vast agglomerating regions requires an insight into the everyday struggles and creative socio-spatial practises of inhabitants, or dwellers, who constantly adapt to transformation processes occurring on a regional and global scale (Brenner 2000; Ruddick et al 2017, p.2). Thus, French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre’s discussion around the multi-scalar impact of everyday practises decades ago remains critical in shifting our understanding of urbanisation toward a process made up of socially produced space (Bertuzzo 2008, p.24; Soja 2011, p.687). Despite this, there remains a lack of knowledge and empirical research on the impact of socio-spatial practises within the extended urbanisation discourse, particularly in China. This inductive study addresses this by conceptualising the practise of dwelling through applying a contemporary understanding of Lefebvre’s framework for the production of space. To gain an understanding into the influence of the SMT on everyday life, a three-tiered methodology interrogates the social, physical, and mental dimensions of the practises of dwelling through empirical research. By unpicking the local complexities of transformation dynamics at urban-rural interfaces, the research reveals how the impact of these dwelling practises is scaled up to inform the socio-spatial development of whole societies and regions.

**1.1.3. Research questions**

This research will address the following guiding questions:

- **How do everyday dwelling practises of villagers interact with top-down rural urbanisation visions in Huangyan, Taizhou?**
- **How are these top-down visions embodied by local actors’ daily lives and local economies?**
- **What hybrid uses and spatial typologies are generated at the urban-rural interface?**
- **What potentials exist for villagers to have a larger role in co-constructing urban-rural integration?**

To address these questions, the study is structured around the following parallel objectives:

- **The practise of dwelling**: to gain an understanding of villager’s lived experiences.
- **The materialisation of housing**: to observe the ways in which this is embodied spatially.
- **Representations of dwelling space**: to analyse top-down visions in relation to their lived reality.
1.1.4. Overview of structure

Chapter 1 – Introduction: introduces the significance of the study and the research gap it aims to contribute to, locating it in wider academic debates and leading to the formulation of the research questions.

Chapter 2 – Theoretical framework: describes the theoretical framework that the study is structured around at two parallel scales: at the macro-scale, addressing contemporary urban studies discourses on extended urbanisation, and at the micro-scale, illustrating how Lefebvre’s theory on spatial production is used as a framework for the empirical study.

Chapter 3 – Methodology: sets out the methodological approach and outlines how the theoretical insights have been operationalised, followed by some critical reflections.

Chapter 4 – Case study: multi-scalar contextual understanding: gives a detailed contextual description of the case study derived from literature and policy reviews, starting with wider urbanisation dynamics in China and scaling down to the specific site in Xinqian Street sub-district. It also sets out the policy context for the study and identifies the primary conflicts to be investigated.

Chapter 5 – Case study: empirical investigation: presents the results of the empirical work through applying the layers of analysis described in the theoretical framework to identify dwelling profiles at different scales, in terms of their material space, everyday practises and interface.

Chapter 6 – Discussion: comprises the interpretation of the empirical work around four overarching and interconnected themes to recollect the main insights of the study.

Chapter 7 – Conclusions: draws conclusions that attempt to answer the research questions, while feeding back into broader debates highlighted in the first chapter and suggesting areas of further research.
2 Theoretical framework
2.1. Macro-scale: extended urbanisation

2.1.1. From binary cities to agglomerating regions

As a result of profound socio-spatial transformations over the last 30 years, conventional notions of cities, urbanism, and urbanisation processes are being fundamentally reconfigured (Brenner and Schmid 2014, p.160). The theoretical categories of the ‘urban’ that shaped 20th century urbanism have been constantly redefined as ‘conurbations’, ‘city-regions’, or ‘metropolitan regions’ (ibid.; p.161). Urban areas were conceptualised as being in opposition to ‘non-urban’ areas that lay outside their boundaries, creating distinct demarcations between urban, suburban and rural areas (ibid.). American urbanism scholar Edward Soja (2011, p.1) described a contemporary condition in which “every square inch of the world is urbanised to some degree.” Within the concept of ‘planetary urbanisation’, the conventional binaries of urban and rural can no longer be applied to a context made up of increasingly dense and agglomerated regions (Brenner and Schmid 2014). Soja (2011, p.7) describes the “emergence of a distinctive new urban form, the expansive, poly-nucleated, densely networked, information-intensive, and increasingly globalised city region.”

This regionalisation has been evident in the socio-spatial restructuring of various metropolitan areas across the globe, steered by the forces of economic shifts, technological developments, and the globalisation of capital, labour and culture (ibid.). Already in 2011, the United Nations identified approximately 500 city-regions with populations over 1 million, containing a third of the world’s total population and the majority of global wealth and innovative capacity (ibid., p.10). New, even larger scales of regional urbanisation have been identified, with several merged metropolitan areas forming mega-city regions with populations starting at 10 million (ibid.; Brenner and Schmid 2014, p.160-163). The rapid scale and pace of this urbanisation has been epitomised by China since transitioning to a market economy in 1978. The Pearl River Delta (PRD) and the YRD region, at 60 million and 80 million people respectively, represent two of the world’s largest regional conurbations (Soja 2011, p.10). While on one hand, these agglomerations are perceived as a “generative source of economic development, technological innovation, and cultural creativity” (ibid.,p.9), on the other, these regional restructuring processes are polarising socio-economic inequalities at multiple scales, from global to local.

2.1.2. Urban–rural interdependencies

Theorising the contemporary ‘urban revolution’, Lefebvre (2003, p.2) described a society that was developing out of industrialisation and economic growth. This ‘urban society’ expands into regions, countries, and continents. Moreover, the urban fabric generated by industrial production is dependent on and absorbs rural areas in a process of domination of the city over the countryside (Bertuzzo 2008, p.24; ibid.). This inherently multi-scalar urbanisation extends out of traditional urban cores into non-urban areas, blurring city boundaries and opening hinterlands up to continuously expanding regional scales (Brenner 2000, Soja 2011, p.9). Urban-rural interfaces become sites of trans-local networks of industrial urbanisation, while ‘wilderness’ areas face environmental degradation due to their increasing connection with global urbanisation processes (Brenner and Schmid 2014, p.162). As a result, the rural can no longer be conceived as existing outside the urban, as “even spaces that lie well beyond the traditional city cores and suburban peripheries […] have become integral parts of the worldwide urban fabric” (ibid.). Hinterland areas increasingly assume traditionally urban characteristics, becoming more heterogeneous and dense. “A vacation home, a highway and a rural super market are all part of the urban tissue” (Lefebvre 2003, p.3,4), representing the urbanisation of the rural, but also the ruralisation of the urban. Therefore, understanding current global socio-spatial transformations requires one to move beyond idealised and dualistic notions of the ‘modern metropolis’ (Soja 2011, p.1-2) which remain enshrined in urban theory and practise, in order to re-articulate them with new categories of analysis (Brenner and Schmid 2014, p.162).

2.1.3. The urbanisation of society

As early as four decades ago, Lefebvre’s predictions of a planetary-scale ‘urbanisation of society’ called for a shift of focus from urban form to urbanisation processes (Bertuzzo 2008, p.24; Lefebvre 2003). Similarly, Soja (2011, p.11-12) set out a new ideological framework to interpret regions not solely as receptacles or reflections of socio-economic processes, but also as fundamental units of social life. This epitomises the attention shift in understanding the spatiality of human life in terms of scale, agglomerations and regions. This ‘spatial turn’ describes the dissemination of discourse around space into almost every discipline (ibid. p.687). Space was
no longer perceived as static or container-like, but as something “dynamic, problematic, developmental and ideologically charged and filled with action, dialectics, process and social causality” (ibid.). Ruddick et al’s (2017, p.2) account of planetary urbanisation criticises the focus on morphology and form over urbanisation’s driving forces. Instead, the authors reference Lefebvre in highlighting the ‘social’ within the ‘socio-spatial’, in which urbanisation is an open process, shaped by the unruly and conflictual everyday struggles of inhabitants (ibid., p.2,13). Moreover, in the post-industrial society the urban exists everywhere, intensifying social practises and the encounters of “living creatures, the products of industry, technology and wealth, works of culture, ways of living, situations, the modulations and ruptures of everyday” (Lefebvre 2003, p.118,119). In Brenner’s (2000, p.368) elaboration on the ‘problematic of geographical scale’, he highlights a renewed relevance in applying Lefebvre’s multi-scalar approach to socio-spatial theory in the context of contemporary urbanisation challenges. The following section describes how Lefebvre’s theoretical and methodological insights into the social production of space are deployed in this research, revealing the interacting layers of extended urbanisation and the practise of dwelling.

Fig. 1. Farming on the banks of the Yongning River, with Huangyan’s urban centre in the distance. Source: own photo
2.2.2. Micro-scale: the practise of dwelling

2.2.2.1. The production of space

In his influential work The Production of Space (1984), Lefebvre defined space as existing on a spectrum: from an abstract level known as ‘absolute space’, to a more complex, layered dimension that considered space as a social product, or ‘social space’. Within this conception, Lefebvre considered the physical, mental and social dimensions of spatial production, which he developed through his ‘spatial triad’ composed of perceived, conceived, and lived space (Lefebvre 1991b, p.38,39). Thus, space is produced through practices of social interaction in everyday life (lived space) that correspond to a specific material environment (perceived space) and its mental conceptualisations (conceived space) (Bertuzzo 2008, p.33). These layers are described in more detail below:

- **Lived space**: the social sphere of space, or space of representation. The lived reality of space as experienced by users; physically, emotionally, intellectually, and ideologically (Lefebvre 1991b, p.39). The dominated sphere, and centre for social practise as “loci of passion, of action and of lived situations: the ego, the bed, the bedroom, dwelling or house, but also square, church and graveyard” (ibid., p.42).

- **Perceived space**: the concrete and material socio-physical space as it is seen, generated and used (ibid., p.38). As such, “spatial practice can be defined as the sensible and most directly observable “layer” of a much more complex urban life – its functional, operational dimension” (Bertuzzo 2008, p.69). This physical sphere of a society’s spatial production is represented in places of everyday life such as work, home and leisure (Lefebvre 1991b, p.38).

- **Conceived space**: the mental sphere, or representations of space in concepts, ideas, and abstractions (ibid., p.38). The sphere that dominates society, conceived by scientists, planners, urbanists, and technocrats through language, images and drawings (ibid.; Bertuzzo 2008, p.29).

Since the 1960s, both Lefebvre and French sociologist Michel de Certeau have employed the lens of Marxist theory to conceptualise spatial production in terms of a society’s everyday practises; the mundane, repetitive, and reproductive practices of daily life. These routine ‘arts of doing’ include walking, talking, reading, dwelling and cooking (de Certeau 1984, p.40). Their impact is scaled up to inform the socio-spatial development of whole societies, such that “urbanisation [is] understood as a continuous process and city as essentially in a transitory state, whereby the concrete everyday life practice dominates and directs its development” (Bertuzzo 2008, p.27). While Lefebvre (2003) conceptualised everyday life as an urban phenomenon in which inhabitants are constrained by capitalism and alienation, de Certeau (1984) everyday life was the site for human agency, defined by opportunity and spontaneity. Thus, everyday life is carried out by ‘poaching’ on others’ territory, using culturally-defined ‘rules and products’ in a way that is influenced but never fully defined by them (ibid., p.xii).

2.2.2. Dwelling in everyday space

Lefebvre (1991b, p.38) described types of everyday space as relating to activities of work (productive space), leisure (consumption space), and home (dwelling space). Norwegian architecture theoretician Norberg-Schulz’s (1985, p.7) portrayed dwelling as “something more than having a roof over our head and a certain number of square meters at our disposal.” Similarly, Lefebvre’s conceptualisation of dwelling as an everyday practise, or habitation, describes the heterogeneous processes that produce material space, modifying everyday spaces by giving them meaning (Stanek 2011, p.84). German philosopher Heidegger (1971) elaborated that the dwelling embodied the ‘emotional state of being’ of its user, whereby the practise of dwelling can have a temporal aspect, and is not constrained to a particular physical space. Furthermore, the relationship between the Home and the Ego demonstrates its connection to identity: “peasant houses and villages speak: they recount, though in a mumbled and somewhat confused way, the lives of those who built and inhabited them” (Lefebvre 1991b, p.165).

Encapsulated by his notion of ‘wohnen’ (habiter) as a way of living, Heidegger highlighted his perceived ‘crisis in dwelling’ in which housing construction was carried out entirely in economic or technical terms (Kofman and Lebas 1996, p.17). This was echoed by Lefebvre’s criticism of top-down modernist housing developments which reduced the act of inhabiting (habiter) to a physical habitat (ibid.). Lefebvre’s involvement in the Institut de Sociologie Urbaine’s studies on dwelling practises in the 60s and 70s led to his theoretical articulation of spatial production, transcending the sphere of planners, architects and other technocrats toward everyday activities of inhabitants (Stanek 2011, p.81,82). This multidimensional approach has appeared in wider debates regarding the
theory and practise of self-help housing promoted by the World Bank since the early 1970s, moving beyond the notion of housing as an end-product or noun (*habitat*), towards a process or verb (*to inhabit*) (Pugh 1991). Thus, dwelling is a practise, perception, and material space, in terms of spatial arrangements, functional interpretations, as well as economics, politics, and social networks (Stanek 2011, p.84). Habitation can be conceptualised in terms of the spatial triad as follows (Elden 2004, p.190; Kofman and Lebas 1996, p.17; Stanek 2011):

- **Habiter (lived space)**: to inhabit or dwell; situations or activities in social space that revolve around dwellers seeking ‘margins of freedom’ within constraints.

- **Habitat (perceived space)**: a material reality or function, its purest form being large housing estates.

- **Habitus (conceived space)**: the way individuals perceive the social world around them, encompassing engrained habits, histories, and dispositions; the principle that governs everyday practises.

2.2.3. Interface: tactics and strategies

The above critiques highlight the power struggle between top-down planning and everyday dwelling and home-making, as a constant negotiation of identity and survival. De Certeau (1984, p.48) described this state interface in which societies are “composed of certain foregrounded practises organising its normative institutions and of innumerable other practises that remain ‘minor’, always there.” He elaborated on modes of resistance to institutionalised, repressive structures of modern society (strategies of domination), in which creative expression is employed by ordinary people through their everyday practises (tactics of resistance) (ibid., p.35-40):

**Strategies** relate to material and administrative external constraints; the institutions and structures of power who act as ‘producers’. From this perspective, space is shaped by production under the dominance of capital, the state, and institutional knowledge (de Certeau 1984, p.34-38). Norberg-Schulz (1985) drew parallel conclusions, relating dwelling to social structure, economy and politics. The efforts of social control and imposition of rules and norms is illustrated in top-down housing projects, publicly provided amenities and infrastructure, and institutionalised spectacles such as political gatherings or cultural events. The conditions of this state interface are also evident in the exchange and access to information, and the allowance for manipulations.

**Tactics** are employed by individuals as ‘consumers’ in a defensive and opportunistic way, within environments defined by top-down strategies (de Certeau 1984, p.34-38). French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1980, p.52-65) had a similar conceptualisation, describing the habitus as a way of developing creative tactics against dominant structures from within the dwelling. Elaborating on the ‘right to the city’, Lefebvre called for appropriation, and the full use of everyday urban space. Thus, tactics of resident housing adaptation, core to his notions of spatial production, “represent material manifestations of alternative social or economic practises” (Stanek 2011, p.92) in which the state interface is shaped by personal connections, networking and social capital.

2.2.4. Multi-scalar dwelling: private, collective and institutional

Lefebvre (1991b, p.158) called for an analysis of space that addresses the interdependent relationship between micro and macro scales. Ranging from individual practises to ‘collective dwelling culture’ (Stanek 2011, p.84), he describes the symbiotic, multi-scalar nature of dwelling as follows:

“Dwelling-space may be that of a group (of a family, often a very large one) or that of a community (albeit one divided into castes or classes which tend to break it up). Private space is distinct from, but always connected with, public space. In the best of circumstances, the outside space of the community is dominated, while the indoor space of family life is appropriated” (Lefebvre 1991b, p.166). His three interacting levels of spatial production are conceptualised as (ibid.; p.155; Bertuzzo 2008, p.69):

1. **Public or global scale (G)**: institutional spaces - temples, palaces, political and administrative buildings.
2. **Private scale (P)**: the level of residence - houses, entrances, thresholds, family spaces, places of retreat.
3. **Intermediate or mixed scale (M)**: shared spaces - arteries, transitional areas, places of business, squares and passageways leading to houses.
Similarly, Bertuzzo (2008, p.35) also understood everyday life as a juxtaposition of various analytical scales, in which she compares Lefebvre's level G to urban planning, M to the city or neighbourhood, and P to architecture. This is echoed by Norberg-Schulz (1985, p.7) who elaborated on three primary modes of dwelling – collective, public, private – as follows: “First, it means to meet others for exchange of products, ideas and feelings, that is, to experience life as a multitude of possibilities. Second, it means to come to an agreement with others, that is, to accept a set of common values. Finally, it means to be oneself, in the sense of having a small chosen world of our own.” Thus, collective dwelling occurs in spaces of the settlement, institutions or public buildings embody modes of public dwelling, while the home is the “private retreat where the individual could prosper” (ibid.). These discourses have been summarised and conceptualised into 3 primary dwelling scales – private, collective, institutional – for the purpose of this research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lefebvre</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>Urban planning</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bertuzzo</th>
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<td>Architecture</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norberg-Schulz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refuge for the personal world: Meeting personal needs in individual domestic life; survival mode homemaking within the family unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encounter of possibilities: Meeting and exchange of ideas, products, feelings despite diversity; aspirational dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional forum for common values: Structural constraints, norms and rules; aiming for agreement and social reconciliation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptualized scale</th>
<th>Private (P)</th>
<th>Collective (C)</th>
<th>Institutional (I)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lefebvre</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>Urban planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bertuzzo</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norberg-Schulz</td>
<td>Refuge for the personal world</td>
<td>Encounter of possibilities</td>
<td>Institutional forum for common values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2. Summary of theoretical scales from literature, leading to conceptualised scales applied to this study. Source: own table derived from Lefebvre 1991b, Bertuzzo 2008, Norberg-Schulz 1984.

**Private dwelling**

Both de Certeau and Bourdieu called attention to the micro practises of individuals in shaping space, where the point of departure for analysing a society should be the house. Thus, the private dwelling is the space where micro practises from the smallest units are played out and reproduced to generate the principal characteristics of a whole society (de Certeau 1984, p.52). Norberg-Schulz (1985, p.13) also identified with this micro-scale analysis, illustrating the private dwelling as the zone in which an individual has the opportunity to define and develop their identity, nourish their personal world, and collect and reflect upon memories. Withdrawal into the private realm allows the home to become a refuge in meeting personal needs through established patterns, while offering protection against the intrusion of others (ibid.). Consistent with his P level, Lefebvre (1991b, p.166) also drew attention to the relationship between the individual and the family unit in everyday dwelling practises.

**Collective dwelling**

Corresponding to Lefebvre’s M level, collective dwelling occurs at the neighbourhood scale; at once a known and an anonymous area of communal space that becomes individualised through everyday use and appropriations. This highlights the importance of social networks at this level, where reciprocal habitation between neighbours allows for recognition, moving toward concrete coexistence (Lefebvre 1991b, p.166). Despite individual differences, collective dwelling space allows for meeting, gathering and exchange of products, ideas and feelings (Norberg-Schulz 1985, p.13). Space at different scales is shaped and reflected by this cultural accumulation, in which a community produces and reproduces their habitus at home according to societal values (Bertuzzo 2008, p.6; de Certeau 1984, p.52). Collective gathering does not necessarily lead to agreement, however it remains critical in enabling people to encounter one another despite their diversity (Norberg-Schulz 1985, p.13).

**Institutional dwelling**

Elaborating on the above description of state interface, the level of institutional or public dwelling encompasses more structured forms of interaction or engagement than those on the level of community-driven collective dwelling. Closely related to Lefebvre’s level G, institutional dwelling is played out in the context of
structural constraints in places where the power of the state can be felt, linking to wider political strategies (Norberg-Schulz 1985, p.13). Within these institutional forums, the aim is for social reconciliation and agreements on the basis of shared interests or values, which over time develop the foundations of a society (ibid.). These forums occur in public and institutionalised buildings or spaces that embody these societal values (ibid.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwelling scale</th>
<th>Private (P)</th>
<th>Collective (C)</th>
<th>Institutional (I)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material space (perceived)</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>The street, vacant or in between spaces</td>
<td>Institution or public building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyday practices (lived)</td>
<td>Dressing, drinking, cooking, eating, sleeping, reading, washing, writing, praying, shopping, etc.</td>
<td>As P, with: Social activities, exchanges with friends and neighbours, bottom-up appropriations</td>
<td>Religious or cultural fests, political gathering, public forums, formal workspace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interface (conceived)</td>
<td>Top-down housing, land acquisition and relocation, personal networking</td>
<td>Formalized spaces, social and cultural norms, restrictions and regulations, appropriation tactics</td>
<td>Publicly provided infrastructure and amenities, social control, information release, structural constraints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3. Interpretive analytical categories to be operationalised in research methodology. Source: own table

2.2.5. Applying the interpretive analytical categories to the spatial triad

To conclude, at each of the above scales, the practise of dwelling has been conceptualised into three primary components which relate to the previous elaboration of habitation within the spatial triad. These include: *dwelling as an everyday practise* (tactics of resistance, survival, appropriation), *dwelling as a place of state interface* (institutional layer, top-down power dynamics), and *dwelling as a material space* (physical spaces produced by negotiations between the previous categories). As shown in the above table, each of these analytical categories and scales are deeply intertwined. While in reality these categories are difficult to compartmentalise, the most dominant type is shown for the purpose of structuring and applying the analytical framework, with a different level taking precedent each time. The way these analytical categories are operationalised as a methodology is shown in the diagram below, capturing the social, physical, and mental spheres of the spatial triad. This methodology is elaborated on in Chapter 3 - Methodology.
2.3. Transferability of Western theories

2.3.1. Dwelling culture

The influential book House, Form and Culture (Rapoport 1969), describes the role of meaning, value and culture in shaping the built environment, especially the house. Individual everyday practises reveal wider socio-cultural processes, uncovered in the materiality of dwelling space (ibid.; Bertuzzo 2008, p.6) which "embodies and implies particular social relations; it shelters a family - a particular family belonging to a particular country, a particular region, a particular soil; and it is a component part of a particular site and a particular countryside." (Lefebvre 1991b, p.83). Bertuzzo (2008, p.7) brought to attention the question of applying Western theories to other global contexts with varying meaning and values embedded in everyday practises. In the context of Dhaka, she interrogates whether Western theory could entirely capture the city’s particular conditions around spatial production; on one hand generated in response to rapidly changing environments, and on the other, strongly shaped by specific cultural and traditional understandings of space (ibid.). Similarly, ongoing transformation processes in China have produced conditions which integrate pre-industrial and industrial social structures, and pre-urban and post-modern spatial features, with hybrid urban-rural cultural representations of space.

