

Local Development Models of Urban Villages in Xihu District, Hangzhou, from the Perspective of Planetary Urbanization: An Empirical Interpretation Based on the Three-Dimensional Framework of Spatial Configuration, Everyday Life, and Territorial Regulation

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Abstract: Since the beginning of the 21st century, the theory of planetary urbanization that Neil Brenner of Harvard University and Andy Merrifield have developed has provided a way to study global urbanization with different epistemologies. No longer does it need to be restricted by the old urban-rural divide, so now this theory believes that cities and villages are all connected areas experiencing social and spatial changes without any fixed borders. This idea is very applicable to our country now; there are fewer barriers between cities and the countryside, and capital is spreading outwards. Urban villages have been called the ‘cancer’ of urbanization for a long time. In terms of planetary urbanization, they may be regarded as a local path of urbanization initiated by the rural population. They have served to support the country’s rapid urbanization, maintain social order, promote opening-up and reform, and deepen China’s integration with the world. Based on the redevelopment of urban villages in Xihu District, Hangzhou, this paper will present Brenner’s system of three-dimensional analysis of space, daily life and territorial regulation. Organize the Spatial Differences of the three types of urban villages in Xihu District and study the internal logic of the three differentiated redevelopment paths: demolition and reconstruction in Fangjiafan and Hengqiao; comprehensive improvement combined with the introduction of a financial-services cluster in Baishaquan; and the ongoing 2025 redevelopment of Shuangpu. Based on the above results, although Western planetary urbanization aims to build a “city without an outside” by eliminating the division between cities and the countryside, the local restructuring of Chinese urban villages should be considered in light of Brenner’s system, and the three basic institutional factors in China—collective ownership of land, central-local decentralization, and the agency of rural residents—must be taken into account. Therefore, there will be a change from exclusionary redevelopment to the ‘Inclusive Urban Village Redevelopment 4.0’ proposed by Professor Ye Yumin. A people-oriented way of arranging physical Space should be taken to integrate the daily life of the people and carry out multi-scale innovations in territorial regulation based on relational and network thinking. Only then will the urban-village areas be transformed and regenerated into high-quality ones. Research has promoted the

application of planetary urbanization theory in China and provided practical support for the planning of cities and towns and other links.

Keywords: Planetary urbanization; Urban village redevelopment; Localized model; Xihu District, Hangzhou; Inclusive renewal; Urban design

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1. Introduction: The epistemological turn in urbanization and the tensions of Chinese practice

From the beginning of the 21st century, the changes and spreads of urbanization around the world have become increasingly complex. Planetary urbanization has gradually gained popularity and is now a hot topic of research in Western cities for reshaping our ideas about cities. In the 2015 paper “Towards a New Epistemology of the Urban”, written by Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid, “extended urbanization” was first put forward. They aimed to replace the old agglomeration-diffusion binary method with a continuous-variable method and cover all parts of the rural, suburban, and even protected natural areas in the wide-area study of urbanization. Therefore, there has been much discussion in China. On the one hand, China’s urbanization rate has increased from less than 20% to more than 65% in only forty years; the speed of this growth is outstanding. At the same time, this small-scale urbanization has led to relatively low-quality urbanization, and although the physical distance between urban areas and rural areas is gradually shrinking, serious problems have arisen in the system of social institutions and psychological consciousness.

The Theory of Planetary Urbanization has flaws you just can’t ignore when you try to use it in China. Yao Huasong and other scholars point out that Brenner’s model, if just copied and pasted onto China, misses some key pieces—like the two-tier urban-rural system, collective land ownership, and the complicated back-and-forth between the central and local governments ^[1]. Because of this, Chinese scholars argue that we need to push past planetary urbanization and develop an independent framework tailored for Chinese urban studies. That’s where this study starts. You can’t just use a Western framework without thinking. Still, Planetary Urbanization gives us a three-dimensional approach that helps break down how urban villages are redeveloped in Xihu District. It also shows how you can adapt the model by adding Chinese institutional realities—keeping it relevant and grounded.