Furthermore, urbanisation in the Asian context is often described as being shaped by informality, acknowledged by many scholars as a form of spatial production within a “generalised mode of metropolitan urbanisation” (Fokdal 2014, p.37; Roy 2005, p.147). As an exception to the ‘order of formal urbanisation’, informality is a continuum of negotiations and transactions between different economies, spaces and actors (AlSayyad and Roy 2004, p.5). Defined as “an organising logic, a system of norms that governs the process of urban transformation” (Roy 2005, p.148), actors have differentiated agency with some forms of informality accepted over others, based on socio-cultural values (AlSayyad and Roy 2004, p.5). As in many global contexts, in China the ‘site of new informality’ exists at the urban-rural interface (Roy 2005, p.149), driving not only urban expansion but also a new culture of local everyday practises.

In terms of physical dwelling space, Lefebvre also criticised Western modernist approaches, which he perceived divided everyday space into restrictive categories defined by consumption and bureaucratic control (Lefebvre 1991b, p.38; Stanek 2011). Following the First World War, he identified links between productive and dwelling space in the context of industrialisation (Lefebvre 1991b, p.124): “What distinguishes peasant life so profoundly from the life of industrial workers, even today, is precisely this inherence of productive activity in their life in its entirety. The workplace is all around the house; work is not separate from the everyday life of the family” (Lefebvre 1991a, p.30,31). This holds true in contemporary China, where everyday activities cannot be effectively compartmentalised, and residential space often serves a dual purpose in which “modes of production, productive labour [is] merged with everyday life” (Lefebvre 1991a, p.30). Lefebvre’s appreciation of Eastern spatial production included its physical flexibility and dynamism of use, in which everyday space for activities, from play to sleep and from cooking to work, may not be fixed (Lefebvre 1991b, p.363). These discussions remain relevant for contemporary China, in which the majority of top-down visions of dwelling go against these cultural dynamics and instead present images of functionalist architecture with compartmentalised uses (Woodman 2011, p.126).

2.3.2. Relocating theory production

As urbanism scholar Ananya Roy highlighted, “much of the urban growth of the 21st century is taking place in the developing world, but many of the theories about how cities function remain rooted in the developed world.” (Roy 2005, p.147). However, she also asserts that abandoning Western theories and practises is unproductive and unrealistic. Instead, she advocates for moving beyond West-East dichotomies, and learning from diverse contexts by “locat[ing] the production of theory and policy in cities of the developing word” (ibid.). In such dynamic and transitioning contexts, an understanding of dwelling practises requires its own context-specific interpretations in the field. Therefore, Lefebvre’s focus on the process of urbanisation, and the pivotal role of the everyday practises of inhabitants in influencing it, moves beyond traditional Western theory (Roy 2011, p.8). Thus, Lefebvre’s theory of spatial production remains an apt tool for understanding the contemporary transitional and informal conditions that characterise the Chinese urban-rural interface. For the purpose of this research, it is used as a critical prism for understanding these complexities, and a methodology for operationalising theory on the ground in order to reveal emerging socio-spatial dynamics.
3 Methodology
3.1. Methodological approach

3.1.1. A phenomenological case study

This study employs a case study approach as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context” (Yin 2009, p.18). Within case studies, theories emerge from data collected through a multitude of methods conducted in an interpretative manner (Bhattacherjee 2012, p.93). Allowing a multi-dimensional and multi-actor study of a specific case can “derive [a] richer, more contextualised, and more authentic interpretation of the phenomenon of interest than most other research methods by virtue of its ability to capture a rich array of contextual data” (ibid.). Thus, the case study was deemed most appropriate for revealing the complexities inherent in the local transformation dynamics driven by the SMT. A phenomenological approach was then applied to gather qualitative data that could capture how the interface with top-down developments impacts everyday dwelling practises, or the phenomenon of dwelling, in the surrounding area.

Phenomenology is both a philosophy and a qualitative research method aiming to understand and describe the lived experience of a particular phenomenon, as precisely as possible from the perspective of those involved (Giorgi and Giorgi 2003). German philosopher Edmund Husserl (Bhattacherjee 2012, p.109), believed that the essence of a social phenomenon is uncovered by intensive exchange with those embedded within it. Typically, interviews are conducted with individuals with first-hand knowledge of a situation to provide rich descriptions of “social realities from […] diverse subjective perspectives” (ibid.), and analyse their underlying meanings. Thus, applying a phenomenological approach to the case study was considered most relevant, as the data to address the research question exists in the subjective perspectives of villagers impacted by the SMT, and first-hand engagement with these villagers was possible during the fieldwork.

Within the literature and policy review prior to the fieldwork, several conflicts were highlighted in this case study in relation to the research question: the CT’s tabula-rasa approach, local exclusion, and the dominance of top-down governance approaches. These conflicts were investigated during a 4-week fieldwork period in Huangyan between 1st and 29th October 2019. 6 administrative villages in Huangyan’s Xinqian Street sub-district were selected due to the proximity and assumed impact of the SMT development. The target group included the people who were encountered within these villages and thus have first-hand experience of the studied phenomenon. With accommodation situated within one of these villages (Xifan village), the researcher was fully immersed in the studied context, allowing for possibilities of participant observation on a daily basis. To gain a better understanding of the unique conditions at Huangyan’s urban-rural interface, visits were made to Huangyan’s urban centre, and several villages in rural areas of the district. During this time, the researcher was employed within the Urban-Rural Assembly (URA) research project at Habitat Unit, Technische Universität Berlin. While the fieldwork was undertaken independently, the researcher also took part in a wider field investigation within the URA project.

3.1.2. Methodological triangulation

This inductive investigation was structured around a three-tiered socio-spatial methodology to complement and capture different dimensions of the same phenomenon. Applying Lefebvre’s framework as described in Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework, the methodological triangulation encompassed:

- **Social sphere**: a phenomenological approach to understand lived experiences and everyday practises through semi-structured interviews, with data analysed through inductive thematic analysis.
- **Spatial sphere**: a typo-morphological approach to understand their material manifestation through observational studies, visual documentation, and mapping, with data analysed through comparative studies of spatial typologies.
- **Mental sphere**: policy analysis of top-down visions through literature reviews and expert workshops, with analysis of the interface with the lived reality.

3.1.3. Investigations into social space (everyday practises)

**Semi-structured interviews**

Within the semi-structured interviews, open questions attempted to uncover meanings behind patterns of everyday dwelling practises, and their evolution in terms of routines, perceived constraints and reactive tactics.
Information on the respondent's personal background was collected, including housing and income situation, family structures, and perceptions of change. The interviews aimed to capture perspectives of villagers living in various conditions of urbanisation, i.e. those relocated into new rural housing developments, and those who remain in traditional rural housing conditions. Furthermore, a wide variety of social positionalities was aimed for in terms of age groups, genders, occupations (e.g. SMT workers, farmers), and backgrounds (e.g. migrants, long-time locals).

A total of 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted (Appendix 3), alongside numerous informal conversations (Appendix 6). Respondents were selected by approaching, or being approached by villagers during periods of participant observation. Through snowball sampling (Bhattacherjee 2012, p.109), the number of respondents often expanded organically through networks within neighbourhoods. The interviews took place in informal settings - in whichever space the respondent was carrying out their everyday activities in, or inside their homes. Interviews were conducted with individuals and in small groups, with answers recorded by note-taking and transcripts from recordings. Interview length ranged from 10 minutes to over an hour, with some made up of several conversations during participation in an everyday activity. All interviews were conducted with a Mandarin-speaking URA team member or student assistant from Tongji University, who assisted in real-time and transcript translation.

Inductive thematic analysis

Data analysis was undertaken through an inductive and content-driven qualitative approach. Thematic content analysis was selected as a exploratory tool to derive themes which emerge out of empirical data (semi-structured interviews, informal narratives, observational field notes) (Boyatzis 1998, p.31, 59). One type of inductive thematic analysis is interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), considered most appropriate for this study to present the researcher’s detailed interpretation of the subjective perceptions around the case study phenomenon (Smith et al 2009). IPA involves the systematic identification of emerging themes, concepts and categories in response to the research question, through a process of coding. Adapted from methods outlined by Smith et al (2009) and Giorgi and Giorgi (2003), this analysis was structured as follows:

1. ‘Bracketing’ the researcher’s preconceptions, values, positionality
2. Reading and rereading transcripts and field notes
3. Initial descriptive note-taking
4. Identifying emerging themes through patterns, key phrases, recurring statements
5. Structuring and clustering themes and sub-themes
6. Searching for connections across themes
7. Summary table and elaborated narrative to give a full description of the experience

Within the IPA approach, the researcher must be ‘immersed’ in their data (Smith et al 2009). Following the above iterative process of data examination, transcripts and field notes were read multiple times, adding layers of descriptive notes. In this process, the researcher identified interesting or recurring statements, breaking the data into smaller units. Through this inductive coding (ibid.), the researcher listed emerging themes and clustered them into categories, looking for hierarchies of overarching themes and sub-themes to contribute to an evolving conclusion. A summary table was generated which analysed each theme in turn (Appendix 4, 5). Finally, a detailed narrative text discussing the findings was structured around the derived conclusions and supported by descriptive quotes and extracts from field notes and informal narratives (see section 5.3-5.5).

3.1.4. Investigations into physical space (material space)

Typo-morphological approach: data collection and analysis

For the spatial analysis, the research employed a typo-morphological approach in which typologies emerge through the multi-scalar analysis of shared characteristics, from a small room to a large urbanised area (Moudon 1994). Within the French Versailles School of typo-morphology, physical from is considered dynamic and continuously changing in a dialectic relationship with its producers, linking to Lefebvre’s thinking on the importance of built space for sustaining social practices (ibid.). Thus, the approach asserts that knowledge derived from physical analysis enables the understanding of the city as a ‘socio-physical phenomenon’ (ibid.). The method
begins with a choice of scales at which analysis will be conducted, followed by the classification of spatial types through specified criteria, and finally the generating typologies by relating one type to another (ibid.).

The aim of the spatial investigation in this study was to observe the ways in which processes of transformation have been embodied physically in the villages surrounding the SMT. Following the multi-scalar typo-morphological approach, the investigation was conducted at the 3 conceptualised dwelling scales: private (housing types), collective (the street or vacant land where appropriation was taking place), and institutional (public or institutional spaces, i.e. cultural halls, temples, public spaces). The recording of material space was carried out through visual documentation, such as photographic surveys and sketches to analyse functions and spatial arrangements. This mapping recorded uses (economic activities, farming practises, social activities, spatial appropriation), as well as the physical environment (building types, architectural elements, extensions and adaptations, materiality). The resultant analytical drawings were later evaluated through the 3 interpretive analytical categories of material space, everyday practise, and interface, which allowed for the definition of hybrid dwelling types (see section 5.3-5.5).

**Participant observation and field notes**

During the mapping process, several routes were taken through the villages to identify areas for observation in key dwelling spaces. Where possible, the researcher attempted to organically join in the everyday activities of villagers by spending extended periods of time in the spaces at various times of day. Field notes were used extensively as a record of the researcher’s experiences and reflections (Morse and Field 1996). These notes captured the context surrounding interviews and participant observation, as well as documenting physical space in great detail. The field notes were separated into observational notes and reflective notes or ‘analytical memos’, for the researcher to ‘bracket’ their positionality to prevent data from being prematurely analysed (Maxwell 2013, p.19). To ensure accuracy and minimal judgment in the recording of data, the researcher transcribed interviews and field notes as close as possible to the time they took place, usually by the end of each day.

**3.1.5. Investigations into mental space (interface)**

**Ongoing literature and policy review**

The initial problem definition phase involved desktop research, which included a literature review on theories around the extended urbanisation discourse and Chinese urban-rural dynamics. It also entailed a policy review of CTs, including the SMT Concept Plan (ZPUPA 2015), and local to regional development and masterplans. This included academic journals, books, news articles, and various policy documents. Alongside desktop mapping and site analysis, the research questions were regularly readdressed throughout this phase. This process continued during the fieldwork, where access to additional policy documents transpired while meeting various actors in the field. Information and data on village collective websites was also compared with what was presented on the physical information boards found in main public spaces within the villages.

**Expert workshops**

Over multiple workshop and presentation sessions with the URA team, questions were raised with experts and scholars from various fields (planning, architecture, geography) at Shanghai University and Taizhou University. Furthermore, a tour of several ‘rural revitalisation’ projects was undertaken with a team from Tongji University in rural Huangyan. The discussions aimed to reveal how different top-down representations of space are driving rural-urban transformations, the policies shaping Huangyan’s periphery on a local level, and the wider historical and political dynamics at a national and regional level. This multi-layered insight into rural urbanisation processes helped to gain an understanding into the individual villagers’ contributions to wider dynamics of transformation. Furthermore, comparison with data collected from villager interviews indicated the ways in which lived realities interact with top-down visions.
3.1.6. Critical reflections

Structural limitations

The research has a series of limitations that have been considered from the outset. Therefore, the fieldwork methodology allowed for an iterative approach, responding to constraints and opportunities that organically arose through connecting with various actors in the field. Political and cultural sensitivities were taken into account, specifically relating to access to information. Without established government authorisation, access to institutional actors within a rigid administrative system remained a challenge within the time-frame. For instance, it was not possible to gain access to SMT township leaders, district officials or village collective members. However, working with the URA team significantly supported access to information, translation, and networks to reach local actors. Furthermore, in practice, the lack of institutional framework also became an advantage in allowing more freedom to approach local actors. One incident exemplified this: while unsuccessfully attempting to meet a village leader in Xifan village through formal channels, a spontaneous, extensive interview was conducted with an ex-village leader on the street, after approaching him informally outside his tobacco shop.

The position of the researcher

The positionality of the researcher was constantly reflected on throughout the fieldwork, specifically in terms of the experiences of foreign researchers in a context such as China. While ‘bracketing’ was applied, the researcher nevertheless maintained an awareness of the possibility that embedded cultural values and norms might subconsciously impact the processes of data collection and analysis. While the researcher has extensive experience living and working in several Asian countries, prior to the field work China was a newer context. In terms of the nature of the adopted methodological approach, the research would be further strengthened by a more extended period of fieldwork to observe change over longer periods and conduct a broader number of interviews. In a few cases, the lack of time to develop mutual trust with local residents created a challenge in asking intimate questions regarding their daily lives, and at times there was some confusion in conceptualising the purpose of such an interview. Nevertheless, the vast majority of villagers were open to be approached through non-intrusive and sensitive tactics in their everyday space. Due to the nature of the research approach, the risk of bias was considered and information was cross-checked as much as possible.

The language barrier was also taken into consideration. Using translated documents and literature, as well as relying on translators in the field, may have resulted in a loss of some detailed information. Furthermore, while the translators were able to communicate with villagers in Mandarin, they were not always able to fully comprehend the local dialect spoken by the older villagers. However, while being foreigner created some methodological limitations, it also became a significant opportunity for interaction, with people often approaching with curiosity and welcoming participation in their everyday activities.
4 Case study: multi-scalar contextual understanding
4.1. Introduction to urbanisation dynamics in China

4.1.1. China’s historic urban–rural divide

Since its 1978 economic reform, China has experienced unprecedented paces of urbanisation. Since then, its urban population has increased rapidly, with expectations of reaching 1 billion in the coming decades (Li et al 2018, p.580). The national 13th Five Year Plan foresees urbanisation rates surpassing 60% in 2020, reflecting experiences of major rural to urban migration and top-down rural urbanisation programmes (Meyer-Clement 2016; Wu et al 2013). Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the country experienced a movement of rural industrialisation which resulted in a profound transformation of the Chinese countryside (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.110). This materialised through two distinct stages of urbanisation – state-led and market-driven – which characterised China’s transition from a “closed and traditional agricultural society to an open and modernised industrial and urban society” (Li et al 2018, p.580).

Centrally-planned era of urbanisation

Following the 1949 establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), the central government began promoting industrialisation to address capital scarcity (ibid., p.581). During this period of centrally-planned growth, investment was concentrated in urban areas and development was achieved to a large extent by exploiting rural resources. To facilitate these processes, in the early 1950s the Chinese Communist Party converted urban land into state ownership, and simultaneously pooled farmland into large communes in which farmers were obliged to sell produce to the state (Bruce 2017, p.3). In 1958, the hukou system was implemented to control population mobility through its division of public service and social welfare based on a person’s urban or rural status, which significantly contributed to inequalities between the two types of population (Li et al 2018, p.581) While the dual system greatly favoured urban residents, transfer of hukou status was strictly prohibited, and thus it became an institutionalised mechanism of social exclusion of rural to urban migrants (ibid.; Fokdal 2014, p.37).

Post-reform era of urbanisation

Following the reform, urbanisation policies became increasingly market-oriented. Rapid urbanisation was driven by the cheap labour of rural migrants, alongside “the creation of provincial level municipalities, the expansion of existing municipalities, the reclassification of counties to municipalities, and the creation of new urban spaces, as well as the amalgamation of townships” (Li et al 2018, p.582). This institutional restructuring, such as the ‘city administering county’ policy, transferred rural resource control to urban governments and drove the development of city-regions that transformed expansive rural areas (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.113). Simultaneously, amid decentralisation, municipalities were granted more authority in development processes. Investment in industrial centres, alongside the loosening of hukou policies, resulted in major surges in rural-urban migration (Li et al 2018, p.580,581). In the early 1980s, policies attempted to incentivise people to remain in rural areas through Town and Village Enterprises (ibid.). This strategy saw significant success in which “investment in labour-intensive industries brought greater profit returns than agriculture” (ibid., p.582), and encouraged the urbanisation of smaller cities and towns, aiming to balance urban growth and promote the rural economy. However, by the early 1990s, the majority of these rural industries declined due to external competition and environmental controls (ibid., p.583,584).

Political value for urban development endured, with municipal expansion facilitated by China’s dual land system (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.113). In the early 2000s, land policies became more market-oriented, through an urban land market in which the transfer of rural land to non-agricultural use must occur through state acquisition to enter the market (Huang et al 2016, p.3). Thus, China’s dualistic land system consists of state urban land and collective rural land; in urban settings state land is sold for long-term use rights, while rural land is owned by village collectives (Wu et al 2013, p.1923). At urban-rural interfaces, both sit side-by side with vast disparities in value. High demand of scarce urban land inflates values, and with no legal market for rural land, it is purchased by the state from village collectives at very low prices (ibid.). Local governments began exploiting the dual land market through selling urban land rights to developers in order to expand urban boundaries and capture large profits (Zhao et al 2014, p.33). Between 2005 and 2011, this generated 50–70% of municipal revenue, often resulting in the relocation of existing villages into new housing sites (Bruce 2017, p.7; Meyer-Clement 2016, p.116). Furthermore, with cities remaining the “core areas agglomerating resources like labourers, capital, material and information” (Li et al 2018, p.582), throughout the 2000s large-scale rural to urban migration persisted.
With worsening polarisation of urban and rural areas, reforms were viewed as an imperative by civil society, private developers, and local municipalities alike (Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.10). The perceived rural crisis in the 2000s resulted in a refocusing on the countryside through the ‘Three Rural Issues’, which advocated for the industrialisation of agriculture and the reduction of urban-rural socio-economic disparities, such as farmer poverty (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.114). The ‘Great Urban Leap’ describes the new form of Chinese rural urbanisation policies that focus on top-down ‘community-building’, such as the 2006 ‘Building a New Socialist Countryside’ (Ahlers and Schubert 2009). In 2014, the National New-type Urbanisation Plan 2014-2020 was launched as the first official framework dealing directly with future urbanisation as a national concern (PRC 2014). While previous plans focused on physical urban expansion, the strategy envisioned a ‘new’ countryside in which sustainable development would be achieved through environmental, social and infrastructural policy targets (Li et al 2018, p.584). The primary aims included long-term urban-rural integrative development, settling rural migrants into cities, coordinating development of cities and small towns into city clusters, and increasing the sustainability of cities (PRC 2014). The proposed ‘people-oriented urbanisation’ aimed to consolidate urban-rural public services, loosen the hukou system, and regenerate existing villages (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.132). Facilitated by administrative decentralisation, the restructuring and merging of municipalities diffused decision-making powers to local governments (Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.7). The aim was to harness market forces to “direct the flows and distribution of […] production factors like capital, labourers, materials and information” (Li et al 2018, p.584) to rural areas. While the state remained the primary service provider, it used preferential policies to attract investment to rural areas normally unable to guarantee high profit returns and high-level workers (ibid., p.585).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional urbanization</th>
<th>New-type urbanization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative and scale growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feature</strong></td>
<td>Rapid and large-scale urban expansion, cheap urbanization costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driving forces</strong></td>
<td>Government interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode</strong></td>
<td>Extensive, large scale factor input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pattern</strong></td>
<td>Top-down, from central to local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban system</strong></td>
<td>Urban bias, large cities development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 5. Comparison of traditional urbanisation and New-type urbanisation in China, concluded from the National New-type Urbanisation Plan, 2014–2020. Source: own table adapted from Li et al 2018, p.584, PRC 2014

#### 4.1.2. Current conditions at the urban-rural interface

Driving rapid urbanisation, migration, and globalisation, these influential reforms have lead to the formation of mega-urban regions, particularly throughout China’s coastal belt (Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.4,7; Fokdal and Herrle 2019, p.90). While the majority of coastal regions remain dependent on low-end manufacturing for export, the transition towards an innovation-based service economy has been heavily promoted (Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.8). China’s affluence has been rising steadily in recent years, while urban-rural disparities have narrowed to some extent (Li et al 2018, p.582). Yet this has occurred at the expense of conditions in the countryside, which remains dependent on cities for investment, employment, and technology (ibid., p.582-585). Multidimensional restructuring has produced “a vast urban-rural landscape with fragments of agriculture, production (factories) and high-density residential areas” (Fokdal 2014, p.185). Moreover, urban-rural interfaces are characterised by uncoordinated amalgamations of new and old developments, changing economic bases, and rapidly developed infrastructure (Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.5).

The distorted urban-rural relationship has also resulted in rural decline, characterised by environmental degradation, loss of agricultural land, and excessive land development and displacement (Meyer-Clement 2016,
Shrinking rural markets and a lack of employment opportunities has led young people to migrate toward cities, while a ‘left-behind population’ of elderly, women and children struggle to sustain agricultural practices (Li et al. 2018, p.581). Furthermore, social welfare inequalities remain despite loosened hukou restrictions (ibid.). Attracting investment has brought environmental burdens to rural areas, and there are few restrictions to municipalities exploiting the dual land system, leaving farmers landless and exacerbating rural poverty (Zhao et al. 2014, p.42). Post-reform urbanisation continues to “apply urban planning to villages, seeking to introduce an urban lifestyle” (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.114), in which many state-led village renovations are, in reality, entirely replaced by urban-style developments (Zhao et al. 2014, p.42). Villages at peripheral areas become engulfed by urbanisation, with urban spatial control extended into rural areas by municipalities (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.110). These urban villages play a crucial role in providing an informal affordable housing market and local economy for millions of rural residents, low paid workers, and landless farmers (Fokdal and Herrle 2019, p.87; Wu et al. 2013, p.1921). In this context, academic and political support for urban expansionism has been diminishing, with a reconsideration of the policies that have dominated and transformed Chinese rural landscapes and societies over previous decades (Li et al. 2018, p.581).

4.1.3. State interface: the everyday politics driving rural urbanisation

Village committees are the lowest level of government in rural areas, and the only in which residents are directly elected (Fokdal and Herrle 2019, p.89). The aim of these self-governing state institutions is to manage public affairs and social services, implement the law, and promote democracy (Woodman 2011, p.34-35). As intermediaries between society and state, they act as top-down ‘building blocks’ for organising people at a grassroots level (ibid.). However, while the state continues to exert authoritative control, it is often not fully translated on the ground (ibid.; Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.8). Citizens relate to the state through ‘socialised governance’, a “face-to-face politics that acts both as a mechanism of control and a channel for claims-making and pressure from below” (Woodman 2011, p.3), and thus integrates formal and informal institutional dimensions. At the interface of top-down and bottom-up practises, “informality is inherent in governance strategies applied by the Chinese state as well as in the tactics applied by civil society agents” (Fokdal and Herrle 2019, p.88). While regional governments exert control over resources and political agency, new forms of local political dynamics interactions are emerging. Despite an “institutional dominance of urban governments” (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.118), county and township cadres are strategic actors influencing rural urbanisation processes. This is illustrated in urbanising villages, where grassroots political strategies, personal networking, and bargaining resources play a vital role in the politics of informal urbanisation (Altrock and Schoon 2014, p.8; Herrle et al 2014). In some cases, local governments demonstrate political autonomy in steering urbanisation processes by opportunistically using their influence to adapt policies to benefit local conditions and population demands, addressing both rural and urban interests (ibid., p.111; ibid.)
4.2. From region to sub-district

Fig. 7. A multi-scalar approach: locating Huangyan district within China. Source: own image generated using Google Earth

4.2.1. The Zhejiang 浙江省 model and Yangtze River Delta mega-urban region

Zhejiang is an affluent coastal province in eastern China which plays a significant role in the YRD economic belt, one of the fastest growing and largest urban agglomerations in China and the world (Liu 2019, p.4). Zhejiang lacks an abundance of natural resources and is constrained by its mountainous landscape (ibid.). However, its location within the regional coastal economy has enabled its consistent ranking of 4th in GDP and GDP per capita nationwide, and its position as a demonstrative region of economic and social development through its market-driven 'Zhejiang model' (ibid.; Xu 2019, p.2). Alongside public investments in infrastructure, the private sector has played a significant role through the promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship, and the construction of industrial clusters (ibid.; Liu 2019, p.62). Zhejiang’s growing urbanisation, profitable agricultural production, and advancing private sector has attracted millions of rural migrants, constituting an immense new social group in the province since the reform (Zhang 2019, p.207; Ge 2019, p.184). The significant role played by the migrant population in Zhejiang’s economic and social development has been widely recognised, contributing to more than 26% of GDP as both consumers and producers (ibid.; ibid., p.200).

As a result of global economic shifts, labour intensive manufacturing enterprises are relocating to areas with cheaper labour and resource costs; moving from coastal to central or western China, as well as to other developing countries in the region (Yuan 2019, p.47). Simultaneously, the development of advanced manufacturing sectors in coastal areas is enshrined in national re-industrialisation strategies (ibid.). Consecutive provincial governments have implemented numerous top-down projects which, alongside economic growth, have achieved industrial development, higher living standards, and economic openness (Xu 2019, p.1). Centred around the 2003 ‘Eight-Eight Strategies’, these projects aim to take advantage of Zhejiang’s strategic location and environmental features, speed up transformation of advanced manufacturing bases by supporting characteristic industries, and coordinate urban-rural development (ibid.). Other initiatives driving the province’s socio-spatial restructuring include the ‘Four Changes and Three Famous Things’, aimed at “replacing people with machines, optimising space to save land, expanding the market through e-commerce, and cultivating well-known enterprises, famous products and eminent experts”, and ‘Three Renovating and One Demolishing’, focused on “renovating old residential areas, old factories areas in urban areas, and the villages in cities, demolishing illegal buildings” (ibid., p.2). However, the high demand on raw materials and public utilities in the province is of increasing concern, as well as the struggle of smaller enterprises in transitioning toward more advanced industries (ibid.). Furthermore, challenges of sustainable land use, hukou-related service inequalities, and declining villages remain prevalent (ibid.).

4.2.2. Taizhou 台州: city of mountains, sea, and manufacturing

While the current capital and economic heart of Zhejiang province is Hangzhou, it is shifting toward other areas in the region, including the prefecture-level city of Taizhou (PGZP-People’s Government of Zhejiang Province 2013). Over an administrative area of 9,411 km2, Taizhou municipality is comprised of 3 districts (Huangyan, Luqiao, Jiaojiang), 3 county-level cities (Wenling, Linhai, Yuhuan), and 3 counties (Tiantai, Sanmen, Xianju) (Taizhou Statistical Yearbook 2018, p.3). Taizhou’s current approximate population of 6 million is
Fig. 8. Locating the YRD mega-urban region within the regional spatial planning logic of the National New-Type Urbanisation Plan 2014-2020: two horizontal and three vertical axes. Source: own diagram adapted from Sun and Lisaia 2018, p.12; PRC 2014

Fig. 9. Locating the prefecture-level city of Taizhou within the urban cluster defined in the provincial spatial planning of Zhejiang Urban System Planning 2011-2020. Source: own diagram based on PGZP 2013 and HKTDC 2015
unevenly distributed across the municipality, concentrated in the 3 districts as a result of natural constraints and disproportionate development tracts (Taizhou Statistics Bureau 2019). These districts, including Huangyan, are experiencing rates of urbanisation of over 70%, surpassing both provincial and national averages (PGZP 2013). Taizhou has a high economic performance, ranking 4th in the province in 2018 in terms of GDP, and 6th in terms of average GDP per capita (Taizhou Statistical Yearbook 2018, p.414). This wealth is also uneven across municipal districts, as well as between urban and rural residents, with GDP per capita for those in urban districts 138% higher than the average (ibid. p.190). In terms of regional spatial structure, Taizhou is located at a key point between Wenzhou and Ningbo, as a complementary economic node in the wider urbanising network of the YRD. Characterised by its high migrant population and strong industrial base, it is assigned a secondary status within the Urban-System Planning of Zhejiang Province 2011-2020 in relation to its regional industrial significance (PGZP 2013). Within this hierarchy, its median position in terms of preferential policies and fiscal resources makes it representative of ‘ordinary’ cities within the YRD.

Taizhou has been coined the ‘City of Mountains and Sea’ and ‘City of Manufacturing’ by planners (Municipal Housing and Urban-Rural Development Planning Bureau 2016). The mountainous city-region is characterised by its coastal location and the distinctive Jiaojiang River. Branching off to the winding Yongning River, a dense network of small rivers and streams pervades the urbanised east of Huangyan district, creating a rich agricultural landscape (ibid.). In 2015, Taizhou was commended as a demonstrative in ‘Building a New Socialist Countryside’, with specific mention of Huangyan district for its agricultural transformation through specialty products, farmer training, and poverty alleviation demonstration villages (Ye 2015). Like Zhejiang, at the heart of the ‘Taizhou model’ is private sector economic development and industrialisation (Tao and Jinchuan 2008, p.107). Despite being poor in mineral resources, Taizhou has a long history of traditional industry, including handicraft production and household manufacturing (ibid., p.109-111). These factors have given rise to the strong manufacturing industry seen in Taizhou today, with its abundance of small-medium sized enterprises and its long-established trade in raw materials and machines (ibid.). Despite endeavours of industrial upgrading, both light and heavy industry remain prominent drivers of regional GDP growth, agglomerated in industrial parks along the coast and river, and within household industries in industrialising peripheral areas (ibid., p.116-118; Taizhou Statistics Bureau 2019).

4.2.3. Huangyan district 黃岩: hometown of Chinese moulds

Within Taizhou municipality, the various jurisdictions vary dramatically in terms of geographic features, administrative structures, economic character, and history. The 3 distinct districts are characterised as follows: Jiaojiang- the current urban administrative centre, Luqiao- the site for wholesale trading markets, Huangyan- the site for traditional manufacturing (Tao and Jinchuan 2008, p.109-111; PGZP 2013). With its 60-year moulding history, and related preferential institutional and policy context, Huangyan district is well-established nationally as the ‘hometown of Chinese moulds’ (ZPUPA-Zhejiang Provincial Urban-Rural Planning Academy 2015, p.26; TMPG-Taizhou Municipal People’s Government 2015). In 2009, the Huangyan Mould Industrial Cluster was identified as one of 21 industrial transformation demonstration areas in Zhejiang (TMPG 2015). As of 2017, there were more than 2,000 moulding enterprises employing over 50,000 staff, and over 3,000 processing households in Taizhou, primarily in Huangyan (Dai and Wang 2018, p.38-39; Zhang 2015). As the pillar industry, moulding production generates approximately 200 billion RMB in Taizhou and contributes to 10% of national GDP within the wider industry (ibid.). Nonetheless, its economic scale is limited in comparison to similar cities, with 80% of the industry made up of small-scale enterprises (Huamu 2018). Through policy support, Huangyan is in a critical moment of industrial upgrading, accelerating from low-end manufacturing to high-end ‘smart’ industrial clusters, attracting talents and developing new skills such as programming (TMPG 2015; Zhang 2015). Furthermore, urban areas of Huangyan are undergoing a physical restructuring wherein old industrial sites are demolished to vacate extensive developable land and coordinate the departure of industrial enterprises from the city centre (Taizhou Daily 2018).

4.2.4. Xinqian Street 新前街道: sub-district at the urban-rural interface

Xinqian Street is a sub-district located on the periphery of the urbanising north-east of Huangyan district. Over an area of 47km2, its population of 55,718 (2010) is dispersed within 27 administrative villages (Baidu Baike 2019; ZGSN-Zhejiang Government Service Network 2019). The sub-district has undergone rapid socio-economic
development in recent years with its position as an industrial satellite town in Zhejiang and one of 30 sub-districts of ‘comprehensive economic strength’ in Taizhou (ZGSN 2019). Since 1994, the Provincial Construction Department has carried out pilot village construction projects, envisioning that “with the continuous development of urban construction, [Xinqian Street] will become the sub-centre of Huangyan’s politics, economy and culture” (ibid.). Embodying hybrid conditions of transformation, Xinqian Street remains characterised by both its industrial and agricultural production. Historically, the sub-district has been defined by strong speciality industries, from tangerines to crafts, and woollen sweaters to mould production, its current pillar industry (ibid.). In terms of agriculture, alongside orange plantations and carp breeding, the sub-district has been home to the largest wild rice stem production base in the province (ibid.). With an industrial output of almost 4.5 billion RMB, Xinqian Street has seen extensive annual investment in technological transformation of 245 million RMB (Baidu Baike 2019). Comparatively, the total agricultural output value is approximately 65 million RMB, while average per capita income of farmers is 6,011 RMB, demonstrative of urban-rural disparities in the sub-district (ibid.).

Fig. 10. Above: Location of the study area at the urban-rural interface of Taizhou’s Huangyan district.
Fig. 11. Below: Xinqian Street sub-district and SMT within Huangyan. Source: own images generated using Google Earth
4.3. The Characteristic Town 特色小镇

4.3.1. Policy overview

In 2017, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China set out a “comprehensive rural revitalisation and urban-rural integration development strategy with Chinese characteristics” (Zhu et al 2018, p.1). Within this new vision of urbanisation, the CT, or tese xiaozhen (特色小镇) represented a significant platform for attracting investment to rural areas and optimising the planning of urban agglomerations (ibid.). The ’one town one characteristic industry’ concept has appeared in multiple policy documents with the aim of advancing agricultural supply-side reform, cultivating emerging industries, and constructing new cities that support coordinated regional innovation (Liao and Yi 2018, p.17-19). CTs were first introduced in Zhejiang, a province with a history of state-led single industry town development (ibid.). Since 2015, the provincial government has led CT development, with its principles set out by the 2016 ‘Guidelines for the Creation of Characteristic Towns in Zhejiang Province’, and the ‘Guiding Opinions on Accelerating the Planning and Construction of Characteristic Towns’ leading toward 2022 (Liao and Yi 2018, p.17-21; Wenfang 2018, p.449). In 2016, a joint paper issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and Reform, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Finance promoted the construction of ‘small towns with distinctive characteristics’, with the aim of reaching 1,000 CT developments nationally by 2020 (Wildau and Jia 2018). Alongside the Ministry of Housing and Construction, these government bodies have listed a total 403 CTs constructed in two batches from 2016 and 2017, with the highest number of 23 in Zhejiang province (ibid.; Liao and Yi 2018, p.17-19). The National Development and Reform Commission, the state planning agency, also set out CT guidelines on their website in 2017, including a maximum planning area of 3km2 and construction area of 1km2, grade 3A scenic location, and 5 billion RMB investment over three years (ibid.). Three overriding aims within CT policy were identified by the researcher:

People-oriented urbanisation: the majority of CTs are located in urban fringes and poor rural areas left behind by China’s rapid industrialisation (Wildau and Jia 2018). With its aims of poverty alleviation, the policy envisions creating ‘specialised communities’ that generate employment and improved living standards in revitalised rural areas, thus discouraging migration to urban areas (ibid.; Wenfang 2018, p.451).

Stimulating endogenous development through specialised industry: the rationale behind the CT is that village industries lack services, infrastructure, and the ability to compete in the market (Liao and Yi 2018, p.18). Specialising in one core industry, the concept claims to address urban-rural inequalities by fostering localised rural development through industrial innovation and economic competitiveness (Wenfang 2018, p.451). By promoting technical innovation alongside a village’s ‘unique features’, the core industry leads the development of struggling rural areas (Liao and Yi 2018, p.18,19).
Nurturing tradition and culture by embracing local conditions: in China, focus on the economic potential of cultural industries is rapidly growing. CTs aim to integrate innovative and cultural industries by highlighting local features that generate unique models of development such as industry + tourism, or culture + characteristic agriculture (ibid., p.23). Leisure and tourism are boosted through commodifying local resources and cultural heritage (Zhu et al 2018, p. 2).

CTs have been implemented in vastly different sites, cities and regions with varied natural resources and economic bases, generating a variety of development models. Thus, the functional orientations of CTs can range from tourist attractions to centres of production, with specialisations from chocolate to drones, and financial services to Chinese opera (Wildau and Jia 2018). The four primary types are outlined as follows (Liao and Yi 2018, p.17-19): In the industry-based model, the CT has a clear leading industry in which the clustering of large enterprises supports the innovation of local industries and plays a leading role in regional development. The location-based model is appropriate for sites with environmental advantages, quality transportation links, and public infrastructure. Within the culture-induced model, regional culture is used to promote tourism and speciality industries, including traditional crafts and products, architecture, and local customs. In the government-led model, active government promotion supports CTs through preferential policies. Development models are primarily government and industry-led, where in the majority of cases, the CT initially follows the government-led type, gradually evolving into others (ibid.).

4.3.2. The Smart Moulding Town

An exemplary industry-led Characteristic Town

In 2015, Zhejiang’s first batch of 37 provincial-level CTs were announced, including Xianju’s eco-tourism town, Luqiao’s Volvo town, and Huangyan’s SMT (Zhang 2015). Epitomising the area’s top-down industrial transformation, the SMT is located within the hinterland of Xinqian Street sub-district and encompasses several existing villages in its planning boundary including Houyanghuang, Xingtou, Jianshan and Xiacao (ZPUPA 2015, p.9). The site has significant location advantages through its direct links to Taizhou train station, Huangyan and Jiaojiang city centres, Taizhou Airport and Haimen Port (ibid.). Specialising in mould manufacturing, the SMT is an industry-based CT that promotes industrial concentration to generate specialised production and favourable conditions along the production line (TMPG 2015). The complex agglomerates 30 moulding enterprises, including 5 internationally-renowned ‘smart’ enterprises as influential local benchmarks from USA, Taiwan, Japan and Germany (PIRI-Prospective Industrial Research Institute 2019). The SMT operates in mould design, programming, parts manufacturing and mould production within the automobile, home appliances, aviation, and rail transportation industries (ibid.).

Fig. 13. The SMT Concept Plan’s site boundary and Western Expansion Area of Huangyan Economic Development Zone, encompassing several villages. Source: own image generated from ZPUPA 2015, p.21
Located within the Huangyan Economic Development Zone, the SMT embodies the vision of the market-led upgrading of the moulding industry, towards a national transformation model area and global innovation base (TMPG 2015). The SMT aims to ‘accelerate the industrial transformation from manufacturing to ‘intellectual creation’, through the promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation in order to create competitive advantageous in regional economic development’ (ibid.). To achieve this, the plan includes training centres within enterprises, research institutes, and incubation centres cultivating small-medium sized enterprises (ZPUPA 2015, p.30-38).

Incorporating modern manufacturing technologies and high performance machinery (PIRI 2019), the SMT’s vision of production automation is captured by the chairman of leading mould enterprise Jingcheng Times Group:

“Enter the door of the workshop, where no one can be seen. In the middle of the workshop, eight first-class equipment from Europe are lined up, and the cutting iron chips are continuously discharged from the two outlets of each machine. The workshop is surrounded by air conditioning and monitoring equipment to maintain constant temperature and humidity” (Huamu 2018).

**Industry + culture + tourism**

The SMT model aims to move from an industrial park toward a CT, by integrating industrial tourism and leisure within an internationally competitive moulding industry cluster (ZPUPA 2015, p.40,41). Xinqian Street sub-district was considered to have favourable conditions for this vision, with its celebrated cultural heritage, dense river network, and proximity to a mountain scenic spot and an orange agricultural tourism park (PIRI 2019). The SMT proposes to act as a ‘museum’ showcasing Huangyan’s moulding industry and culture through tour experiences in ‘smart’ factories, mould expos, leisure resorts, and green spaces including a mould sculpture theme park, wetland ecological park and connections with the Yongning River greenway (ibid.; TMPG 2015). In the long-term, events centred around knowledge exchange, such as mould-making seminars and product fairs, are proposed to continue to promote the feature industry (ibid.). Furthermore, the SMT envisions an integration of production and living through the transformation of existing adjacent villages into ‘beautiful villages’, promoting their economic development with agricultural tourism (ZPUPA 2015, p.41, 54; TMPG 2015). This ‘industry + culture + tourism’ branding is conveyed by the SMT committee chief:

“For the enterprise, the mould town will be a dream factory; for the makers, the mould town is a venture city; for the residents, the mould characteristic town is a happy community; for tourists, the mould town is a leisure park” (Huamu 2018).

![Fig. 14. Left to right: overall land use plan of the SMT; CGI vision illustrating the existing context as an empty site; aerial photo of SMT in its recent stage of construction. Source: ZPUPA 2015, p. 67, Zhejiang Online 2019](image)
4.3.3. Reflections on the Characteristic Town approach

During ongoing government evaluations of CTs, a number are deemed unsuccessful. In 2016, 16 of Zhejiang's CTs were deemed outstanding, 32 good, and 19 acceptable (Miao and Phelps 2019, p.50). 6 received a warning, while 5 that had been previously approved were demoted to ‘inspection’ (ibid.). As a new policy with a rapid pace of implementation, there has been insufficient time to understand and analyse shortcomings of CTs, though they continue to be reproduced at a national scale. Corresponding with the 3 overriding CT policy aims outlined above, primary conflicts in implementation have been identified by the researcher:

**People-oriented urbanisation-- Dominance of top-down governance approaches**

Miao and Phelps (2019, p.50) highlight that "growing competition among [CTs] also implies that there are winners and losers." There is risk of CT's bringing urban real estate models into rural villages, which may fuel property bubbles (Wildau and Jia 2018). Through policy manipulation, developers can access CT-allocated land with the justification of building supporting housing (Miao and Phelps 2019, p.50). Outside usual strict land use regulations, investment properties or ‘hotel-style apartments' are sold for large profits (ibid.). These dynamics have been criticised as "catering for only the elite youth middle class, which has nothing to do with lifework balance and a harmonious society that is propagated by central and local governments" (ibid.). Furthermore, the design of new rural housing developments is typically based on urban models, while resident participation is not elaborated on in CT policy (Yu 2017, p.7,23). These approaches leave rural development dependent on the whim of village collectives and local government capitalism (Liao and Yi 2018, p.19-21). In many cases, the economic benefits created for local residents through the integration of industry come with substantial environmental risks, while the urban expansion to create sites for CT development drives land acquisitions (den Hartog 2017; Miao and Phelps 2019, p.50).

**Stimulating endogenous development through specialised industry: Local exclusion**

One of the major challenges experienced in CT implementation is a lack of local skills to match the demand of the feature industry, both in terms of the management experience of village cadres and the labour skills of the existing local population (Wang et al 2019, p.13). As a result, these projects often attempt to attract outside talents instead. Furthermore, despite promises of poverty alleviation, CTs also risk exacerbating conditions in the long-term if villagers simultaneously lose land and lack the necessary skills to benefit from new industries. Furthermore, with a lack of financial incentives and land policies to foster continued growth, villages struggle to obtain bank loans to maintain the interest of CT investors (Liao and Yi 2018, p.19-21). Overall, the lack of financial support leaves villages disinvested, with public services failing to match the pace of CT development (ibid.). CT industrial concentration, and its resultant neglect of other local industries, also exacerbates the risk of CTs failing in the long-term, with a potentially devastating local impact.