Urban villages are a very typical kind of China’s space, and thus serve as a suitable empirical site for research on this issue. The mainstream discourse has long considered them to be the opposite of urbanization. On the other hand, they are also local routes to urbanization where rural residents are the main actors and collective land serves as the material foundation. They have provided hundreds of millions of new urban residents with an affordable way of life in the city and served as a necessary buffer that allowed China to carry out rapid industrialization and urbanization under good social order. Hangzhou is the central city of the southern wing of the Yangtze River Delta and one of the main areas of the digital economy. Urban villages in Xihu District are among the larger in Hangzhou’s main urban area, with about 31,000 households and more than 150,000 residents. The redevelopment of this area will change the view of the West Lake Scenic Area and will also be one of the modernization tasks for megacity governance to address the new dual structure problem. Therefore, this paper investigates: From the general view of planetary urbanization, how

has Xihu District developed a local path for urban-village renovation that aligns with the front-line theory of urbanization around the world but is also in line with the institutional conditions in China? What are the corresponding problems of urban renewal and urban planning in our country?

2. Theoretical foundations: Planetary urbanization and the production of space

To learn about the actual situation in Xihu District, we first need to clarify what we mean by the core theoretical tool in this paper, namely planetary urbanization, and what kind of spatial philosophy it is based on. This is necessary for the school, and it will also provide a solid basis for the following case analysis.

2.1. Brenner's "new trinity"

Brenner's theory is not an idea developed in isolation; it is built upon previous work. It is a modern development of Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* ^[2]. In short, the main propositions are a new concept, a new mechanism, and new analysis directions.

2.1.1. A new concept: The urban as a dynamic process rather than an inherent type

The first kind of urban planning usually divides the city into areas that are separated administratively or built. Brenner has changed this idea. In his view, the city should not be regarded as a fixed type of space but rather as many kinds of processes involving changes in society and space. Therefore, the division of urban areas needs to be constantly adjusted with changes in the environment. Today's city structure is the result of previous rounds of capital accumulation and also contains the latent force for new space arrangement. Brenner proposes that the city is a Space without definite borders in a more radical way. In the process of planetary urbanization, the urban-rural dichotomy has lost much of its meaning; most of the surface of the Earth is now an urbanized region, and the differences between regions are primarily due to different degrees of urbanization rather than essential characteristics.

2.1.2. A new mechanism: The interaction of concentrated, extended and differential urbanization

Brenner proposes that the dialectical interaction of concentrated urbanization, extended urbanization and differential urbanization should replace the traditional linear narrative of urban development. Differential Urbanization is to be conducted. Lefebvre drew upon the metaphor of nuclear physics and used the paired processes of implosion and explosion to describe differential urbanization, which are considered the socio-spatial manifestations of capitalist creative destruction. It will create new spaces and promote the organization of society and politics. The three mechanisms have developed unevenly and are thus being renewed continuously as the drive for urbanization on the planet.

2.1.3. New dimensions: Spatial configuration, everyday life, and territorial regulation

Brenner built upon the three sections put forward by Lefebvre in his study of the problem listed above to develop an urban analysis system. The former is included in and mutually constitutes the latter.

Spatial configuration is the material or 'hard' attribute of urbanization. With the development of new parcels, the renewal of older areas, the construction of facilities and other works, as well as changes in the form of land use, are changing commercially and socially. In terms of urban design and architecture, this is equivalent to architectural Design, building-cluster planning, and environmental place-making.

In daily life, it has been pointed out that cities are not only the creations of architects and planners but are continuously rebuilt by the people who live here. Changes in the social structure of urban areas are also caused by people's daily life, such as different ways of commuting, consumption patterns, etc. Therefore, the Urban Environment and Governance are also changed. Urbanization without regard for daily life will result in spatial alienation.