**Nurturing tradition and culture by embracing local conditions: Tabula-rasa approach**

CTs have been criticised as only superficially addressing local particularities, culture, and resources, instead simply extending urbanisation into rural areas (den Hartog 2017; Wang et al 2019, p.12). While the policy claims to protect and promote the existing natural landscape and building heritage, economic motivations appear to be the true driver of the majority of CTs (den Hartog 2017). Furthermore, few CT policy documents elaborate on local perceptions of cultural values or how cultural sustainability will be achieved (Yu 2017, p.7, 22). Thus, many have been criticised for their lack of understanding of local features, instead transplanting homogeneous CT models onto other sites to generate a brand image that attracts investment (den Hartog 2017). While socially or culturally significant places and structures are lost through this tabula-rasa approach, many new constructions in ‘ancient-looking styles' appear to commodity local identities, aimed at attracting tourists rather than improving quality of life for existing residents (ibid.). Thus, "without studying the needs of individual locations and ecosystems, feature towns will remain forever isolated as commercial gimmicks" (ibid.)
Localising the challenges in the SMT

The above challenges can also been identified in the SMT development. Huangyan’s industrial upgrading project is hindered by a lack of high-skilled local talent, rising wages and raw materials costs, weak demand in the international market, and competition in the domestic market (Dai and Wang 2018, p.38-39; TMPG 2015). Increasing industrial land costs are also driving entrepreneurs and smaller-scale enterprises to relocate to other areas (ibid.). Lacking the ability to produce certain complex moulds locally, existing enterprises remain focused on production, omitting R&D and training functions (PIRI 2019). Despite the SMT’s promise of local development, in relation to other areas in Taizhou, many of the adjacent villages remain neglected. Situated at the urban-rural interface, the SMT site demonstrates characteristic disparities in urban and rural conditions, such as its poor infrastructure and public services, low GDP, and hybrid social values and norms. This disparity has been identified as a key challenge to implementation, with existing smaller-scale enterprises criticised as lacking uniformity, while services are perceived to be falling short of CT standards, described as “small, scattered, chaotic, and poor street businesses” (PIRI 2019; ZPUPA 2015, p.19). Rather than promoting existing conditions, the surrounding villages are instead perceived as a hindrance to SMT implementation due to their influence on functional layout, while new developments are often imposed onto the existing fabric as if it were an empty site (ibid.) Thus, it remains to be seen whether efforts declared by the local government of modernising agricultural infrastructure, farmer employment training, public service investment, and green initiatives (ZGSN 2019), are enough to deal with these contradictory development trajectories.
5 Case study: empirical investigation
5.1. Village dynamics

5.1.1. Screening and characterisation

To gain an understanding of local transformation dynamics, the fieldwork entailed a screening of 6 administrative villages surrounding the SMT, which enabled a comparative analysis of their varying conditions. The villages were investigated firstly in terms of their socio-economic dynamics, development tract, and demographics. The typo-morphological analysis addressed spatial layout, housing types, public buildings, building heritage, and open space. While the villages had many qualities in common, each represented a unique condition in terms of its stage of transformation. This allowed the characterisation of the villages into types: urbanised village, productive peripheral village, commercial road village, rural village, SMT workers’ village, and informal village (Appendix 1).

**Jing’an Village** 泾岸村: informal village

Jing’an is highly impacted by both the expansion of the urban area and the SMT development. Some villagers have been relocated for the construction of an SMT access road which segregates a new rural housing development and the old village fabric. The village previously had a strong agricultural base of wild rice stem, but this has been reduced aside from some farmland to the back of the village. The old part of the village has a highly commercialised and industrialised fringe along an old arterial road, with a large number of informal workshops, such as moulding, plastic product assembly, and woollen sweaters inside households and makeshift industrial structures. A central water body used to define the village around the temple, but is now highly polluted by adjacent industrial workshops. The housing is primarily 3-4 storey new rural housing, 80-00s rural terraces, with clusters of dilapidated older timber traditional housing in the inner village.

**Xingtou Village** 杏头村: rural village

Xingtou is the smallest and most isolated villages, situated on the western side of the SMT and surrounded by fields. An adjacent smaller cluster of houses is connected by a path between farmland. While the current pace of transformation is slow, there are signs of future development with the construction of a road leading from the SMT and an expansive adjacent factory site. Though its agricultural base has been greatly reduced, the village maintains its rural appearance and there is a lack of other economic activity. There is one small restaurant, public toilet, temple, and dilapidated shop used as a community centre. The village has a separated grid of 3-4 storey new rural housing, while the rest of the village is in a relatively poor state of repair. There are many dilapidated old structures of stone and timber, and those in decent condition were being lived in. Other housing consisted of 80-00s rural terraces.

**Qianyang Village** 前洋村: commercial road village

Qianyang is highly influenced by the Changjua Line road and is structured around its commercialised fringe. The village has a large proportion of village enterprises, such as a wooden door manufacturer and other industrial workshops, often producing woollen sweaters. The village is surrounded by productive farmland, and a small river meanders through the site. While there is a temple, the village has no clear central area. The 3-4 storey new rural housing development is separated from the old village fabric, and sits beside the cultural hall building which has been re-purposed several times by the village collective, from Taobao office, to primary school. The rest of the village is made up of 80-00s rural terraces, with some timber traditional housing remaining.
Houyanghuang Village 后洋黄村: productive peripheral village

Houyanghuang is a large village structured around the Changjua Line road, leading to other parts of rural Huangyan. This highly commercialised fringe is active at night with urban-based economic activities, such as hairdressers, real estate agents, and restaurants. The village is heavily influenced by urban expansion and will soon be engulfed into the urbanised area. An expansive construction site for a gated apartment complex and a section of the Yongning River greenway lie adjacent to the village. Its northern end is almost immediately adjacent to the SMT, and to the west, it is bordered by farmland with a path leading to the SMT. There had been a compensation conflict in which the village leader disappeared with the collective relocation compensation money, and the villagers had subsequently gone to court. The housing types included 80-00s rural terraces, timber traditional housing, and converted containers, often in front yards. A new rural housing development was under construction to the west, and there were numerous informal extensions.

Xifan Village 西范村: urbanised village

Xifan is a highly commercialised and industrialised village which has evolved into its own urban centre with new rural housing developments, urban housing blocks, and gated high-rise condominiums. In more isolated areas of the village, older rural housing types can be found, many dilapidated and used for storage. The village collective is wealthy as a result of the high income of collective land rental to factories (Interview 12). It has well maintained public amenities and infrastructure, such as the senior house and shaded public square, and temple undergoing refurbishment. The village formerly had orange tree plantations but has since lost all farm land through the industrialisation processes. Though rents are higher than in peripheral villages, the urbanised village has a very high proportion of migrants and workers seeking accommodation in the proximity of factories. There are some signs of rural life persisting in the physical landscape including a series of ponds, now mostly contaminated.

Xiacao Village 下曹村: SMT workers’ village

Xiacao is located immediately adjacent to the SMT, with direct access over a newly-built bridge. However, it is relatively disconnected from other areas. The majority of the village farmland has been sold for the SMT development. Since losing their agricultural base, many villagers seek alternative income through converting space in their houses, building extensions, or using containers to provide housing for SMT workers. There were mixed impressions among villagers regarding the proportion of migrants, suggesting that processes of demographic change may be happening at a rapid pace. While there are less industrial workshops in this village, there were several advertisements for SMT jobs. The village has newly-built public amenities concentrated in a central area, including a well-used cultural hall, basketball court, and public park next to a village administration centre. There is also a temple and small shrine near the entrance to the village. The housing primarily consists of 80-00s rural terraces, as well as some timber and stone traditional houses.
5.2. Identified dwelling profiles

5.2.1. Catalogue of practices and typologies

During the screening of the 6 villages, identified dwelling practices were catalogued at each scale: private, collective, and institutional. These practices, alongside characteristic typo-morphological features, were then mapped to demonstrate their breadth and diversity. 3 examples were selected at each scale for further analysis. These are numbered in the diagram below, and correspond with the tables on the following page.

![Diagram](image)

Fig. 23. Mapping the identified dwelling practices and characteristic typo-morphological features in the study area. Source: own diagram generated using Google Earth
5.2.2. Profiles selected for analysis

The tables below compare the 3 selected examples at each dwelling scale which were most illustrative of the villager’s interactions with the top-down rural urbanisation dynamics. Each case is elaborated on in more detail in the following pages, using the analytical categories outlined in the theoretical framework; material space, everyday practices, and interface.

**Private dwelling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Material space</th>
<th>Everyday practise</th>
<th>Interface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The productive new rural house</td>
<td>3 storey new rural housing block</td>
<td>Repurposing the house to a woollen sweater workshop, sewing, napping, cooking, delivering sweaters</td>
<td>Top-down new rural housing development, land use regulations, negotiations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The migrant family’s old rural house</td>
<td>Single storey old rural rental house</td>
<td>Playing with granddaughter, farming, informal waste collection, returning from work at SMT</td>
<td>Constraints housing access, lack of diverse economic opportunities due to ‘one town one industry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The multi-functional 90s house</td>
<td>00s rural 3 storey detached house</td>
<td>Informal household shop and workshop, tending to shop, packing plastic pieces, socializing with friends</td>
<td>Threat of redevelopment, compensation for farmland, land use regulations, son works in SMT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Collective dwelling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Material space</th>
<th>Everyday practise</th>
<th>Interface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The vegetable garden on the vacant site</td>
<td>Vacant lot between factories, new village housing site, and school</td>
<td>Appropriation tactics on vacant space, tending to vegetable plots, farming for leisure</td>
<td>Perceived encroachment of top-down development, son’s moulding business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grandmother’s playground</td>
<td>Playground built on the street space in front of old rural house</td>
<td>Appropriation tactics, building neighbourhood amenities, women playing with children, neighbours meeting</td>
<td>Threat of redevelopment, environmental impacts from SMT, unaware of development plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The market repurposed as a BBQ restaurant</td>
<td>Industrial market structure and yard repurposed as a BBQ restaurant</td>
<td>Adaptive reuse of market structure, creating a multi-functional social space, negotiation of shared space</td>
<td>Relocation to new rural housing development, business enabled by land compensation, opening hours reflect moulding worker’s shifts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Institutional dwelling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Material space</th>
<th>Everyday practise</th>
<th>Interface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The unused cultural hall</td>
<td>The new cultural hall in the new rural housing development</td>
<td>Negotiating space with farmers from old village who dry rice on car parks, social nodes located in old village</td>
<td>Unused cultural hall, tabula-rasa development plans, displacement due to SMT road, encroachment of moulding industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The shaded public square</td>
<td>Shaded public space and adjacent institutional buildings</td>
<td>Daily playing with children, neighbours meeting, build-up of social capital between neighbours allowing for migrant integration</td>
<td>Location in the village’s ‘institutional quarter’, husband’s job experience of moulding industry upgrading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The old community shack</td>
<td>The old community centre with the small shop</td>
<td>Informally built and appropriated structure, elderly people meeting, playing mahjong, tending to the shop</td>
<td>Development plans posted on walls, family members working in the SMT, environmental impacts from the SMT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3. Private dwelling

5.3.1. The productive new rural house, Qianyang village

In the large interior space, there were high piles of fabrics and pieces of woollen sweaters on the floor around the entire room. The owner of the house said they were primarily sold in Shanghai and Hangzhou. One of the women working said she used to grow oranges before getting a job in the textile industry. Toward the back of the house, a man was sleeping on a deck chair and the door was open to the fields behind. The third floor was being used as a workshop, where there were 5 workstations with sewing machines, and several women and 2 men were assembling pieces of fabric. A few workers sat on stools sewing the sweaters by hand, saying that for particular design details it was not possible to use the machines. An older woman said that her son was a programmer for a moulding enterprise. Piles of fabrics were being sorted by a worker in one corner of the room. Outside, fabrics and sweaters were being thrown out of the third-floor window to a driver who was loading them onto the back of his small vehicle. [Field Notes Extract 5]

Actor profile:

68 year-old local subcontractor of a textile workshop. He lives with his wife and son in the village.

Material space

On Qianyang village’s south-west edge, a new rural housing development had been constructed to relocate villagers as part of the SMT development. Separated from the old village and surrounded by fields on all sides, it was situated between the old Changjua Line road and the newer Jiaohuang Line provincial road. The development was laid out on a 3x3 grid with a total of 9, almost identical 3-4 storey residential structures. There was an additional house in a different style a short distance away, evidently owned by the village leader. The highly formalised environment was interrupted by the productive activities of the house on the north-east corner that had been converted into a fully-fledged woollen sweater workshop. The other houses in the neighbourhood were terraced, however in this case 2 houses had been combined to create a large open space on each floor. The ground floor was used for storage and sorting, the 1st floor was mostly empty aside from a small kitchen, and the 2nd floor was used a workshop. Another much smaller sweater workshop had been converted from a commercial space on the ground floor of another house in the neighbourhood. Thus, the new rural housing development had become a microcosm of a productive live-work environment defined by the woollen sweater industry.

Everyday practise

The entire house had become a productive space, however some private dwelling activities remained, such as washing and cooking food, or resting. The driver of the delivery vehicle gave an insight into the transitioning everyday practises of an ex-farmer who has become a subcontractor within the textile industry; shifting from farming to light industrial everyday practises. After selling his farmland, he now works in a nearby workshop with 3 others involved in the final stages of the woollen sweater production line--washing and finishing. Though he expressed an eagerness to adapt to these lifestyle changes, he also retained his old farming practises through growing vegetables and oranges near his house. He also repeatedly conveyed a positive perception of rural areas and the way they have been changing in recent years:

“I don’t go to the city; I don’t see the point. I find rural areas to be in a very good condition. This area is so rich and there is a good quality of life here.” [Interview 1]

Despite his negative perception of urban areas, he is proud of his grandson attending an expensive high school in Huangyan’s urban centre. This highlights the rapid generational shift from an everyday farming lifestyle, to a family economic situation that can afford an expensive city education. Furthermore, urbanisation shapes the man’s everyday life through the linkages within the woollen sweater production line which his current work forms a part of. This urban-rural hybrid was also illustrated by the surrounding farmland, signifying that the village was defined by both the everyday practises generated by textile production, as well as the sustained farming activities.
Despite the austere and ‘urban-style’ architecture, even the village leader demonstrated signs of a maintained connection to rural identity, with a pond and a few farming plots directly outside the house. In the field in front of the textile workshop, an old man and woman were tending to a vegetable plot:

“We own the whole piece of land including these few plots and all these orange trees. These plots got a bit wild as my husband had a stroke earlier in the year and I had to look after him. It will rain soon so we are trying to finish planting these vegetables as soon as possible. Would you like an orange?”

[Narrative 2]

**Interface**

The functionalist design of this new rural housing development appeared to disregard the existing village context. Furthermore, in the context of strict regulations around rural land use, the existence of the woollen sweater workshop suggests an interplay of negotiations between different actors. Despite the proximity to the village leader’s house and village collective cultural hall, the doors of the workshop were left open without much effort to conceal the activities inside, suggesting the informality had been tolerated to some extent. However, it was unclear what resources were needed for this, or for the owners to access 2 houses in this new rural development. Contributing to a trans-local economy, the production of the fabrics and sweaters is dispersed in the local area in other small workshops, while the finished products are sold in Shanghai and Hangzhou. Furthermore, this production line provides crucial employment to villagers who come from farming backgrounds and have lost their land through SMT land acquisitions.

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**Fig. 27.** Left to right: growing oranges and vegetables in front of a grid of identical new rural housing blocks; subcontractor’s delivery vehicle; gated front porch used for household activities. Source: own photos.
Fig. 28. Socio-spatial analysis of the productive new rural house. Source: own drawing
5.3.2. The migrant family's old rural house, Xingtou village

An older man arrived in an electric mini-truck vehicle with bags of plastic bottles stacked in the open trunk. It was parked next to a series of bins with overflowing rubbish, which had a strong smell. There was also a large amount of construction material lying nearby as a result of the renovations to the adjacent temple. The man entered one of the small houses opposite, and sometime after, a woman and a friendly small baby came out smiling and laughing. While playing with the baby, the grandmother kept trying to stop her picking up some sand on the ground next to the house. A villager passed by who had been farming in the fields behind and asked the little girl if she would like to pick some vegetables from the field with him. Several factory workers in uniform and hard-hats passed by the house as they were returning home from work in the SMT on their motorcycles. [Field Notes Extract 13]

Actor profile

55-60 year-old woman from Anhui province, living with her husband and their 1.5 year-old granddaughter in an old rural house. The woman is retired while her husband is involved in informal waste collection. Their younger son's family lives in another part of Xinqian Street. Their older son, the baby’s father, lives in Wuxi with his wife and another daughter of about 9 years-old.

Material space

On the eastern edge of Xingtou village, an old 2-storey rural structure stood at the entrance to the village next to a stream. It was the closest point to the adjacent SMT less than 150 meters away, with a direct access path through an open space made up of active farmland and wasteland with piles of rubbish. The building had a steep sloping roof, reminiscent of styles of the 80s, and was in a relatively poor condition. The structure had been divided into 3 individual houses. This subdivided old rural structure was a typical housing typology, often used for renting to migrants and workers, or converted to extra kitchen space or storage. To the back of the building was a cluttered shared yard and garden with fruit trees belonging to the neighbours. While the house was considerably small for 3 people, the main concerns from the grandmother regarding their living conditions consisted of the condition of the door and the amount of daylight. She did not mention any environmental concerns, such as the presence of the rubbish heap adjacent to her house, or the proximity to the SMT, despite the noise emanating from the factories.

“The door is broken; it is always stuck and I cannot even open it properly. And it’s very dark inside, without any light in the rooms. It is not a good place to raise a child.” [Interview 14]

Everyday practise

The family are long-time migrants who have lived in several locations over the last 10 years, and have moved to the village 2 months ago. The driving force behind the family’s relocation was the difficult work-life balance of the woman’s sons, who both work in urban contexts. The grandparents follow their children in order to raise the youngest members of the family unit, while the baby's parents drive 2 hours to visit each weekend. Home appeared to be a temporary situation for the family; they are well-accustomed to adapting to their surroundings and are actively planning their next step. They have not appropriated space around their house or demonstrated any embodied farming habits. Thus, their transient way of life brings different everyday practises which do not necessarily align with the locals. However, there were signs of amiable relationships between the family and people in the neighbourhood, such as the local farmer’s interaction with the baby. Language appears to be key for migrant social integration among long-time locals in a new neighbourhood.

“I can connect with some people in the village because there is someone from our hometown living here. We spend time together and have chats. So far, I have found it relatively easy. Their dialect is easy for me to understand, so luckily, I don't have a big issue with language.” [Interview 14]
With its location on the access route to the SMT and surrounded by fields, the space outside the house became a busy node of everyday activities carried out by people embodying very different lifeworlds: the migrant family, the SMT workers, the local farmers. The hybrid rural-urban condition was illustrated vividly in the early evening, with SMT workers commuting back to their accommodation on the path through the fields where farmers were tending to their crops. While the migrant grandmother played with her granddaughter outside their house, the grandfather was arriving home in his small vehicle from which he appeared to work as an informal waste collector.

**Interface**

While the SMT and the wider industrialisation processes have drawn many migrants to the area, one of their largest structural constraints is access to affordable housing. This drives family units to split, even within the same city. According to the grandmother, not only are the rents too high in urban areas, but the rental market is aimed at temporary accommodation for single migrant workers rather than families. From her perspective, there is also lack of a diverse range of economic opportunities in the area. This is the primary reason the baby’s parents to live in Wuxi, where they operate a hairdressing salon in a night market. In an area defined by the ‘one town, one industry’ mode of development, this also captures the struggles of some villagers who may not have the necessary skills to benefit from the moulding industry.

“The main reason for living here is that the rent is very cheap, about 5,000 RMB per year. Also, it was very difficult to find a place to rent with this little girl because people think children are noisy and annoying. This is a barrier for us. But we are definitely going to move out soon because we don’t like it here.” [Interview 14]
Fig. 30. Socio-spatial analysis of the migrant family’s new rural house. Source: own drawing
5.3.3. The multi-functional 90s house, Xicao village

The products on display on the shelves were sparse and covered in dust. There was a room toward the back where 4 mahjong tables were placed in rows, but appeared unused. All around the room were various boxes of products, crates of beer and stacks of rice bags. On the desk at the front of the shop was a large bag filled with plastic wall mounting pieces and screws. Now and again the woman continued grouping them together and packaging them in small plastic bags. She received several phone calls and was having long, animated discussions until her son told her she should attend to her costumers. A few friends dropped by the shop to see her. We sat for an hour on stools eating pomelos, while she continued packing the plastic pieces at her desk. [Field Notes Extract 8]

Actor profile

50-55 year-old local shopkeeper living with her adult son and husband. She plays a role in the informal moulding production line through packaging plastic products in her shop.

Material space

On one of the primary streets in Xicao village, the woman’s large 3-storey house was typical of styles from 90s rural housing developments. 2 houses had been combined, creating a central atrium space with a skylight. Several times, she mentioned the value of extra living space in terms of the economic flexibility it allows. The cluttered ground floor had been converted into a multifunctional space consisting of a shop, workspace, kitchen, and mahjong hall. The shelves in the shop were displayed through the ground floor window, and were stacked with household goods like cooking oil, dried noodles, snacks, and drinks. Next to the entrance, a large sack was sitting on a desk with plastic pieces flowing out of it. The pieces had been packaged into small plastic bags and thrown in a basket on the floor next to it. Toward the back of the ground floor were 2 rooms: a kitchen and dining area, and a long room designed as a garage which the woman used to rent out as a mahjong hall. The hall was now unused, and the dusty mahjong tables were covered with household objects. In the centre of the house, the two upper floors were reached by a corner staircase, leading to the family bedrooms and living rooms.

Everyday practise

“Every family in the area is wealthy and they don’t have to work too hard. I just enjoy life, and don’t need to lead a busy life. But still, the villagers work 7 days a week so they can have more income.... Since the SMT provides so many jobs, there will be many migrant workers coming into the village to rent houses...but I don’t want to rent my house out anymore, so I give up this extra income.” [Interview 9]

From the woman’s perspective, the everyday lives of residents in this village are defined by their work. In her case, she has re-purposed the ground floor of her private dwelling as both a neighbourhood commercial space and an informal workshop linked to the moulding industry. The woman highlighted that the informal economy (in particular the moulding and textile industry) is a very strong component of the village. Though her family income is high, having a household business was considered vital to the woman. She does not remain strongly attached to her rural background: she has no space left to grow vegetables, but this lifestyle shift does not appear to concern her. Instead, the woman's shop has become the nucleus of her everyday life, used as a space for socialising on a daily basis. She consistently demonstrates her value of social networks, but does not use formal social infrastructure, such as the cultural hall, due to her busy work-life balance. Thus, the shop allowed the private space of her house to be both a commercial space and a public living room for her and her neighbours. Addressing the potential of relocation due to the SMT development, the woman was unconcerned about how it may impact these established social dynamics, believing that the neighbourhood will move together.
“If I want to have a chat with my friend it just happens in front of my house, there are no special public spaces in the village that we meet in.” [Interview 9]

**Interface**

The woman has a direct connection with the moulding industry through her son’s work in an moulding enterprise within the SMT. The family has a high income, which she claims is significantly more than the average in the neighbourhood. The family typifies the rapid livelihood shifts in the area: as previous farmers, their agricultural land was bought by the government bought for 800 RMB per acre. From the woman’s perspective, this amount is low, however the family still benefits from the land sale through monthly compensation payments (1,888 RMB), and social welfare support. Despite her village being included in the SMT plans, she was unaware of the future relocation plans that may impact her. The woman perceived that the SMT has had a positive impact on the village economy, providing a source of employment for many of the villagers, directly and indirectly. Formal land use regulations are considered flexible and not perceived as a barrier to her. The SMT appears to play a role in providing some commercial amenities in the village, which the woman claims are otherwise lacking. As a result, cars have become integral to everyday life as villagers shop and work in areas outside the village.