Territorial regulation is the direction of governance at all levels, such as the direction of global capital flow and national strategy, regional coordination, and local community governance. Regulations determine the allocation of resources in space reorganization and establish institutional limits on the daily life of the people.

The three-dimensional framework will be employed as the primary analysis instrument for the Xihu District cases and will be applied in all sections of this paper.

2.2. Theoretical origins in Lefebvre's production of space

Brenner's idea has been influenced by Lefebvre for a long time. Lefebvre believed that Space is not an indifferent Stage for the progress of society but is instead produced by society ^[2]. He put forward the well-known spatial triad of spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces. Government planning drawings are representations of Space in urban-rural renewal, and self-built houses and scenes of life in streets and alleys are representational Spaces that, with their interactions and conflicts, form Spatial Practices. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no genuine rejuvenation of the physical economy, only a change in the allocation of power and capital.

3. The Chinese context: The urban-rural dual structure and the institutional origins of urban villages

Before applying the theory of Western planetary urbanization to China, we need to understand the specific conditions of Chinese urbanization. This is because of the special conditions of the institutional history and, more specifically, the prolonged existence of the urban-rural dual system.

3.1. Historical trajectory: From "localized industrialization" to autonomous urbanization

Marx mentioned in the Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy that modern history is characterized by the urbanization of the countryside, not the ruralization of the city, as was the case in antiquity ^[3]. Lefebvre believed that the development of capitalism was also an industrialized form of urbanization. Modernization in China was not the same as that in other parts of the world.

Under the Mao era, China focused on building an industrialized society and reduced people's consumption by controlling it, neglecting urbanization. Mao put forward the idea of localized industrialization: rather than having the rural population flow to the cities for work, industry should be developed in the countryside so that peasants can work there ^[4]. Fei Xiaotong's ideas about a large population, limited land, and the organization of labor and resources were also in line with this. Although this path of industrialization did not have corresponding urbanization, it

After the 1990s, with the rise of post-Fordism around the world and domestic reform of state-owned enterprises and worker layoffs, a large number of people moved from rural areas to cities. Unlike in the classical period, China's dual system of household registration and collective land ownership did not grant

migrants full urban citizenship immediately, and they still held homestead and collective-land rights in their original villages. Institutions have given the people of rural areas some power over their own urbanization. Instead of being absorbed by the city passively, they took part in the construction of new cities. The edge-adjacent factories in the Pearl River Delta and the village-enterprise and rental-housing economies in the Yangtze River Delta are typical cases of such agency ^[5]. Many urban villages in the area of Xihu District established township and village enterprises after the introduction of the Household Responsibility System in 1978, and quickly changed to service industries at the beginning of the 21st century. The Space of these people's homes shows the effects of self-built rental houses in autonomous rural investment.

3.2. Urban villages as a Chinese form of differential urbanization

Ebenezer Howard's three-magnets diagram in "Garden Cities of To-Morrow" proposed that the problem of urban-rural division could be solved by means of original urban planning ^[6]. The specificity of Chinese urban villages is that they are not idealized urban-rural hybrids but semi-urbanized areas under an institutional in-between state. Local villagers have been statistically reclassified as urban residents but still retain rural social customs and identity. Migrant tenants live in the city but are still excluded from some parts of the urban public service system institutionally. Both groups live in collective land and have formed their own social ecology together.

Ye Yumin and others have referred to it as a "new dual structure" ^[7]. There is a division between the developed areas of the central city and the marginalized areas in the suburbs, and also a separation among local urban residents with full urban rights and migrants who do not enjoy these rights. Urban villages are the space for the disadvantaged pole, and they often have the characteristics of 'three lows and two highs': low land-use efficiency, low industrial and technological level, and low resident income; at the same time, there are high crime rates and a large number of unauthorized constructions. Non-hukou residents make up 36.8% of the permanent urban population and 41.2% of the working-age urban population in China ^[8]. Therefore, urban-village redevelopment is not merely a spatial plan or an effort to beautify the city; it is a fundamental social undertaking that aims to develop the human capital and social integration of over two-fifths of the urban labor force.

According to Brenner's theory, differential urbanization in the West is often the result of capital's creative destruction of space and the subsequent social resistance. Due to the institutional environment in China, differential urbanization has formed a new dual structure and local informal housing supply. This structure has created the form of affordable housing for the people, but has also raised the risk of social division. It is therefore the logical beginning of the localization of planetary urbanization theory in China.

4. Empirical study: A typology and redevelopment history of urban villages in Xihu District, Hangzhou

Xihu District is one of the key urban areas in Hangzhou and therefore a typical place for studying urban-village redevelopment. Based on the above theory, this section will introduce some local urban villages and discuss the redevelopment work there.

4.1. Conceptual definition and geographical setting

The urban villages in Xihu District are the residential areas of the planned construction area of Hangzhou

that are still under the rural collective economic shareholding system and have retained village-committee institutions, or those that have been converted into communities without full separation of collective assets. Although these areas have been incorporated into the urban area through construction, they are still rural in terms of land ownership, management system, and social structure.

4.2. Typology based on spatial form and industrial characteristics

Based on field investigation and planning documents, the urban villages in Xihu District can be divided into three typical categories according to their distance from the urban center, the extent of land development, and the main livelihood mode. Therefore, there will be different developments and a more contextual design of the city.

(1) Type I

Fully built villages without the first-tier sector. These villages are in the area of the educational district and Huanglong Commercial Area, such as Huayuan, Gudang, Luojiashuang, and Jiulian. Most of the buildings are four to six floors high and have been built in a way that is close to the urban areas around them. However, due to the lack of coordinated planning and management, there have been uneven-aged constructions, with some “handshake buildings” being built close together and others “slivers of sky” being very narrow. There are no municipal utility connections yet, and the fire-access lane is narrow. Original villagers make up a small proportion of the population, and a large number of migrant workers live in rented houses here. The Space is close to urban standards, but daily life is still very busy and chaotic.

(2) Type II

Mixed villages with a small number of farms. These villages are usually in the areas that will be developed for urbanization in the near future, such as Wulitang, Zhuantang, and Xialongwei. They have the features of an urban-rural fringe; there is a mixed arrangement of single-family homes and low-rise buildings, and no single urban design system has been adopted. Residents have various farmer-worker identities. Some villagers are still involved in agricultural business, but most of the household income comes from non-agricultural work or rent. As the frontiers of urban development, these villages are at the forefront of renewal.

(3) Type III

Peripheral retained villages with considerable agricultural land. Most of the villages are located in the outer areas, such as Shuangpu Town and parts of Liuxia Subdistrict. They still have a relatively large share of agricultural land, have undergone relatively little urbanization, and retain more traditional rural forms. Although they are not the main focus of the redevelopment work at present, they are gradually being affected by the advancing wave of extended urbanization.

4.3. Overall scale and policy evolution

In the past, Xihu District had 91 urban villages, which made up one-third of the total in the main urban area of Hangzhou and housed nearly 31,000 households as well as over 150,000 people. Therefore, it will be a relatively large and complicated system project for the reconstruction. The development of the above is divided into three periods.

The first village-to-community conversion in the early 2000s was an administrative change; the village committee became a residents’ committee, and the villagers were redesignated as urban residents. The usual way of doing so failed to consider the property value of the collective land or the will of the villagers. As

a result, many nominal urban communities were formed in which the formal labels had changed, but the underlying institutional relations had not.

The five-year campaign from 2016 to 2020 was in line with the five-year plan for urban village construction in the main urban area of Hangzhou, and Xihu District started to carry out large-scale demolition work at that time. In 2017, agreements were signed for 42 villages and 12,101 households in one year, and this speed has been referred to as the “Xihu speed”. Although there has been a rapid change in space, social factors have been relatively ignored in this period.