“The village in the future will be demolished and redeveloped, so we will move out...when I move to the new house it will be forbidden to open a shop legally, but I can figure something out. One thing is for sure, the living space won't be as big as the current one.” [Interview 9]

Fig. 31. Left to right: 90s rural housing typology; interior of shop with plastic packaging workstation, living room converted to shop storage space and an unused mahjong hall. Source: own photos.
Fig. 32. Socio-spatial analysis of the multi-functional 90s house. Source: own drawing
5.4. Collective dwelling

5.4.1. The vegetable garden on the vacant site, Xifan village

A large vacant site, which at first appeared to be abandoned, stood between two very different worlds: the moulding factories lining the busy Jinchuan road, and the newly-built residential and urbanised area on the other side. On closer inspection, the space was serving a purpose to several villagers who had claimed a piece of the land to grow vegetables. One of these people was an old man carefully tending to one of the vegetable plots along a dirt access path. From his appearance, he appeared to be a farmer from a nearby village searching for left-over land to keep up his daily work. Surprisingly, he explained that he lived with his extended family in the exclusive gated condominium located on the other side of the vacant site. [Field Notes Extract 6]

Actor profile

60-65 year-old retired farmer from a rural area in Hunan province. He lives with 8 family members in the adjacent gated tower complex, and came to Huangyan to look after his grandchildren.

Material space

The expansive vacant site was located in the north of Xifan village, directly behind a series of factories that lined Jinchaun road, the SMT access road. A high school and a newly-developed residential area bordered the site on its other sides, alongside a dirt access path. While the majority of the site had been left abandoned and overgrown, several areas were used as small-scale farming plots. To the west of the site, the land was being prepared for development and construction work was taking place. The site had several walls separating it from the neighbouring buildings, and a new wall was being constructed directly adjacent to the farming plots. Despite the proximity to the factories and construction work, the old man tending to his vegetable garden stated that he loved the area and perceived it to be quiet. The man’s family owned a 6 bedroom apartment on the 1st floor of the adjacent 12-storey gated condominium complex, and a ground floor unit rented out to a retail business. The exclusive towers were reminiscent of residential buildings in dense urban areas, with security booths, a cafe, and an underground car park.

Everyday practise

“My wife and I are taking care of family here, helping my son and daughter-in-law to support their daily life. They are very busy. According to my life experience, I always have to bring up the little ones.” [Interview 3]

“I don’t consider myself rich- I still do this farm work here just for my family’s daily life. I don’t own this land, I just started using the lot because it was empty and nothing else was happening here.” [Interview 3]

The man and his wife live with their son and daughter-in-law, two grandsons, and their daughter-in-law’s sister and husband. With 8 people in one household, this is an example of a intergenerational rural household that is now living in urban-style housing typologies. Like many migrant families in the area, the grandparents have moved to Huangyan to support their children’s busy daily lives by raising the grandchildren. The man has been living in the area for 3 years, but perceives his time in Huangyan as temporary and has not transferred his hukou. The man has a farming background, but through a generational lifestyle shift, is now living in a rapidly urbanising context with family members working in various industrial enterprises. Nevertheless, the man still identifies strongly with his farming background. Through his micro-scale farming practises, growing vegetables for household consumption remains an integral part of his daily routine. His opportunistic use of the vacant site also suggests that there are no formal spaces for these types of practises in the new development in which he lives. The man explained that the other appropriated vegetable plots on the site belong to several other villagers in the surrounding area, suggesting a degree of negotiation on the use of space.
The man’s family has a direct link to the moulding industry, with his son having established a family moulding business when he arrived in Huangyan 8 years previously. The man’s daughter-in-law also works in the finance department of the factory, which has over 40 employees. In this case, the moulding industry has allowed for rapid socio-economic progression for a family of rural-urban migrants. Standing at odds with the narrative of the SMT development plans, the man perceived that the moulding industry is currently in decline. However, he appeared to be unaware of future developments in the area, and disconnected from wider processes of transformation in the neighbourhood. Instead, he remained fixated on the immediate threat of the construction of the wall adjacent to his vegetable plots and its direct impact on his embedded everyday habits.

“By the time I arrived in Huangyan, my son had already made a lot of money in the moulding industry and was able to purchase one of these apartments. The moulding business is not that good this year, but in past years it was going really well.” [Interview 3]

“The wall has recently been constructed but I don’t know what it is for…I have heard there will be a new road here. I am worried about how this will affect my vegetable plots.” [Interview 3]
Fig. 34. Socio-spatial analysis of the vegetable garden on the vacant site. Source: own drawing
5.4.2. The grandmother’s playground, Xingtou village

In the early evening, several old farmers were out tending to crops. Clusters of orange trees and fields separated one part of the village with another smaller group of houses. Some farmers were cycling past on bikes with small wagons in which they transported crops, materials and tools. In the village playground, two women and some children were sitting next to a swing, a seesaw and a few small chairs. In front of the house, a very old man was sitting by the front door with a zimmer-frame, while a woman of a similar age walked nearby to water some plants before sitting down next to him. A large car arrived, and one little boy looked expectantly as his father emerged to greet him. The father’s office-like clothes contrasted with the surrounding village context. He sat down next to the old couple and looked at his smart phone. More and more children appeared out of neighbouring houses to play, while several factory workers walked past from the direction of the SMT and toward a nearby residential building. [Field Notes Extract 14]

Actor profile

60-65 year-old local grandmother who has built a playground for her 1 year-old grandson. During working hours, she looks after the young boy and her own elderly parents at their house.

Material space

To the south of the main core of Xingtou village, a smaller neighbourhood was connected by a path through some farmland. The directly adjacent SMT site highlighted the extreme contrast of its interface with the quiet rural residential area sitting among the surrounding fields. Situated in a central position in the neighbourhood, the woman’s small playground stood at the corner of the village’s primary street. The playground consisted of a colourful swing, a seesaw and a climbing frame, with a long bench placed along one side. It had been built in the concrete open space in front the woman’s parent’s house, an ornate 2-storey traditional building made from stone with a steep pitched roof. The house had a shaded front porch which overlooked the play area, with decorative balustrade and column details. The same space in front of other neighbouring houses was generally used for car parking, storing farming tools, or drying rice in the sun. A walled pond was located a short distance away adjacent to a large piece of overgrown land with several orange trees, and another from which wild rice had been harvested.

Everyday practise

The woman had taken on the position of a carer in the inter-generational family unit, which was divided in terms of their rural and urban lifestyles. Though she also owned a house in the village, she has moved in with her elderly parents in order to help them in carrying out their daily tasks, such as cooking and cleaning. The woman’s son lived with his family in the urban area of Huangyan, and worked in Jiaojiang district. His appearance suggested he had an office job or works in a managerial role. Due to their busy work-life balance, each morning the woman’s son or daughter-in-law drops their baby son off at the house in the village, and the woman looks after him. At the end of the working day, they return to collect him. Thus, despite the generational lifestyle shift, her son remains closely engaged with the family unit and the rural area he originates from.

“I come to my parent’s house every day to look after them and make meals for them. Since I also have to look after my grandson, I take him with me to their house every day.” [Narrative 7]

Through the creative appropriation of space, the woman’s playground has become a significant focal meeting point in the neighbourhood, particularly with women and children. The playground sits at an axis crossed by many different types of people in the village: families from neighbouring houses, farmers returning from fields, factory workers on their way home from work at the SMT. A local woman also passed by on her motorbike, stopping at the pond to wash her bed sheets on the steps.
“I built the small playground in front of my parents’ house myself so that my grandson could play here. He is here every day because there is nowhere else for him to play in the neighbourhood. The neighbours also come to play with their children there, so it has become a playground for the whole village!” [Narrative 7]

Interface

At its closest point, the SMT is just 50 meters from the neighbourhood. There a strong visual connection with the SMT, with direct views to the various moulding enterprises. Moreover, it is in such close proximity to the village that the sounds emanating from its factories can be heard across the fields. The presence of the moulding workers in the village on their daily commute also illustrates that the SMT is bringing a new demographic into the area. Built for villagers relocated by the SMT development, the formal architecture and dense spatial layout of the nearby new rural housing development stood at odds with the existing village morphology. Despite this, the woman was unaware of the development plans for the area, and did not appear threatened by the encroachment of industry in such close proximity. Her main concern was the lack of public open space or play facilities in the area, despite the promise of the SMT in offering new public spaces and amenities. With the resources she had available to her, the woman’s re-purposing of space responded directly to this perceived need.

Fig. 35. Left to right: playground as a focal meeting point, crossed by moulding workers, farmers and neighbours; the multi-generational household. Source: own photos.
Fig. 36. Socio-spatial analysis of the grandmother’s playground. Source: own drawing
5.4.3. The market re-purposed as a BBQ restaurant, Xifan village

At the end of the laneway was an opening where an industrial structure and a new rural housing development stood adjacent to one another. The open industrial structure was colourfully decorated and looked as if it was being used a restaurant. Though it was around lunch time, the space was mostly empty aside from a few staff members sitting on plastic stools having their lunch. Inviting us to come back one evening for dinner, they explained that the structure was once a popular farmer’s market in the area, and had recently been converted to a BBQ restaurant by a local woman living in the new rural housing development. [Field Notes Extract 1]

In the evening, we returned back to the BBQ restaurant. While the food was being cooked, we sat outside in the dimly lit yard around one of the round plastic tables. Despite the efforts in decoration, we were the only costumers at that time. After serving the food, the owner, a well-dressed middle-aged woman, came to sit with us for some time. She said that the restaurant is busiest around 10pm when workers in the nearby moulding factories finish their shifts. She proudly spoke about her restaurant and all the ideas she had for the space. [Field Notes Extract 4]

Actor profile

40-45 year-old local woman relocated to a new rural housing development, running a BBQ restaurant.

Material space

Directly to the south of the busy Xincheng road in Xifan village, an old market structure stood adjacent to a series of large-scale factories. To the east, a lane-way of brick single-storey extensions ran behind a row 90s terraced housing blocks. Neighbouring this was a horseshoe shaped grid of 4-storey new rural housing blocks for relocated villagers. The blocks were identical in terms of design, with an overgrown open space in the centre showing some signs of farming activity. Separated from the residential area by a wall, the former market structure stood behind a large yard space with rows of long brick platforms. These market stalls were now neatly decorated with lines of identical potted plants. To one side of the yard was a small toilet structure, and beside it was a raised concrete stage with a white painted wall behind it, also decorated with plants. The market structure itself was industrial in character, with steel pitched roofs and 5 door-less openings punctuating the concrete facade. Now converted to a BBQ restaurant, the interior roof structure was decorated with lines of colourful bunting, hanging above groups of plastic chairs and round tables draped in red tablecloths. At the back of the interior space were a series of enclosed private dining rooms with single round tables inside. A few other small restaurants were attached to the street side of the structure, facing the factories opposite.

Everyday practise

The local village woman who owned the BBQ restaurant had re-purposed the former market structure with her own resources and had taken a innovative approach to her business. While her primary motivations were economic, she also intended her restaurant to be a multi-functional space of social interaction in the neighbourhood. By combining the restaurant with entertainment uses, the entrepreneurial woman aimed to create a unique public space in the area, shared by residents from various residential areas, moulding factory workers, and local business owners. Even outside of business hours, the space remained open to the public and several people walked through the structure as a shortcut toward the residential area. Social networks had been key to the woman’s initiative, made possible through the negotiation of shared space with other restaurant owners in the complex, and her personal connections with her friend who runs a plant business.
“I have made a lot of effort to make this place special. I got these plants from a good friend of mine who runs a plant business in the area. It was my idea to build the stage over there, so we can invite people to do movie screenings or music performances at night.” [Narrative 1]

*Interface*

A large amount of former village land in the area had been acquired by the government in order to rent to factories. This top-down physical restructuring has resulted in many existing residents being relocated to new urbanised housing developments, as exemplified by the case of the woman. Sitting adjacent to large-scale factories, these new housing developments make up the majority of this southern part of Xifan village. Rather than remaining attached to her previous rural lifestyle, the woman saw an opportunity in her relocation and has capitalised on the financial resources she gained as compensation in order to start a new business. In the context of the ongoing industrialisation of the area and the corresponding influx of workers, the majority of her customers work in the adjacent moulding factories and live in the immediate neighbourhood. Adapting her restaurant’s opening hours to the shifts of the moulding factory workers, her business and everyday life is also shaped by the rhythms of this industrialisation.

*Fig. 37.* Left to right: decorated interior dining hall with private rooms; plants on former market stalls in the yard; the stage and film screening wall. Source: own photos.
Fig. 38. Socio-spatial analysis of the market re-purposed as a BBQ restaurant. Source: own drawing
5.5. Institutional dwelling

5.5.1. The unused cultural hall, Jing’an village

Some of the housing blocks in the elaborately designed new rural housing development had been divided into 3, while others had been combined to create 1 large house. A few of the houses had signs outside offering rental accommodation. The front porches were used extensively, with plant pots, fruit trees, kids’ toys, clothes drying and other household items. Outside some houses, clusters of beans and rice were laid out to dry, and in one case, ducks inside a cage. The neighbourhood cultural hall looked as if it was brand new and not yet in use. The space in front had been designed as a car park, but was instead almost completely covered with large sheets on which rice was being dried. Two boys sitting on the steps of the shaded entrance were laughing and playing. The building was locked aside from a side door that appeared to have been accidentally left open. The only signs of life in the building were a cigarette on the floor and an office room full of dirty glasses and chairs scattered around a screen. [Field Notes Extract 9]

Actor profile

50-55 year-old retired woman, relocated with her husband and son’s family to a new rural housing development. 60 year-old retired man living alone in a brick house extension in the older part of the village.

Material space

Jing’an’s new cultural hall stood along the recently constructed Jinchuan road, a very busy access road to the SMT which severs the village into new and old areas. The 4-storey building was located to the south of the village on the corner of a new rural housing development and adjacent to a large industrial complex. The building’s austere architectural style appeared to represent an assertion of the village collective’s influence on the area. The ground floor consisted of a large reception and waiting area, with small office rooms along both sides, labelled ‘women’s resting room’, ‘men’s resting room’, and a room with equipment for natural disasters. An exhibition about the village was displayed on the walls. On the 1st floor was a room with rows of wooden benches facing a small stage. The walls of the adjacent library space were covered with images and information about distinguished villagers, the village committee, and the village history, agricultural production and crafts. On the 2nd floor were a series of office and meeting rooms, most of which appeared unused. The 3rd floor was made up of an expansive conference hall, scattered with village collective leaflets.

Everyday practise

“In the past, if any events happened in the village, they always happened around the temple and the senior centre. We call this area the ‘Hong Kong district’ because it is always so busy and active. It is the real village centre where all the neighbours gather. The new cultural hall in the new housing area is too far away, so we never use it. It is only in that area because the village leader lives nearby...The villagers living in the new area are richer; they have good clothes and expensive cigarettes.” [Interview 11]

From the man’s perspective, the top-down planning of the new cultural hall has disregarded existing social nodes in the village. He also perceives that the old and new areas of the village represent a contrast in lifestyles and socio-economic situations. The residents of the new rural housing development have mostly lost their farming practises and land in the process of development. A limited amount of wild rice farming was still practised in the fields behind the old village, primarily for household use. This contrasts with the images presented in the cultural hall showing extensive wild rice production. Various open spaces in the new formal development have been appropriated by villagers from the older neighbourhood who lack available land, such as the cultural hall car park which was used to dry rice and beans. This suggests the existence of informal agreements between new and old villagers in terms of negotiating the use of space at various times of the day.
“During the day, these areas are used to dry beans and rice in the sun. Nobody uses the space because it is too hot, so this way it can be used for something. It’s not our rice; we don’t have farmland left. Farmers from the older part of the village put it there. In the evening it is collected again, and we can use the area for kids to play or to dance.” [Interview 10]

**Interface**

The new rural housing development was built directly adjacent to factory complexes and worker accommodation, demonstrating the encroachment of the moulding industry into residential areas. The woman’s son and neighbour are moulding workers, and she describes the industry as being famous all over China. From her perspective, industrialisation is perceived as a symbol of progress, while the negative environmental impacts are not a consideration. Outside the cultural hall, planning drawings of 2 new rural housing developments were posted on the village collective information board. Like the SMT access road, the drawings indicated a grid of new roads placed on top of the existing village in a tabula-rasa manner. As a resident of the new rural housing development, the woman expressed appreciation for her upgraded living conditions and an acceptance of developments in the area. For the woman, the new cultural hall was a source of pride. However, though it had been built approximately 3 years ago, it appeared almost entirely unused. On the other hand, the man from the older part of the village expressed a sense of domination by the state. Through land acquisitions, he perceived the village collective was ‘occupying’ and profiting from village farmland, without providing employment support or social assistance.

“They needed to build a new road to the SMT, so they had to rebuild this whole part of our village, including this new area for housing. The government gave us compensation for our land, and we were allowed to decide what style of building we want to have.” [Interview 10]

“In the past, the village had much more space for farmland and housing. Now the government is occupying some of our farmland for new development, using compulsory purchase orders to take the land... The village collective and district government are struggling with debts because of very high spending on construction. Everyone knows they are just earning money from these land sales, and do not care about the villagers’ future. This is corruption.” [Interview 11]

Fig. 39. Left to right: new cultural hall facing the SMT access road; unused reception hall with a display of the village history; farmer’s appropriation of the parking space, and the adjacent new rural housing development. Source: own photos.
Fig. 40. Socio-spatial analysis of the unused cultural hall. Source: own drawing
5.5.2. The shaded public square, Xifan village

Many different people were gathered under the shade of the roof, such as children, mothers, old people, and workers on their lunch breaks. A couple were playing badminton, mothers chatting, children playing, teenagers played basketball and skateboarded, and a couple of people were napping. Observing the scene from across the road, a young woman approached enthusiastically with her baby daughter and a few other shy children. The woman was known by the others sitting on the benches, and proudly showed videos and photos of her daughter playing in the public space on many different occasions. In the group sitting underneath the trees, almost everyone was a migrant from a different place. One young girl studying in Xinqian elementary school was from Guizhou, while an old man from Sichuan explained that he had come to Huangyan because his son works in a local moulding factory. The old man had come to Huangyan to take care of his grandson, who was sitting nearby playing with some Lego. [Field Notes Extract 7]

Actor profile

20-25 year-old migrant housewife and her 2-year old daughter, living with her husband’s parents in a new rural housing development. The family are from Guizhou. She moved to Huangyan 2 years ago to join her husband who has lived in the area since he was 14 years old.

Material space

Located in a central area of Xifan village, a series of institutional structures were situated next to one another in an area undergoing redevelopment. These included a village administration building dealing with migrant housing services, a public toilet, a police station, and a temple. Attached to the temple was a large and elaborately decorated steel canopy structure, shading the main public space in the village. Under the canopy, long rows of benches were lined up on either side, and a large raised stage area was situated toward the back. On one side was an area with basketball nets and a wall with a painted mural. On the other side was a pavilion structure that was under renovation and covered in bamboo scaffolding, facing a small lake. Across the street, in front of the village administration building was a newly-landscaped area consisting of decorative bollards and a series of shaded stone benches under a row of trees.

Everyday practise

The structure appeared to be a key public space in the neighbourhood for a wide variety of people, using the space for play, sports, socialising, resting and people watching. Several elderly people and a group of mothers and children were sitting on the benches in front of the village administration building, watching the scene in the public space. For the young mother, this public space forms a critical part of her everyday life with her daughter and facilitates familiarity among neighbours, which helped her integrate into the local community. Having children, and the presence of other migrant families in the area, have also played an important role. The personal connections and social capital fostered by this type of public space play a significant role in social mobility. As a migrant family, it is unusual to have gained access to a house in the nearby new rural housing development, built for the purpose of rehousing local villagers. The woman explained that this was enabled by her father-in-law’s local connections. This suggests she has gained access to the informal housing market, allowing her to upgrade her living conditions despite restrictions from the village collective.

“Being around the neighbour’s children helped me to get to know people here because they gather all the time around this square. There are a lot of other migrants in the area who come here too... I come here every day with my daughter.” [Interview 5]
“All the important activities in the village happen in the shaded public square. People meet there to dance and do many other things. Sometimes thousands of people will gather there. There used to be a temple next to it, which was a very important place for the villagers. But it is closed now, because it is too small...” [Interview 12]

As part of the ‘institutional quarter’ in the village, the public space is closely overlooked by the village collective and is a physical representation of the state interface. Since the arrival of the SMT and other moulding enterprises in Xifan village, the existing public infrastructure no longer has the capacity to support the growing village population and influx of migrants. Amid the wider vision of urbanisation in the village, the current temple renovations are part of the efforts from the village collective to respond to this growth. The ex-village leader described regular formal events in the public space, organised by the village collective. However, over the 2 years since the woman has lived in the area, she was yet to experience this herself.

Through her husband’s job as a moulding programmer, the woman’s family has a direct link to the SMT. Her husband also has personal experience of the top-down processes of industrial upgrading within his factory which offers him a double salary incentive to undergo training for new moulding skills. However, due to the difficult daily working routine demanded of moulding workers, her husband wishes to return to their hometown to start his own business once enough money has been saved. This demonstrates the typical difficulties faced many moulding enterprises in retaining talent in the long term.

“My husband works in the SMT. He has been learning moulding skills in the factory, and now programming. Compared to other moulding workers, he makes a very large amount of money. He is a very skilled worker and earns over 10,000 RMB per month. His new programming skills will bring him even more, over 20,000 RMB per month. But it’s still difficult as he has to work 24 hour shifts; 24 hours on, 24 hours off.” [Interview 5]
Fig. 42. Socio-spatial analysis of the shaded public square. Source: own drawing
5.5.3. The old community shack, Xingtou village

Several people, mostly elderly, were gathered outside a dilapidated shack-like structure on the corner. One of the men was sitting directly outside the left entrance tending to a shop counter, while a group of men and women were sitting together outside the other entrance. The group was deep in discussion, mostly speaking with a thick local dialect. Across the street, another old man was watching the conversation while sitting on a stool on his porch. Directly next door, a woman was watering her vegetable plot in a shared garden outside a row of houses. The intersection was relatively busy during the early evening, with a farmer cycling past toward the fields and a man around the corner chopping wood on the side of the street. [Field Notes Extract 12]

Actor profile

Several local elderly people over the age of 70 running the village community centre and shop.