In 2023, in line with the guiding opinions of the State Council, the high-quality development stage of urban village redevelopment in megacities and super-large cities began. Redevelopment has changed its form and is no longer a model of demolition and reconstruction; now, it generally incorporates conservation and improvement, demolition, inclusion, industrialization, long-term management, etc.

4.4. In-depth analysis of typical cases

4.4.1. Fangjiafan and Hengqiao: Demolition and reconstruction in the Zhuantang area

Fangjiafan and Hengqiao are both located in Zhuantang Subdistrict, next to the Xiangshan Campus of the China Academy of Art and the Zhijiang Campus of Zhejiang University. They have good locations and are therefore very close to the area where many culture and education centers are located.

Spatial Arrangement. Relocation in Fangjiafan began in 2009, and by this time, about 270 rural households and seven enterprises had been covered; Hengqiao followed in 2010, adding another 225 households and 12 enterprises. Redevelopment altered the Spatial Form. Low-rise rural housing was demolished and new high-rise apartment buildings, such as Dingbei Jiayuan and Hengqiao Shenheyuan, were built in their place. It is a typical case of concentrated urbanization, and consequently, the land price has risen.

Infrastructure and Services First. The first projects were mainly about selling land; these new ones have added public facilities. With the completion of the Zhijiang Campus of Xuejun Primary School, Shangsi Middle School, and two Zhuantang Kindergarten campuses, educational services have been offered at a level similar to those in the central city. At the same time, the construction was arranged according to the plan for social services.

Regulatory Adjustment. Zhuantang Subdistrict has established a fixed-price relocation system in the territorial regulations. Compensation is based on the policy, and there is no case-by-case negotiation^[9]. At the same time, the size of the household, number of registered residents, and compensation were also released publicly for transparency. On March 31, 2017, 1,432 households in the eight communities signed the relocation agreement in a single day, and 90% of the Party member households had already signed^[10]. By increasing transparency and setting a good example, Party members have reduced transaction costs and shown the modernization of grassroots governance.

4.4.2. Baishaquan: Comprehensive improvement and functional replacement

Baishaquan is in the west of Baoshi Hill, next to the Huanglong commercial area, and it is one of the new areas in the Xihu District’s renovation plan.

Problem Diagnosis. Before the redevelopment, 170 of the 185 buildings in the area were rented houses. There were many small restaurants, small hotels, and late-night food stalls in the neighborhood, and around 5,000 people lived here during the day and worked at night. Due to serious fire safety problems, the local

branch secretary of the Party reported that there were “powder kegs”.

A Non-Demolition Path. Fangjiafan was not all-weather demolition and reconstruction; Baishaquan was not either. Therefore, it chose to improve the whole thing and add functions. The measures taken were to demolish the 35,000 square meters of illegal buildings, carry out façade renovation and improvement of public facilities, and most importantly, change the low-end residential functions into a merger-and-acquisition financial district.

Balancing interests. Mobilization was the biggest problem. Property owners are afraid that the removal of illegal additions will reduce the floor area and rent. Therefore, the government offered a very good guarantee of an annual rental income of 400,000 yuan for the owners. It was much higher than the about 200,000 yuan the owners had made by subdividing and renting out their property. We must reduce the resistance.

Redevelopment Results. After opening in 2017, the Baishaquan M&A Financial District has been building a team of 176 enterprises to manage more than 100 billion yuan of funds. The 185 buildings have been redeveloped in the same cyan-grey, white, and black color system to maintain the original street and alley structure and create an architectural atmosphere. An Area has been set up as a small urban ‘bonsai’ near the Huanglong Commercial District. It is a case of differential urbanization without total demolition; after all the adjustments in space and function, land prices have risen sharply.

4.4.3. Shuangpu Banqiao-Hangjiang: The ongoing 2025 “Demolition plus industry” reset

In September 2025, the new round of redevelopment started in Banqiao and Hangjiang of Shuangpu Town, covering about 700 households. In accordance with the latest practice of the new State Council policy, it points to the future direction of urban-village transformation.