Material space

Directly in the geographic centre of Xingtou village, the community centre was situated on the corner of the primary thoroughfare that leads in and out of the village. Two small structures made of timber and corrugated steel sheets had been combined and adapted as the officially recognised village community centre and a local shop. On one side of the building was a simple shop counter selling cigarettes, drinks, and household goods. The other side resembled a living room, with a series of mahjong tables and various chairs scattered inside. To the left of the building was a piece of land shared by several neighbours, with vegetable plots and a series of orange trees. Some of the adjacent 2-3 storey terraced houses had brick extensions or were built around older single-storey timber buildings. These older structures were in a poor state of repair, highlighting the decaying physical environment in parts of the village. The group outside the community centre explained that many old people still left in village are living in poor conditions in these structures; they welcome their demolition and hope for new development.

“Some old people live in those types of small wooden houses. But those very old buildings are all falling apart. Nobody wants to live there. They will be demolished.” [Interview 13]

Everyday practise

Despite the lack of well-maintained public amenities in the village, simple public infrastructure and activities, such as the small-scale selling of household goods, appeared to be enough reason for meeting and gathering. This multi-purpose community ‘shack’ has become an important central node of everyday social interaction in the village, particularly with elderly people. On enquiring about perceived changes in the area, one old man in the group described the village as currently being in a transitional period due to the arrival of the SMT. While the village maintains agricultural production on a smaller scale, and some villagers continue their personal farming habits, the SMT development has resulted in a shift in everyday practises for many residents. The old man described the adaptation tactics of local villagers, in particular landless farmers, in renting out space in their houses for the SMT’s migrant workforce. As a result, he perceives the SMT as being indirectly positive to the village economy.

“It's a very old building, but it's our community centre. This is the centre of the village and we come here every day. People can buy small things here and also play mahjong together...We also often use the space here just outside. Whenever anything happens in the village, this is where everyone gathers.” [Interview 13]

“I still do some farming but only in small vegetable gardens in front of my house. It's mostly just for my own use now. But there are still some larger plots of agricultural land growing over there. Someone specific will come to collect it; they buy it and then sell it in the market. But it's not that much.” [Interview 13]
Interface

On one side of the community structure, 3 detailed plan drawings of the village had been posted and placed in an incorrect order. The village buildings had been coded in red and blue to signify whether or not the structures had been officially approved by the village collective. At the entrance, more papers on the wall presented tables that listed detailed information about every property in the village. It was unclear what the purpose of posting the drawings publicly was, and when asked, the villagers in the group stated they did not know. This demonstrated a lack of awareness among residents of future development plans and their potential impact. It also potentially suggested a communication gap with the village collective or a tokenistic form of top-down engagement. In the group, two men described a direct connection with the SMT within their families, expressing similar concerns regarding the harsh conditions of work in the industry which consume daily life. A woman in the group also described the physical encroachment of industry in the area, stating that sounds of the adjacent factories could be heard from within the village. Another old man perceived that the transformations in the area were not intended for the old villagers’ benefit, and that already existing resources such as finance or personal connections were necessary to access new housing developments or upgraded living conditions.

“My son works just there in the SMT. He is very busy; he mostly just comes home to sleep because he works such long hours...” [Interview 13]

“Some villagers got rich, and they could move to the new housing development. Only if you are rich you can live somewhere like that. For us it is not possible. We will stay here.” [Interview 13]
Fig. 44. Socio-spatial analysis of the old community shack. Source: own drawing
6 Discussion
6.1. Emerging themes

6.1.1. Overview of identified transformation dynamics

Many themes emerging from the fieldwork analysis relate to wider discourses around Chinese rural urbanisation, setting the scene for presenting the findings specific to the research questions. As in other cases, Huangyan’s transformation processes are driven by an unsustainable top-down development tract, through ongoing farmland acquisition to provide profitable development sites. Overall, the interviews revealed that ex-farmers appeared satisfied with compensation payments, and are undergoing drastic increases in wealth and/or living conditions. However, a common concern was that no alternative employment was offered to counteract their loss of livelihood in the long-term. Moreover, villagers’ experiences are highly dependent on the varying governance of village collectives. With their long-established role in driving industrial transformation in the area, the feeling toward migrants among long-time residents appeared positive, wherein they represent progressive development and income opportunities (Interview 12). Furthermore, the interviews identified that despite wide varieties in living arrangements (families dispersed geographically or large extended households), the family unit remains central to the post-rural society. The processes of industrialisation are not only transforming physical space, but also extending into the everyday lives of many people in the area surrounding the SMT. It appeared that the majority of villagers have had their lives impacted by the moulding industry in some way: an immediate family member employed at a local enterprise, a means of informal income in the production line, or losing farmland to the construction of a new factory. Entire villages are heavily reliant on the industry as the renting of land to factories has become a lucrative source of income for village collectives (Interview 12). However, this concentration and over-reliance also puts the local area at risk to industrial decline. While those that have managed to progress to higher-skilled positions have profited highly, one of the major challenges is the struggle of the local unskilled workforce in reaping the benefits of industrial upgrading and automation (Herrle et al 2014, p.151). Some enterprises within the SMT claim to offer up-skilling programs, however it is unclear who this support is accessible to. Thus, it is uncertain how landless farmers or unskilled villagers can adapt to these transformations without already existing resources.

The following sections discuss the empirical findings that relate directly to the research question: How do everyday dwelling practices of villagers interact with top-down rural urbanisation visions in Huangyan-Taizhou?. This chapter attempts to ‘make sense’ (Morse and Field 1996) of the rich, descriptive data generated by the triangulated methodology. Through the thematic analysis of interviews, informal narratives, field notes, and spatial analysis of the selected dwelling profiles, 4 overarching themes and sub-themes were identified:

- Productive dwelling
- Evolving urban-rural identity
- Tolerated informality
- Villagers as pioneers

6.1.2. Productive dwelling

_Economic potential of private dwellings_

New rural housing developments attempt to implement a functionalist form of living which compartmentalises dwelling and productive practises. However, even within regulated environments, these practises remain intertwined as industrial activity creeps into housing. The extra space offered by new developments is highly valued by villagers, for both their additional living space and their potential for new income opportunities, such as household workshops. In some cases (see section 5.3.3), work space is integrated into living spaces such as bedrooms or garages. In others (see section 5.3.1), entire structures designed as private dwellings are re-purposed for productive use. Some opportunistic villagers capitalise on their relocation into more spacious developments, while villagers in older houses construct extensions. Thus, the SMT was considered by many respondents as indirectly positive in terms of the productive potential of household industries.

_Encroachment of industry_

The rapid shift from agricultural to non-agricultural income sources has a profound impact on villagers’ everyday practises. However, when discussing the SMT, the majority of respondents primarily focused on short-
term gains. The long-term environmental impacts of the integration of industry into the everyday environment appears largely overlooked by residents and policymakers alike. However, in terms of its social impacts, a concern raised constantly was the harsh working conditions demanded by the moulding industry. Workers’ everyday lives entirely revolve around long working hours and 24 hour shifts, without time for family and leisure. While some respondents expressed pride in their perception of the area being defined by the moulding industry, others stated difficulties in maintaining their lifestyle as moulding workers in the long term, despite the financial gains.

“Soon the area will change a lot. There will be moulding factories and skyscrapers here. More factories will be built behind my house. I don’t mind if this field becomes a built-up area with factories because there is a park along the river.” [Narrative 3]

**Migrant dwelling typologies**

Migration has been a family strategy for numerous respondents, that often splits the family in different geographic locations. The increase of migrant workers into the Xinqian Street area due to employment opportunities offered by the construction and operation of the SMT is changing the physical spaces in the surrounding villages. Migrants face a range of constraints: the restrictions of the hukou system, low paid work, and lack of affordable housing. The informal rental market which has emerged as a response has generated new dwelling typologies and living arrangements, such as extensions to existing housing, temporary container structures on driveways, or informal subdivisions of new rural housing developments. Furthermore, by introducing their own forms of spatial appropriation, migrants add to the hybrid everyday dwelling practises in the villages.

“My wife and I rent a room in a rural house that has been subdivided. It is a 3 storey house with stairs in the middle, so it can be divided into front and back sections to create 6 rooms to rent out to migrants… All of the people living in the house have to come down to the ground floor to cook as we share the kitchen.” [Interview 6]

**6.1.3. Evolving urban-rural identity**

**Generational lifestyle shifts**

The rapid pace of industrialisation in Xinqian Street is resulting in dramatic lifestyle changes in which perceptions around urban and rural everyday lives differ vastly between villagers of different age groups. While many older generations remain attached to traditional rural practises centred around agricultural production, younger respondents generally appeared to embrace busy urban lifestyles and often struggle to relate to the nostalgia of their older family members or neighbours. Nevertheless, engrained rural identities continue to shape the everyday practises of many villagers. This contradiction is captured by a woman in her 20s in Houyanghuang village’s new rural housing development, and a middle-aged taxi driver from rural Huangyan:

“This is a friend’s plant, and there is also a lot of garlic planted here because my father-in-law really likes to plant vegetables. But I want a nice garden and trees like our neighbours. I don’t like growing vegetables at all, we rarely use it.” [Narrative 6]

“It is much better in rural areas, because of the air, the water and the food. People can grow whatever they want, and even if they don’t grow anything, there is still bamboo growing around to eat… Back when I lived in a rural area, I enjoyed the ‘acquaintance’ society. But it is not like this in my current neighbourhood because people are so busy working all the time.” [Interview 7]

**Appropriation through micro-farming**

Spaces which suggest a persistence of rural identity remained prevalent, in even urbanised villages such as Xifan. While the majority of villages have lost most of their agricultural production, many retain their practise of vegetable growing for household consumption. Farming at a micro-scale was carried out in any available space around housing, industrial workshops, and vacant land (see section 5.4.1). New rural housing developments generally fail to adequately provide space which caters for the everyday activities of rural lifestyles. Despite this, the
now disassociated habitual farming practises from older villagers remain carried out. Farmland appears to be re-appropriated at a micro-scale, where spaces designed for urban lifestyles, such as parking spaces and driveways, are often used for drying rice, vegetable gardens and keeping chickens.

**Loss of rural built heritage**

“There are some 100 year old buildings here. But inside is not very nice; now some toilets are better than this.” [Interview 11]

New rural housing developments typically disregard the typo-morphology of existing village and dwelling layouts. Despite CT rhetoric of promoting local culture, a loss of building heritage was a common feature in the villages. Traditional housing structures, many with ornate decorative features, are left in a dilapidated condition without inclusion in development plans (ZPUPA 2015). Often re-purposed as storage, workshop, kitchen, or rental space, these old structures were generally disregarded, while institutionalised dwelling structures such as temples appeared to hold more value. Another example of this forgotten rural landscape are the water ponds which were formerly integral to daily life in villages, used for drinking water and washing vegetables. Although some ponds are still used for washing clothes, the majority appear contaminated with household and industrial waste. This history is captured in the memory of older generations, as exemplified by a group in Qianyang village:

“The water in the pond used to be so clear. It is 20 meters deep and you could see the bottom... People from this village, and also from other surrounding villages, came to collect drinking water here. They did not wash anything except for a few vegetables, but now it is too dirty...” [Narrative 3]

**6.1.4. Tolerated informality**

**Responding to local needs**

In many villages, the informal economy made up of moulding and textile enterprises is crucial in generating employment that the state fails to provide. Many villagers consider formal land use regulations an unfair constraint, with one respondent expressing frustration at construction restrictions due to the SMT masterplan (Interview 8). Informal extensions or adaptations of existing structures were common, due to a perception that older houses lack space for expanding families. This extended space also enables the informal rental market, providing affordable accommodation to the SMT’s migrant workforce and an alternative income for landless farmers.

“There the government won’t provide any job opportunities. If you want a job you need to find it on your own, but it's easy to find a job because there are many workshops in the village. There are many textile workshops that produce cotton sweaters which they sell on to all provinces in China. These and moulding workshops are very common in the village…” [Interview 9]

**Capitalising on informality**

Due to the significant role played by informality in the functioning of villages and the regional economy, it is a reality tolerated by village collectives. Respondents cited cases of the informal economy being recognised as an opportunity for profit from the top-down, where village collectives formalise illegal workshops, converting them to official village enterprises (Interview 8,11). Many form a part of the moulding production line. In this way, village collectives use informality to manipulate strict land use regulations and legitimise violations for their own gain.

“There are many illegal workshops inside people's houses...The workshop shed next door was constructed illegally but then the village collective bought it and now rents it out as a workshop space.” [Interview 8]

**Unequal agency in negotiations**

Amid a lack of awareness of future development plans, it appeared that residents from new and old village areas often had disparate views on development dynamics. Despite positive accounts from relocated villagers,
multiple residents in older village areas expressed an underlying frustration with authorities, who they perceived were profiting on sales of farmland without consideration of long term impacts (Interview 11). These respondents noted that resources such as personal connections or wealth can enable manipulations of formal planning processes. This can be a key factor in securing the benefits of the SMT, such as socio-economic mobility. This unequal agency also exists for migrants who often lack these networks and are unable to achieve upgrades to living conditions and access to services. However, there were cases where migrants were able to gain leverage in these negotiations through family members with pre-existing local connections (see section 5.5.2).

“This house is big enough for my family because I have combined two houses together. I was only able to do this because of my personal connections... [In the new developments] you could only get a house if you have a close relationship with the officers who conduct the process.” [Interview 8]

6.1.5. Villagers as pioneers

Entrepreneurial villagers

Many cases of innovative socio-spatial appropriation were identified, often driven by an entrepreneurial mindset (see section 5.4.3). Examples include the creative craftsmanship of the private dwelling of a local carpenter, and the elaborately designed workshop of a door manufacturer, mimicking traditional southern Chinese architecture. Creative adaptive reuse of space is perceived as a unique marketing device for the family business. Furthermore, this demonstrates the villager’s adaptive attitude, enabled by his resources. Entrepreneurial villagers did not appear to remain attached to farming practices, and thus are embracing new types of practices in opportunities that emerge from industrialisation and urbanisation processes. Another example is the informal recycling practices identified as an economic incentive in some villages (see section 5.3.2).

“I do not have much formal education but I taught myself different skills like design and carpentry. This architectural feature helps me advertise my business, and stand out in front of competitors... I will have to move in about 5 years or so due to the new developments in the area. But I’ve accepted this. For me it’s not such a big problem because my design was quite simple and cheap to construct, so I can do it again in the next place.” [Interview 2]

Neighbourhood living rooms

In other cases, villagers took on the role of providing neglected public services, using their own resources to re-purpose space to provide a social function in their neighbourhood (see section 5.4.2). Particularly within new rural housing developments, it was common for garages to be used as public living rooms and neighbourhood mahjong halls. In other examples, shared space was created in communal vegetable gardens, or on the street with a temporary structure erected for a neighbourhood birthday party. In the analysis of collective dwelling spaces, simple facilities appeared to be sufficient in creating spaces of social interaction. It was also evident that some institutionalised spaces had been appropriated by villagers to serve their own social purposes. Many village senior centres functioned beyond their intended purpose, becoming a key public space for all types of residents.

“If we want to do any kind of activities, we can go to the senior centre and use it as a community space. People are always suggesting different activities to the manager of the senior centre, like playing mahjong, watching movies, or even just meeting to chat. There is always something going on here.” [Interview 11]

Enabling social capital

The importance of social capital among neighbours was often raised by respondents, who highlighted the their wish of being relocated together. Responding to a lack of effective collective spaces to foster these networks, many villagers took it upon themselves to provide them. The social capital built by these spaces is critical in allowing for informal negotiations between villagers, such as in the case of Jing’an village (see section 5.5.1) where residents from the new and old village areas negotiate the use space at different times of the day. This ability for effective negotiation will be crucial as the area continues its transformation.
Fig. 45. Left to right: **Productive dwelling**: crafting metal hangers on the front porch; entire dwelling as rubber glove workshop; assembling pieces for the moulding production line. **Evolving urban-rural identity**: washing clothes in front of high-rise gated condominiums; ornate balustrade of a dilapidated rural house; leftover spaces for vegetable growing. **Tolerated informality**: 2-storey extension; illegal workshop formalised by village collective; workers' accommodation in a new rural housing development garage. **Villagers as pioneers**: door manufacturer's workshop; mahjong hall in garage; informal electronics recycling. Source: own photos
7 Conclusion
7.1. Concluding remarks

7.1.1. Overview of research outcomes

This thesis employed a multi-scalar approach to understanding local impacts of top-down extended urbanisation programs through theoretical and empirical research. It investigates changing micro-scale socio-spatial dwelling practises within macro-scale rural urbanisation visions, in the context of an ‘ordinary’ city within the Chinese mega-urban coastal corridor. Interrogating the CT, Huangyan-Taizhou’s SMT served as an exemplary case in which to study the experience of transformation in its surrounding villages. The guiding research questions were:

- How do everyday dwelling practices of villagers interact with top-down rural urbanisation visions in Huangyan, Taizhou?
- How are these top-down visions embodied by local actors’ daily lives and local economies?
- What hybrid uses and spatial typologies are generated at the urban-rural interface?
- What potentials exist for villagers to have a larger role in co-constructing urban-rural integration?

Employing a Lefebvrian research approach, the study was structured around an understanding of spatial production consisting of its social (lived experience of dwelling), physical (materialisation of dwelling space), and mental (top-down representations of dwelling) dimensions. To answer the above questions, the inductive socio-spatial analysis enabled the identification of several key findings, summarised through four interconnected themes:

**Productive dwelling:** Despite the functionalist approach to spatial planning and architectural forms of new rural housing developments, the intertwining of dwelling and productive practises continues to define everyday life. The SMT is generating new dwelling typologies in the area which become part of informal production lines or respond to the needs of the migrant workforce. However, the long-term environmental and social impact of the encroachment of industry in this former rural landscape is largely left unaddressed.

**Evolving urban-rural identity:** Profound and rapid lifestyle shifts are taking place in which villagers are transitioning from farmers to industrial workers, landlords and entrepreneurs in a hybrid, industrialising environment. These shifts appear most dramatic when comparing the everyday dwelling practises of different generations. Small-scale farming practises of older villagers remain prevalent, adapting to the changing physical landscapes through their appropriation tactics. However, the decaying rural built heritage is often disregarded by both villagers and policymakers alike.

**Tolerated informality:** Transformation processes have resulted in an informal economy which provides critical access to housing and employment for marginalised groups such as migrants and landless farmers. Despite formalised environments and land use regulations, this takes a physical form in extensions, adaptations, and re-purposing of existing dwelling spaces. Due to the crucial role this informality plays, it is often tolerated, and at times formalised and capitalised on by village collectives. Successful negotiation between various actors may be enabled by access to financial resources or personal networks.

**Villagers as pioneers:** Innovative villagers experiment with wide-ranging socio-spatial dwelling practises in response to opportunities generated by urbanisation processes. In some cases entrepreneurial-minded villagers sought economic gain, in others, it was seen as a necessary intervention in providing neglected public services or social spaces. Institutionalised spaces are often appropriated by villagers who give them functions beyond their intended purpose. The social capital built as a result allows for effective negotiation and kinship between villagers, and fostering it is particularly crucial in this rapidly changing context (Herrle et al 2014, p.29).

7.1.2. Villagers as multi-scalar agents of change

The 6 villages in this study offer snapshots into the various stages of transformation of this productive hinterland, in which their distinctive conditions challenge traditional urban-rural binaries. The research revealed the complexity of actor networks within these processes, where villages become ‘nodes’ in interactions of capital, land and labour (Fokdal and Herrle 2019, p.92; Herrle et al 2014, p.29), demonstrating their significant role in influencing top-down processes of extended urbanisation. The findings have shown how, through their micro-scale socio-spatial dwelling practises, villagers take on various innovative roles as agents of change, with impacts that are scaled up to a regional and even global scale. Returning to the interdependent theoretical scales conceptualised in Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework assists in describing these dynamics:
**Institutional (macro):** at a regional and global scale, moulding industry investment is transforming villages, with their land critical in providing for industrial uses. Villagers are embedded, formally and informally, in trans-local moulding production lines (and others) which generate employment and attract regional labour.

**Collective (meso):** at a city and neighbourhood scale, villagers have created an informal local economy through their productive households and bottom-up provision of local amenities.

**Private (micro):** at a family and individual scale, micro-scale survival tactics of innovative villagers and their evolving urban-rural practises play a crucial role in placemaking and facilitating social capital.

These interactions demonstrate a series of negotiable practises (AlSayyad and Roy 2004) between various scales and actors, returning to Roy’s discussion on informality dynamics in terms of “the unceasing and minute tactics that both govern and negotiate the habitation of space” (Roy 2011, p.8). Similarly, this research has shown how this ‘negotiated urbanism’ generates a distinctive and hybrid form of placemaking in which various actors carve out their own needs, identities and everyday practises. However, these conditions are also particularly vulnerable as they must be “constantly negotiated, re-negotiated and readjusted by reacting to changes in global, national or local conditions” (Fokdal and Herrle 2019, p.90). Furthermore, while some benefit from these conditions, there is unequal agency between actors. With space further fragmenting and a constant need to re-define roles, issues excluded from negotiations - i.e. long-term environmental and social impacts - are left unaddressed (ibid.).

### 7.1.3. Co-producing transformation

Uncovering emerging socio-spatial practises and hybrid urban-rural qualities, this research calls for more inclusive instruments in approaching urban-rural integration. Highlighting the necessity for a localised understanding of extended urbanisation, it demonstrated the potential of platforms for local actors in their leading role in sustainable urban-rural development. However, despite policy efforts, significant structural constraints remain. The complex hukou and dual land system have yet to see genuine reforms that effectively address polarisation between urban and rural areas (Zhao et al 2014, p.42,63). Furthermore, planning structures still follow top-down rationales characterised by urban expansion and market dominance, fuelling the ongoing socio-spatial fragmentation and decaying environmental and cultural landscape. Thus, “the full impact of the new urbanisation process on rural society cannot yet be predicted, but it is expected to be tremendous” (Meyer-Clement 2016, p.115). Only with political will to address deeply embedded power structures can these challenges be genuinely addressed, in China and beyond.
Lessons for China

Responding to the 3 policy conflicts identified in section 4.3.3, a series of recommendations are offered:

Institutional re-adjustments: toward collaborative planning: Sustainable development can only occur as a cooperation between different actors, with a complex understanding of their interrelationships (Zhao et al 2014, p.63). Through unified urban-rural institutional readjustments, the top-down mode of governance should shift toward more transparent and collaborative planning mechanisms. Rather than attempting to capitalise on current dynamics, local governments can take a more proactive role in enabling inclusive local development and decision-making processes, particularly with marginalised groups such as migrants or landless farmers.

Facilitating a diverse local economy: For long-term socio-spatial inclusion, development plans need to address the needs of vulnerable stakeholders and integrate diverse economic activities. Moving beyond industrial concentration, a local economy that supports pioneering villagers can be scaled up through regional networks, for instance through linking everyday practises and local knowledge with innovative industries (i.e. organic farming or rice textiles). For more equitable land acquisition, instruments such as land value taxation can reduce financial incentives for municipal expansion and capture increasing land values (Bruce 2017, p.19), to support the provision of affordable housing and up-skilling of landless farmers, for a more sustainable agriculture-industry transition.

Incremental and context-sensitive approach: To more genuinely address and promote local particularities, the know-how of local actors should be engaged to build on a sense of identity in a rapidly changing environment and promote incremental in-situ development. To protect natural and cultural heritage in rural areas, policy incentive mechanisms can be adopted, such as grants to encourage conservation. New developments must embody a longer-term vision that responds to the ongoing social transformation from rural to urban lifestyles, more effectively facilitating the rhythms of everyday practises and promoting the stability of social capital networks.

Lessons for the global debate

Overcoming urban-rural binaries: planning processes should not be defined by redundant urban-rural administrative boundaries, or concentrate efforts in consolidated urban areas. Instead, issues should be considered holistically within new categories that conceptualise diverse and interdependent territories, and interventions that function at a variety of scales.

Recognising ‘ordinary’ cities: ordinary cities are critical scales and conditions in which to promote integrated urban-rural development, and further research is needed to document and share cases, tools, and strategies for policy-making in regional strategic planning.

Deepening the understanding of complex actor interrelations: the local implementation of global policies (i.e. SDGs) requires interdisciplinary perspectives which must be included within regional policy-making, for a decentralised, actor-centric understanding of urbanisation impacts and to reflect and draw on stakeholder diversity.

7.1.4. Potential further research

In its nature, this an open-ended study which could be built on over time to reach a deeper understanding of the complex and fluid dynamics taking shape on the ground, through several areas of further research:

- A continued study on the socio-spatial transformation dynamics around the SMT to map changes over longer time-frames.
- Conducting more extensive interviews with village collectives and administrations for a deeper understanding into the motivations and means of driving change within the local government, and looking into potentials for co-productive approaches.
- A comparative study on the local impact of CT policy in other cases, in Zhejiang and other provinces.
- A comparative study with other areas developing under the influence of Chinese rural urbanisation visions (within China; within Asia, i.e. in Cambodia and Vietnam; and internationally, i.e. various African cities)
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Fig. 26.

Left to right: growing oranges and vegetables in front of a grid of identical new rural housing blocks; subcontractor's delivery vehicle; gated front porch used for household activities. Source: own photos.

Fig. 27.

Socio-spatial analysis of the productive new rural house. Source: own drawing

Fig. 28.

Left to right: entrance to the migrant family's old rural house; shared back yard with the SMT in sight; playing outside while farmers tend to fields and moulding factory workers return from the SMT. Source: own photos.

Fig. 29.

Socio-spatial analysis of the migrant family's new rural house. Source: own drawing

Fig. 30.

Left to right: 90s rural housing typology; interior of shop with plastic packaging workstation, living room converted to shop storage space and an unused mahjong hall. Source: own photos.

Fig. 31.

Socio-spatial analysis of the multi-functional 90s house. Source: own drawing

Fig. 32.

Left to right: vegetable plots bordered by a row of moulding factories; a portion of the vacant site cleared for construction; adjacent gated condominium complex where the man lives with his extended family. Source: own photos.

Fig. 33.

Socio-spatial analysis of the vegetable garden on the vacant site. Source: own drawing

Fig. 34.

Left to right: playground as a focal meeting point, crossed by moulding workers, farmers and neighbours; the multi-generational household. Source: own photos

Fig. 35.

Socio-spatial analysis of the grandmother's playground. Source: own drawing

Fig. 36.

Left to right: decorated interior dining hall with private rooms; plants on former market stalls in the yard; the stage and film screening wall. Source: own photos.

Fig. 37.

Socio-spatial analysis of the market re-purposed as a BBQ restaurant. Source: own drawing

Fig. 38.

Left to right: new cultural hall facing the SMT access road; unused reception hall with a display of the village history; farmer's appropriation of the parking space, and the adjacent new rural housing development. Source: own photos.

Fig. 39.

Socio-spatial analysis of the unused cultural hall. Source: own drawing

Fig. 40.

Left to right: large canopy shading the public square; benches under trees opposite; children playing while their mothers chat on benches. Source: own photos.

Fig. 41.

Socio-spatial analysis of the shaded public square. Source: own drawing

Fig. 42.

Left to right: detailed listing of village properties posted outside the community centre; old man tending to the shop; the adjacent mahjong hall. Source: own photos

Fig. 43.

Socio-spatial analysis of the old community shack. Source: own drawing

Fig. 44.

Left to right: Productive dwelling: crafting metal hangers on the front porch; entire dwelling as rubber glove workshop; assembling pieces for the moulding production line. Evolving urban-rural identity: washing clothes in front of high-rise gated condominiums; ornate balustrade of a dilapidated rural house; leftover spaces for vegetable growing. Tolerated informality: 2-storey extension; illegal workshop formalised by village collective; workers' accommodation in a new rural housing development garage. Villagers as pioneers: door manufacturer's workshop; mahjong hall in garage; informal electronics recycling. Source: own photos

Fig. 45.

Relating the emerging themes back to the spatial triad to demonstrate their role in the multi-scalar production of dwelling space. Source: own diagram

Fig. 46.
1. Comparative characterisation of villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>General characteristics</th>
<th>Housing typologies</th>
<th>Village type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xifan Village</td>
<td>• Large, complex and diversified. • Engulfed in urban expansion. • Mostly redeveloped into urban blocks, some remaining village structures • Strong and wealthy village collective. • Well developed public amenities and infrastructure • Contaminated ponds. • High income from land rented to factories. • Broad range of economic activity: commercial and industrial • High proportion of migrants and workers seeking proximity to factories.</td>
<td>• urban apartment blocks • gated high rise condominiums • 3-4 storey new rural housing • 80s, 90s and 00s rural terraced housing • timber traditional rural housing</td>
<td>The urbanized village • Highly urbanized and industrialized. • Part of urban fabric • Highly productive • Slower pace of transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houyanghuang Village</td>
<td>• Highly influenced by Changjua Line road passing through. • Highly commercialized fringe along main road. • Large number of village enterprises • Parity relocated in new rural housing development site • Previously branded as Taobao village • Woollen sweater industry is still active through informal workshops • Entrepreneurial villagers</td>
<td>• 3-4 storey new rural housing • 80s, 90s and 00s rural terraced housing • timber traditional rural housing • container housing</td>
<td>The productive peripheral village • Urbanizing and industrializing periphery • Commercialized fringe road village • Highly productive • Dynamic transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qianyang Village</td>
<td>• Highly influenced by Changjua Line road passing through. • Highly commercialized fringe along main road. • Large number of village enterprises • Partly relocated in new rural housing development site • Previously branded as Taobao village • Woollen sweater industry is still active through informal workshops • Entrepreneurial villagers</td>
<td>• 3-4 storey new rural housing • 80s, 90s and 00s rural terraced housing • timber traditional rural housing • container housing</td>
<td>The commercial road village • Commercialized fringe road village • Entrepreneurial • Moderate transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xingtou Village</td>
<td>• Smaller-scale agricultural production maintained. • Rural character, even though agricultural base has been greatly reduced • Isolated, surrounded by fields. • Mostly undeveloped, stagnant. • Less signs of village collective wealth. • Deteriorating public amenities and housing • Older population, migrants seeking cheap rent. • Small population</td>
<td>• 3-4 storey new rural housing • 80s, 90s and 00s rural terraced housing • timber traditional rural housing • stone traditional rural housing</td>
<td>The rural village • Low impact of urbanization • Isolated village of rural character • Agricultural village • Slower pace of transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiacao Village</td>
<td>• Adjacent to the SMT with direct access bridge • Newly built public amenities • Mixed impressions of number of migrants. • Villagers perceived as relatively wealthy. • No new rural housing development. • Loss of agricultural base. • Farming land sold for SMT site. • Advertisements jobs in the SMT, and for house rental for SMT workers</td>
<td>• 80s, 90s and 00s rural terraced housing • timber traditional rural housing • stone traditional rural housing • container housing</td>
<td>The SMT workers' village • Rental village • Isolated village of rural character • Low levels of production • Dynamic transformation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Jing'an Village  | • Adjacent to the SMT • Expropriation of villagers' land for the SMT access road. • Parity relocated in new rural housing development site • Highly influenced by urban expansion. • Highly commercialized and industrialized fringe along old road. • Loss of strong agricultural base (wild rice stem), searching for new income sources • High number of informal workshops (moulding and woollen sweater) inside households and makeshift industrial structures. • Central water body used to define village, now contaminated and polluted. • Access road segregates new area village development with old village fabric. | • 3-4 storey new rural housing • 80s, 90s and 00s rural terraced housing • timber traditional rural housing • container housing | The informal village • Urbanizing and industrializing periphery • Highly productive • Broad range of informal economic activity • Dynamic transformation.
2. Semi-structured interview guideline

**Personal information**

- Time, location:
- Type of dwelling space:
- Age range, gender:
- Place of origin:
- Family structure:
- Occupation:

**On private dwelling: personal needs**

1. Who lives with you? Has this changed in recent years?
2. Please describe your typical daily routine- where you went, what you did, and why?
3. Where do you go if you want to spend time alone (relax / pray / nap / enjoy nature)?
4. Where do you do household tasks (wash clothes, clean dishes, eat, shopping, gardening/farming)?
5. Can you describe the layout of your house? What is the most well-used space?
6. What are the main issues with the physical structure / layout for you?
7. Have you added any extensions / additions? Are you planning more?
8. Do you like living here? why?
9. What is your favourite space / space with personal significance in the house?
10. Has the SMT had any impact on your daily life? Will you have to move?
11. How would you feel about living in a more urban area?

**On collective dwelling: meeting and exchange**

1. How do you entertain guests or have celebrations?
2. What is your relationship like with your neighbours?
3. Which neighbourhoods/areas (other than yours) do you go to?
4. Do you use space in the neighbourhood for your daily activities?
5. Which spaces in the house or the neighbourhood do you use for socializing?
6. Does your house have outside space (garden, terrace, porch, balcony), how do you use it?
7. What do you think about this area? How has it changed in recent years / since the SMT?
   What was here before the SMT?
8. Which places in the neighbourhood have a personal significance to you? Favourite place?
9. What is the community like in the neighbourhood? Are there any migrants / temporary workers living here?

**On public dwelling: structural constraints and institutional forums**

1. Do you use any spaces in the house for work and/or rent out any space?
2. Do you ever go to the SMT or interact with the workers? Why?
3. Are you a member of any groups (savings, elderly, women groups...)?
4. Do you take part in public celebrations or events?
5. When and by who was your house / building constructed?
6. If you are relocated, what would be your ideal housing type, layout, materials? Where?
7. Are there any places you can discuss concerns or get informed about political / social events?
8. Is the SMT good or bad for the area? What do you feel is its purpose?
9. What is your relationship with the village committee? Are you involved in any discussions about SMT plans or compensation?
10. Which is the most politically / socially / religiously important place or building here

**Key**

- Social - dwelling as practise: social space of everyday life
- Physical - materialization of housing: physical structure and spatial arrangements
- Mental - representations of dwelling: interpretation of the SMT vision
### Overview of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Migrant</th>
<th>Dwelling scale</th>
<th>House Type</th>
<th>Urban - rural scale</th>
<th>Moulding industry link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Qian Yang</td>
<td>Outside the garment workshop</td>
<td>Garment workshop subcontractor</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Qian Yang</td>
<td>Inside his showroom</td>
<td>Owner of the door manufacturing workshop</td>
<td>45 - 50</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>00s 3 storey terrace with adjacent workspace sheds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Xfan</td>
<td>Vacant lot between the factory, middle school and new Inside his living room</td>
<td>Retired grandfarther, ex farmer</td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x (r-u)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>New gated high rise condominium complex with retail on ground floor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Xfan</td>
<td>Manager of moulding company</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>3 storey new relocated village housing block</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Xfan</td>
<td>Village community space</td>
<td>Housewife, mother</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x (u-r)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>3 storey new relocated village housing block</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Xfan to Taizhou Academy</td>
<td>In his taxi</td>
<td>Taxi driver</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x (u-u)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Subdivided new village house</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Xfan to Jianyang Lake</td>
<td>In his taxi</td>
<td>Taxi driver</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x (r-r)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Urban affordable housing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Xia Cao</td>
<td>In his house (tea room, living room, kitchen)</td>
<td>Owner of advertising company, and…?</td>
<td>50 - 55</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Combined 2 storey and 90s rural terraces</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Xia Cao</td>
<td>In her household shop</td>
<td>Shopkeeper, informal worker</td>
<td>50 - 55</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>3 storey 00s detached house with extension</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Jing An</td>
<td>On the street outside their houses</td>
<td>Moulding worker / grandmother</td>
<td>30 - 35 / 50 - 55</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3 storey new relocated village housing block</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Jing An</td>
<td>Outside the senior centre</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>55-60</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Rear extension of 60s 3 storey terrace</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Xfan</td>
<td>On the street outside their shop and house</td>
<td>Retired ex-village leader</td>
<td>75 - 80</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Urban apartment block</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Xingtou</td>
<td>Inside and outside their community centre</td>
<td>Group of retirees</td>
<td>65 - 85</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Unknown (one in a 80s rural terrace)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Xingtou</td>
<td>On the street outside her house</td>
<td>Retired, grandmother</td>
<td>55 - 60</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x (r-r)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Extended traditional stone rural house</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**

- urban - rural scale
  1. most rural
  5. most urban / industrial

- Migrant
  - r-r: Rural to rural
  - r-u: Rural to urban

- Dwelling scale
  - P: Private
  - C: Collective
  - I: Institutional / public
## 4. Inductive thematic analysis: theme clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Meaning unit</th>
<th>Theme cluster</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1</td>
<td>I used to be a farmer but I have now sold all my land. I still grow vegetables and oranges near my house.</td>
<td>Evolving urban-rural identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3</td>
<td>I don't consider myself rich I still do this farm work here just for my family’s daily life. I don’t own this land, I just started using the lot because it was empty and nothing else was happening here</td>
<td>Appropriation through micro-farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4</td>
<td>Some of the older generations in the area still retain the old habit to grow food in these small plots.</td>
<td>Generational lifestyle shifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 10</td>
<td>The villagers from this new neighbourhood don’t farm anymore. In the past, this area was for planting a lot of rice, and now the villagers use it also for planting vegetables and plant orange trees.</td>
<td>Loss of rural building heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 13</td>
<td>I still do farming but only in small plots in front of the house. It’s mostly just for household use now. But there are still some larger plots of agricultural land growing over there. Someone specific will come to collect it; they buy it and then sell it in the market, but it’s not that much.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 8</td>
<td>There were a lot of traditional buildings before, but now they were demolished. I really like traditional buildings and think it’s a shame they are gone. I really want to return to the time where there were still traditional buildings in the area. The temple nearly was built about 100 years ago. I really love the ancient and traditional buildings. When I see one, I must take a photo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 11</td>
<td>Nowadays not so many people do farm work, but in the farmland at the back of the village they plant some wild rice. There is also a lot of vacant land. There are some 100 year old buildings here. But inside is not very nice; now some toilets are better than this.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 6</td>
<td>This is a friend’s plant, and there is also a lot of garlic planted here because my father in-law really likes to plant vegetables. But I want a nice garden and trees like our neighbours. I don’t like growing vegetables at all, we rarely use it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>He lives with his wife and son in Huangyan city. His brother and mother live in the village in the house adjoining his workshop with their dogs.</td>
<td>Productive dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 9</td>
<td>The government won’t provide any job opportunities. If you want a job you need to find it on your own, but it’s easy to find a job because there are many workshops in the village. There are many textile workshops that produce cotton sweaters which they sell on to all provinces in China. There are also quite a few moulding workshops that produce rubber products and are common in the village.</td>
<td>Economic potential of private dwellings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 9</td>
<td>Since the SMT provides so many jobs, there will be many migrant workers coming into the village to rent houses... but she says she doesn’t want to rent her house out, so she gives up this extra income.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 10</td>
<td>Everyone has some personal connection to the moulding industry. Perception that moulding industry defines area. Pride in moulding industry - perception of positive impact. Migrants are key workforce.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 5</td>
<td>Soon the area will change a lot. There will be moulding factories and skyscrapers here. More factories will be built behind my house. Its ok if this field becomes a built-up area with factories because there is a park along the river.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 6</td>
<td>Him and his wife rent a room in a small rural house, that has been subdivided. It is a 3 storey house with stairs in the middle, so it can be divided into front and back to create 6 rooms. The rooms are rented out to migrants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview 7</td>
<td>All of the people living in the house have to come down to the ground floor to cook as we share the kitchen.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Field Notes Extract**

All of the people living in the house have to come down to the ground floor to cook as we share the kitchen. Interview 7

Narrative 1

I have made a lot of effort to make this place special. I got these plants from a good friend of mine who runs a plant nursery. Interview 11

Interview 2

The workshop shed next door was constructed illegally but then the village collective bought it and now rent it out as a small workshop space. Narrative 4

There are some illegal things happening. Owners of houses in the village are renting out rooms for workshop owners. Interview 8

Narrative 5

Soon the area will change a lot. There will be moulding factories and skyscrapers here. More factories will be built behind my house. Its ok if this field becomes a built-up area with factories because there is a park along the river. Interview 10

Interview 10

He works in moulding factory, but not the SMT. He works to the north of the neighbourhood. There are so many moulding factories nearby. Local people always work in the moulding industry. It’s very good - it is the leading industry in the area and is famous in China. Many migrants work in the SMT. Narrative 5

Soon the area will change a lot. There will be moulding factories and skyscrapers here. More factories will be built behind my house. Its ok if this field becomes a built-up area with factories because there is a park along the river. Interview 10

Data source Meaning unit Theme cluster

| Interview 1 | I used to be a farmer but I have now sold all my land. I still grow vegetables and oranges near my house. | Evolving urban-rural identity |
| Interview 3 | I don't consider myself rich I still do this farm work here just for my family’s daily life. I don’t own this land, I just started using the lot because it was empty and nothing else was happening here | Appropriation through micro-farming |
| Interview 4 | Some of the older generations in the area still retain the old habit to grow food in these small plots. | Generational lifestyle shifts |
| Interview 10 | The villagers from this new neighbourhood don’t farm anymore. In the past, this area was for planting a lot of rice, and now the villagers use it also for planting vegetables and plant orange trees. | Loss of rural building heritage |
| Interview 13 | I still do farming but only in small plots in front of the house. It’s mostly just for household use now. But there are still some larger plots of agricultural land growing over there. Someone specific will come to collect it; they buy it and then sell it in the market, but it’s not that much. | |
| Interview 8 | There were a lot of traditional buildings before, but now they were demolished. I really like traditional buildings and think it’s a shame they are gone. I really want to return to the time where there were still traditional buildings in the area. The temple nearly was built about 100 years ago. I really love the ancient and traditional buildings. When I see one, I must take a photo. | |
| Interview 11 | Nowadays not so many people do farm work, but in the farmland at the back of the village they plant some wild rice. There is also a lot of vacant land. There are some 100 year old buildings here. But inside is not very nice; now some toilets are better than this. | |
| Narrative 6 | This is a friend’s plant, and there is also a lot of garlic planted here because my father in-law really likes to plant vegetables. But I want a nice garden and trees like our neighbours. I don’t like growing vegetables at all, we rarely use it | |
| Interview 2 | He lives with his wife and son in Huangyan city. His brother and mother live in the village in the house adjoining his workshop with their dogs. | Productive dwelling |
| Interview 9 | The government won’t provide any job opportunities. If you want a job you need to find it on your own, but it’s easy to find a job because there are many workshops in the village. There are many textile workshops that produce cotton sweaters which they sell on to all provinces in China. These and moulding workshops are very common in the village. | Economic potential of private dwellings |
| Interview 9 | Since the SMT provides so many jobs, there will be many migrant workers coming into the village to rent houses... but she says she doesn’t want to rent her house out, so she gives up this extra income. | |
| Interview 10 | Everyone has some personal connection to the moulding industry. Perception that moulding industry defines area. Pride in moulding industry - perception of positive impact. Migrants are key workforce. | |
| Interview 10 | He works in moulding factory, but not the SMT. He works to the north of the neighbourhood. There are so many moulding factories nearby. Local people always work in the moulding industry. It’s very good - it is the leading industry in the area and is famous in China. Many migrants work in the SMT. Narrative 5

Soon the area will change a lot. There will be moulding factories and skyscrapers here. More factories will be built behind my house. Its ok if this field becomes a built-up area with factories because there is a park along the river. Interview 10

Interview 6

Him and his wife rent a room in a small rural house, that has been subdivided. It is a 3 storey house with stairs in the middle, so it can be divided into front and back to create 6 rooms. The rooms are rented out to migrants. Interview 7

All of the people living in the house have to come down to the ground floor to cook as we share the kitchen. Field Notes Extract 2. We then came across a container in the front yard of a housing block that had advertisements for container housing with their children there, so it has become a playground for the whole village! The neighbours also come to play with their children there, so it has become a playground for the whole village. Interview 3

I used to be a farmer but I have now sold all my land. It’s mostly just for household use now. But there are still some larger plots of agricultural land growing over there. Someone specific will come to collect it; they buy it and then sell it in the market, but it’s not that much. Interview 1

I don’t go to the city, I don’t see the point. I find rural areas to be in a very good condition. This area is so rich and there is a good quality of life here Interview 1

We live together with 2 other relatives from my daughter in law’s side, her older sister and her husband. There 8 people in the one household. Interview 3

It is much better in rural areas, because of the air, the water and the food. People can grow whatever they want, and even if they don’t grow anything, there is still bamboo growing around to eat. Interview 7

Back when I lived in a rural area, I enjoyed the ‘acquaintance’ society. But it is not like this in my current neighbourhood because people are so busy working all the time. Interview 7

Narrative 6

This is a friend’s plant, and there is also a lot of garlic planted here because my father in-law really likes to plant vegetables. But I want a nice garden and trees like our neighbours. I don’t like growing vegetables at all, we rarely use it | |

<p>| Interview 8 | There were a lot of traditional buildings before, but now they were demolished. I really like traditional buildings and think it’s a shame they are gone. I really want to return to the time where there were still traditional buildings in the area. The temple nearly was built about 100 years ago. I really love the ancient and traditional buildings. When I see one, I must take a photo. | |
| Interview 11 | Nowadays not so many people do farm work, but in the farmland at the back of the village they plant some wild rice. There is also a lot of vacant land. There are some 100 year old buildings here. But inside is not very nice; now some toilets are better than this. | |
| Narrative 3 | The water in the pond used to be so clear. Its 20 meters deep and you could see the bottom... People from this village, and also from other surrounding villages, came to collect drinking water here. They did not wash anything except for a few vegetables, but now it is too dirty... | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview 8</td>
<td>There are many illegal workshops inside people’s houses. It is totally illegal. Some are textile workshops and others are moulding workshops, and many of the workers are not living in the village.</td>
<td>Tolerated informality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 8</td>
<td>There are some very unfair policies. For the last 10 years, there has been no permission for any new construction, to build a new house or factories- even if you apply formally. There is no land left for construction land. Around the SMT, only 3 villages have permission for construction land.</td>
<td>Responding to local needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Notes Extract 10</td>
<td>We also passed a variety of different workshop spaces such as for auto repair or bike repair, and in other cases warehouse like spaces that had boxes of packaged goods, in one case plastic toys. There were also quite a few informal additions added to the ground floor of buildings, which seemed to be used as rental housing or extra kitchen space</td>
<td>Responding to local needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 4</td>
<td>There are some illegal things happening. Owners of houses in the village are renting out rooms for workshop owners.</td>
<td>Responding to local needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 8</td>
<td>The workshop shed next door was constructed illegally but then the village collective bought it and now rent it out as a workshop space</td>
<td>Capitalizing on informality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 11</td>
<td>The man’s nephew opened a small wooden textile workshop in a residential building around here. The village leader also runs a wooden textile factory in the village, a very big one.</td>
<td>Capitalizing on informality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 4</td>
<td>Most of my neighbours are the original villagers who used to live on this site. But there are also some people that come from other areas that manage to buy a house here. They have found a way to manipulate the system and get not just a house but also rural residential land plots</td>
<td>Unequal agency in negotiations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 8</td>
<td>This house is big enough for my family because I have combined two houses together. I was only able to do this because of my personal connections. He has two land titles for the two houses….If he only had one house it would not be enough space at all</td>
<td>Unequal agency in negotiations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 8</td>
<td>You could only get a house if you have a close relationship with the officers who conduct this process.</td>
<td>Unequal agency in negotiations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrative 7</td>
<td>I come to my parent’s house every day to look after them and make meals for them. Since I also have to look after my grandson, I take him with me to their house every day.</td>
<td>Pioneering villagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 8</td>
<td>I built the small playground in front of my parents’ house myself so that my grandson could play here. He is here every day because there is nowhere else for him to play in the neighbourhood. The neighbours also come to play with their children there, so it has become a playground for the whole village!</td>
<td>Neighbourhood living rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Notes Extract 2</td>
<td>In a piece of open space behind this building large number of old electrical appliances including old TVs, fridges, computers and other metal material have been stacked, with a man wearing gloves adding more to the pile and sorting them.</td>
<td>Neighbourhood living rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>I do not have much formal education but I taught myself different skills like design and carpentry. This architectural feature helps me advertise my business, and stand out in front of competitors.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial villagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>He will have to move in about 5 years or so due to new developments in the area, but has accepted this. He said for him it’s not such a big problem because his design was quite simple and cheap to construct so he can do it again in the next place.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial villagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Notes Extract 11</td>
<td>There was one house in particular that caught our eye, that was 3 storeys high combined terrace type, and very large, but which looked quite different from the others we had seen. The roof and balconies were in a unique curved style and the house itself was raised as if it was on a hill, with a wild garden and trees in front of it. The door and window details also were unlike any I had seen on other houses. There was a very large shelter for parked cars made out of bamboo.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial villagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 11</td>
<td>If they want to do activities, they go to the senior centre and use it as a community space to play mahjong, watch movies, and chat. He says there are always activities here. To suggest activities, you have to talk to the manager of the senior centre.</td>
<td>Enabling social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 1</td>
<td>I have made a lot of effort to make this place special. I got these plants from a good friend of mine who runs a plant business in the area. It was my idea to build the stage over there, so we can invite people to do movie screenings or music performances at night</td>
<td>Enabling social capital</td>
</tr>
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Inductive thematic analysis: process of identifying emerging themes (sample extracts)

**The urban as a symbol of progress**

- The architectural addition helps me to advertise my business, helps me stand out in front of competitors.

**Progressive mentality - unattached to rural life**

- My baby son also has a plot of land at the back of this village, behind the house, as we still had relaxed activity in comparison to his busy family apartment?

**Land dynamics, Resources to**

- We also own the ground floor too, which we rent out for a retail business.

**How was the baby allowed to own the land?**

- Left-over land? Large amount of land resource. Extra.

**Entreprenuerial drive**

- I used to be a farmer. My son is running a family business, a moulding factory with more than 40 employees. My daughter in law also works in the factory in the finance department.

**Access transformation benefits**

- My wife and I are taking care of family here, helping my son and daughter in law to support their daily life. They are very busy. According to my life experience, I always have to bring up the little ones...

**Generational lifestyle**

- Family unit is split; migration is normal in this family. Role of grandparents to care for grand children. Son and daughter in law lead very busy daily lives in the moulding industry.

**Lack of awareness about developments in the area.**

- We did not transfer our hukou here.

**Rural identity persisting**

- We live together with 2 other relatives from my daughter in law's side, her older sister and her husband. There are 8 people in the household.

**Role of grandparents to care for grand children.**

- What resources allowed for this, as a family of migrants? Informal negotiations, innovative appropriation driven by entrepreneurial / business mindset.

**Preference for urban**

- I don't go to the city; I don't see the point. I find rural areas to be in a very good condition. This area is so rich and there is a good quality of life here.

**Urban as a symbol of progress**

- I am very proud of my grandson who goes to an expensive (70,000 RMB / year) junior high school in Huangyan city.

**Livelihood shift from farming to garment industry.**


**Entreprenuerial drive**

- I do not have much formal education but taught myself different skills like design.

**Pioneering**

- My son in law has a garage and is doing some of the moulding work there. It is important to market it to the customers and get them interested in our product. We are also marketing it through exhibition in the local town.
No intention to settle; determination to return home. Migration as a way of life. No matter what happens, I will not stay here; I want to go back to my home town.

Interview 6

Low expectations, accustomed to short term arrangements. Migration as a way of life. It doesn't matter, as long as it is cheap and clean. Back in Hunan I own two houses. One house in the rural area, and one apartment in the urban area.

Informal household economy, with stairs in the middle so it can be divided into front and back to create 6 rooms. The rooms are rented out to migrants. I pay over 500 RMB / month for rent. Some of the rooms are small but I have the largest room in conditions for migrants.

Urbanizing rural area. Illegal subdivision and renting of rural housing to migrants. Lack of affordable housing and need of income in rural areas. Housing barriers / conditions for migrants.

Informal income sources, Poor. My parents live in Hunan with my daughter who is 8 years old. My wife is here with me in Interview 6.

Entrepreneurial drive, just any small business. Though I earn a lot of money here, I still do not want to stay. Does not consider Huangyan as a home in the long term; maintains strong link with hometown. Envisions a more simple everyday life. No strong attachment to his career / the moulding industry. Entrepreneurial nature. I want to set up my own business back in his hometown. Not in the moulding industry necessarily.

Public open space valued highly, and I come here every day with my daughter. Being around the neighbour's children helped me to get to know people here because they gather all the time around in this square. There are a lot of other migrants in the area who come here too.

Key public space in the neighbourhood for gathering, social interaction and children's play which facilitates familiarity... can help with integration. Easier integration with the presence of families from the same hometown in the neighbourhood.

Industrialization of society, Both of my parents-in-law work in toy factories. My mother-in-law's factory is 30 minutes by electronic motorcycle. Industrialization shapes the lives of the family unit. Life balance in the moulding industry workers. Compared to other moulding workers, my husband makes a large amount of money. My husband works in the SMT. He is learning moulding skills in the factory, and now learning Processes of industrial upgrading; upskilling of workers through training. Innovative practises of unit at core of society.

Migrant parents - second generation migrant? Migration in the family unit. Maintained strong ties with hometown since he was 14. I came here two years ago, but my husband has been here since he was 14 years old. Both me Interview 5.

Unsustainable farm land acquisition, What does industrial upgrading and automation mean for unskilled workers? How will landless farmers access any benefits from this? Impact of industry upgrading, Global - local impacts. Future challenges: how sustainable is the moulding industry in Huangyan? The moulding business is impacted by globalization and the commercial wall between China and the US... As a result, It is very hard to do business here. It's a critical moment; a threat but also an opportunity.

Material possessions as an indicator of relative wealth and lifestyle. Proximity to factories - access transformation benefits, Value of social capital. Supports entire family unit with his salary as a moulding manager, along side financial support from the village collective. Symbol of progress. State interface, The urban as a resource to access transformation benefits. Vertical cultural events planned in the space - how regular are they if after 2 years she is still. There are regular events throughout the year happening in the community space with performance, supports entire family unit with his salary as a moulding manager, along side financial support from the village collective.

For him the new village development embodies progress. Supports the progression of land appropriation, Generational lifestyle change. Appropriation on any available land in an attempt to maintain aspects of previous everyday farming lifestyle. Contrasting with his daily habits. Separates himself from these practises. Farming as an indicator of lifestyle change. Some of the older generations in the area still retain the old habit to grow food in these small plots.

Resources to access transformation benefits, State interface, Generational lifestyle change. Appropriation on any available land in an attempt to maintain aspects of previous everyday farming lifestyle. Contrasting with his daily habits. Separates himself from these practises.

Resources to access transformation benefits, Value of social capital. Supports entire family unit with his salary as a moulding manager, along side financial support from the village collective.

I am very proud and optimistic about this village development. With all these properties already on the land it will be better and better, even though we are now trying to sell a small part of our.

For him the new village development embodies progress. Supports the progression of land appropriation, Generational lifestyle change. Appropriation on any available land in an attempt to maintain aspects of previous everyday farming lifestyle. Contrasting with his daily habits. Separates himself from these practises.
Physical rural heritage

Rural identity persisting, Decaying

Benefits

Highly values historical buildings. Strong connection to village history and identity

Resources to access transformation

There is no affordable housing in the village, but there are some in the urban area. They are designed for people with low income but they are usually given to people with personal networking allows access to housing and services.

Value of social capital, Decaying

There is only one old person living in the house opposite, which was built around 1980. If it is demolished, they will not get a new house. In this case they only get compensated if the house was identified as a dangerous.

Value of social capital

Very positive feeling about the neighbourhood and social network. Old people remain in old buildings,

Contradiction with another respondee

I worked for the cultural hall, and now work in advertising. I am on my way to the city centre, to visit a factory. My... a teacher for a kindergarten, around the Changtan Reservoir area. It is quite far but she goes back and forth every day.

Did he used to work for the village administration? Unclear about his job - he is not forthright. Daughter commutes- no local job for her?

Benefits

fields. Family networks allowing access to employment

Resources to access transformation

My son is not doing well in school in terms of scores. I was thinking that if I can do better, I can continue to study but if not, I can work in the moulding industry and learn from my nephew. I am

Difficult daily life in the moulding industry, work overrides all else. Work-life balance

it's impossible to have these 24 hour shifts; they should be 12 hour shifts.

High skilled position. Training programs to upskill and upgrade workers. Impact of industry upgrading

No, that's much too little (laughing). I earn over 40,000 RMB/month.

Industrialization of society

Everyone has some personal connection the moulding industry. Impact of industry upgrading,

I have a sister who has two children, and one is working in the moulding industry

Leisure time in the evening as part of everyday routine, Appreciation of green space. Public open space valued highly

Me and my wife go to the greenbelt almost every day in the evening to take a walk.

Balance

There I enjoyed the 'acquaintance' society. But it is not like this in my current neighbourhood because people are so busy working all the time.

Values the strong rural social network / social capital. Urban working society - people do not have time for this in their busy daily lives. Work takes over everyday life.

apartment they currently live in to my son, because I think I will not be able to get one myself. My

Contradiction - while he would like to leave, family attachment to local urban area remains.Rural identity persisting

studying here. It is really hard to afford to support two children who are still in education. I find this a huge financial burden.

Migration as a way of life

I prefer my home town but have no choice but to stay in the urban area, because my son is now

No intention to settle in urban area; determination to return home. Despite this, perceived necessity for the urban: better education, jobs etc. Perception that rural lifestyles cannot sustain financial costs of education.

Rural values: clean air / water / food

Importance of self-sufficiency, communal resources. Maintaining strong links to rural daily life and

It is much better in rural areas, because of the air, the water and the food. People can grow whatever they want, and even if they don't grow anything, there is still bamboo growing around to

Industry as a pull factor to the urban area. Generational shift: parents doing industrial work while daughter is at university. Generational lifestyle change

I live with my wife, who works in a factory, and two children. My daughter is studying in Hangzhou

Local migrant: rural - rural. Farming background?Rural identity persisting

What industry brought him to Taizhou? Moulding? Rigid and inflexible daily work routine. Values flexibility

When I first came to Taizhou, I was working in factories. I changed to be a taxi driver because I do
6. Informal narrative extracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative 1, p.6</th>
<th>I have made a lot of effort to make this place special. I got these plants from a good friend of mine who runs a plant business in the area. It was my idea to build the stage over there, so we can invite people to do movie screenings or music performances at night.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xifan 7.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 2, p.9</td>
<td>We own the whole piece of land including these few plots and all these orange trees. These plots got a bit wild as my husband had a stroke earlier in the year and I had to look after him. It will rain soon so we are trying to finish planting these vegetables as soon as possible. Would you like an orange?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qianyang 12.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 3, p.9</td>
<td>The water in the pond used to be so clear. Its 20 meters deep and you could see the bottom... People from this village, and also from other surrounding villages, came to collect drinking water here. They did not wash anything except for a few vegetables, but now it is too dirty...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qianyang 12.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 4, p.17</td>
<td>There are some illegal things happening. Owners of houses in the village are renting out rooms for workshop owners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiacao 19.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 5, p.22</td>
<td>Soon the area will change a lot. There will be moulding factories and skyscrapers here. More factories will be built behind my house. Its ok if this field becomes a built-up area with factories because there is a park along the river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houyanghuang 21.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 6, p.22</td>
<td>This is a friend's plant, and there is also a lot of garlic planted here because my father in law really likes to plant vegetables. But I want a nice garden and trees like our neighbours. I don't like growing vegetables at all, we rarely use it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houyanghuang 21.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 7, p.26</td>
<td>I come to my parent's house every day to look after them and make meals for them. Since I also have to look after my grandson, I take him with me to their house every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xingtou 23.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative 8, p.26</td>
<td>I built the small playground in front of my parents' house myself so that my grandson could play here. He is here every day because there is nowhere else for him to play in the neighbourhood. The neighbours also come to play with their children there, so it has become a playground for the whole village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xingtou 23.10.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7. Field Notes extracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 1, p.1 (Xifan 2.10.19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At the end of the laneway was an opening where an industrial structure and a new rural housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development stood adjacent to one another. The open-industrial structure was colourfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>decorated and looked as if it was being used a restaurant. Though it was around lunch time, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>space was mostly empty aside from a few staff members sitting on plastic stools having their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lunch. Inviting us to come back one evening for dinner, they explained that the structure was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>once a popular farmer’s market in the area, and had recently been converted to a BBQ restaurant by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a local woman living in the new rural housing development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 2, p.4 (Houyanghuang 6.10.19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We then came across a container in the front yard of a housing block that had advertisements for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>container housing units, most likely aimed at migrant workers who temporarily look for cheap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accommodation in the area, as well as for construction workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 3, p.5 (Xingtou 6.10.19)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In a piece of open space behind this building large number of old electrical appliances including</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>old TVs, fridges, computers and other metal material have been stacked, with a man wearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gloves adding more to the pile and sorting them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 4, p.6 (Xifan 7.10.19)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the evening, we returned back to the BBQ restaurant. While the food was being cooked, we sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>outside in the dimly lit yard on one of the round plastic tables. Despite the efforts in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>decoration, we were the only costumers at that time. After serving the food the owner, a well-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dressed middle-aged woman, came to sit with us for some time. She said that the restaurant is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>busiest around 10pm when workers in the nearby moulding factories finish their shifts. She</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>proudly spoke about her restaurant and all the ideas she has for the space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 5, p.8 (Qianyang 12.10.19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the large interior space, there were high piles of fabrics and pieces of woollen sweaters on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the floor around the entire room. The owner of the house said they were primarily sold in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shanghai and Hangzhou. One of the women working said she used to grow oranges before getting a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>job in the textile industry. Toward the back of the house, a man was sleeping on a deck chair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and the door was open to the fields behind. The third floor was being used as a workshop, where</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>there were 5 workstations with sewing machines, and several women and 2 men were assembling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pieces of fabric. A few workers sat on stools sewing the sweaters by hand, saying that for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>particular design details it was not possible to use the machines. An older woman said that her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>son was a programmer for a moulding enterprise. Piles of fabrics were being sorted by a worker in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>one corner of room. Outside, fabrics and sweaters were being thrown out of the third-floor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>window to a driver who was loading them onto the back of his small vehicle</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 6, p.10 (Xifan 13.10.19)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An large vacant site, which at first appeared to be abandoned, stood between two very different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>worlds: the moulding factories lining the busy Jinchuan road, and the newly-built residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and urbanized area on the other side. On closer inspection, the space was serving a purpose to</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>several villagers who had claimed a piece of the land to grow vegetables. One of these people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>was an old man carefully tending to one of the vegetable plots along a dirt access path. From his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appearance, he appeared to be a farmer from a nearby village searching for left-over land to keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>up their daily work. Surprisingly, he explained that he lived with his extended family in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exclusive gated condominium located on the other side of the vacant site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 7, p.11 (Xifan 13.10.19)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many different people were gathered under the shade of the roof, such as children, mothers, old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>people, and workers on their lunch breaks. A couple were playing badminton, mothers chatting,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>children playing, teenagers played basketball and skateboarded, and a couple of people were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>napping. Observing the scene from across the road, a young woman approached enthusiastically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with her baby daughter and a few other shy children. The woman was known by the others sitting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on the benches, and proudly showed videos and photos of her daughter playing in the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>space on many different occasions. In the group sitting underneath the trees, almost everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>was a migrant from a different place. One young girl studying in Xinjian elementary school was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from Guizhou, while an old man from Sichuan explained that he had come to Huangyan because his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>son works in a local moulding factory. The old man had come to Huangyan to take care of his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grandson, who was sitting nearby playing with some Lego</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Notes</th>
<th>Extract 8, p.18 (Xiacao 19.10.19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The products on display on the shelves were sparse and covered in dust. There was a room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>toward the back where 4 mahjong tables were placed in rows, but appeared unused. All around the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>room were various boxes of products, crates of beer and stacks of rice bags. On the desk at the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>front of the shop was a large bag filled with plastic wall mounting pieces and screws. Now and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>again the woman continued grouping them together and packaging them in small plastic bags. She</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>received several phone calls and was having long, animated discussions until her son told her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>she should attend to her costumers. A few friends dropped by the shop to see her. We sat for an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hour on stools eating pomelos, while she continued packing the plastic pieces at her desk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some of the housing blocks in the elaborately designed new rural housing development had been divided into 3, while others had been combined to create 1 large house. A few of the houses had signs outside offering rental accommodation. The front porches were used extensively, with plant pots, fruit trees, kids’ toys, clothes drying and other household items. Outside some houses, clusters of beans and rice were laid out to dry, and in one case, ducks inside a cage. The neighbourhood cultural hall looked as if it was brand new and not yet in use. The space in front had been designed as a car park, but was instead almost completely covered with large sheets on which rice was being dried. Two boys sitting on the steps of the shaded entrance were laughing and playing. The building was locked aside from a side door that appeared to have been accidentally left open. The only signs of life in the building were a cigarette on the floor and an office room full of dirty glasses and chairs scattered around a screen.

Field Notes Extract 10, p.23 (Xifan 22.10.19)
We also passed a variety of different workshop spaces such as for auto repair or bike repair, and in other cases warehouse like spaces that had boxes of packaged goods, in one case plastic toys. There were also quite a few informal additions added to the ground floor of buildings, which seemed to be used as rental housing or extra kitchen space.

Field Notes Extract 11, p.23 (Xifan 22.10.19)
There was one house in particular that caught our eye, that was 3 storeys high combined terrace type, and very large, but which looked quite different from the others we had seen. The roof and balconies were in a unique curved style and the house itself was raised as if it was on a hill, with a wild garden and trees in front of it. The door and window details also were unlike any I had seen on other houses. There was a very large shelter for parked cars made out of bamboo.

Field Notes Extract 12, p.25 (Xingtou 23.10.19)
Several people, mostly elderly, were gathered outside a dilapidated shack-like structure on the corner. One of the men was sitting directly outside the left entrance tending to a shop counter, while a group of men and women sat just outside the other entrance. The group was deep in discussion, mostly speaking with a thick local dialect. Across the street, another old man was watching the conversation while sitting on a stool on his porch. Directly next door, a woman was watering her vegetable plot in a shared garden outside a row of houses. The intersection was relatively busy during the early evening, with a farmer cycling past toward the fields and a man around the corner chopping wood on the side of the street.

Field Notes Extract 13, p.25 (Xingtou 23.10.19)
An older man arrived in an electric mini-truck vehicle with bags of plastic bottles stacked in the open trunk. It was parked next to a series of bins with overflowing rubbish, which had a strong smell. There was also a large amount of construction material lying nearby as a result of the renovations to the adjacent temple. The man entered one of the small houses opposite, and sometime after, a woman and a friendly small baby came out smiling and laughing. While playing with the baby, the grandmother kept trying to stop her playing with some sand on the ground next to the house. A villager passed by who had been farming in the fields behind, and asked the little girl if she would like to pick some vegetables from the field with him. Several factory workers in uniform and hardhats passed by the house as they were returned home from work in the SMT on their motorcycles.

Field Notes Extract 14, p.26 (Xingtou 23.10.19)
In the early evening, several old farmers were out tending to crops. Clusters of orange trees and fields separated one part of the village with another smaller cluster of houses. Some farmers were cycling past on bikes with a small wagon in which they transported crops, materials and tools. In the village playground, two women and some children were sitting next to a swing, a seesaw and a few small chairs. In front of the house, a very old man was sitting by the front door with a zimmerframe, while a woman of a similar age walked nearby to water some plants before sitting down next to him. A large car arrived, and one little boy looked expectantly as his father emerged to greet him. The father’s office-like clothes contrasted with the surrounding village context. He sat down next to the old couple and looked at his smart phone. More and more children appeared out of neighbouring houses to play, while several factory workers walked past from the direction of the SMT and toward a nearby residential building.