Plan first. The two previous rounds had already established the land-use purposes before the start of relocation. The land will be used to construct the Zhijiang Science and Technology Innovation City High-Tech Industrial Park and two senior high schools. Industrial Introduction was therefore placed before Spatial Reconstruction.

Transfer of cleared and serviced land. The model avoids the vacancy and inefficient use that often resulted from demolition before planning. By ensuring that land is cleared and serviced before transfer, industrial projects can be implemented rapidly.

A New Form of Inclusive Urban Village Redevelopment 4.0. In line with Ye Yumin’s idea of inclusive urban village redevelopment 4.0, this approach is to plan scientifically and develop through industry leadership, involving all sectors of society. In addition to changing the buildings, an organized system for industries will also be established here; it is hoped that excellent young people will be drawn to settle and work in high-tech fields.

5. Theoretical reconstruction: Extracting a localized model in the context of planetary urbanization

The three case studies show us how the theory of Western planetary urbanization has been altered and integrated in China. Brenner’s 3D structure will be employed to create a local model of the urban-rural development area of Xihu District.

5.1. Spatial arrangement: Brenner's theory proposes that capital circulation is carried out at the level of space. In China, it should also be in line with the national strategy and social order

The Need for Differentiation. The experience of Xihu District shows that no single redevelopment model is suitable for all. Highly integrated Type I villages can use a combination of demolition and renovation to fix problems with the old facilities and buildings. Transitional Type II villages are suitable for demolition and the start of industrialization, such as Shuangpu. Peripheral Type III villages should focus on all-round development, maintain rural culture, and develop urban agriculture or ecological tourism. The two kinds of plans show that the urban-rural construction work is being done in an organized way.

The Logic of Industry-First Planning. The typical pattern of property development is to obtain land, construct buildings, and sell houses; other industries are added later. Shuangpu model is based on industrial planning and urban renewal for the new economy. It will increase the economy of the country, lower the problem of dormitory towns, and create jobs.

Transmission of Architectural Culture. Baishaquan is also a good model for urban Design. It was not an indiscriminate demolition and rebuilding, but rather a planned design to reorganize all the areas and use an all-Chinese color system of cyan-grey, white, and black. It retained the small scale of streets and alleys but improved the quality of buildings to integrate new urban functions with the charm of old buildings.

5.2. Everyday life: From exclusionary redevelopment to inclusive renewal

This direction has the most novel content in the local model. The Western Plan for Urbanization will probably lead to some people losing their homes because of rising rents. Redevelopment of the urban-rural areas in China is beginning to explore a new road.

Private Rental Housing as a New Kind of Affordable Housing. The first redevelopment was not inclusive. The demolition of each area has led to many cases of displacement for low-income families; they have been forced to live further away and have thus increased their travel expenses, and these displaced families have formed new urban villages outside the city center. Ye Yumin's idea of *minzu fang*, or privately supplied rental housing, is another one. It is the surplus resettlement housing of the villagers that has been added to the affordable rental housing system by way of small-unit, long-term lease. Public rental housing and talent-oriented rental housing together form the three parts of the affordable housing system.

Policy Recommendations. In the future, there may be a quota for private rental houses in the redevelopment agreement of Xihu District. For instance, the first 20 percent of the floor area in each resettlement building will be reserved for the long-term rental of eligible migrant workers. Support services should also meet the living and other needs of new urban residents, such as families with children. Such measures would maintain the essential fine-grained labor and service network of the city, promote social integration among old and new residents, and give practical significance to the idea that cities are built by and for the people ^[11].

Continuity of Daily Life. Baishaquan was successful in part because it altered the local functions without destroying the old social order. Although the number of tenants has changed, the interests of the original residents have been protected, and new financial-sector professionals have found a good place to live. Soft Renovation is for renovation and maintenance.

5.3. Territorial regulation

No longer dominated by administrative authority, there is now negotiation and scaling of territorial regulations among many parties to manage space and daily life.

Innovation in Micro-Level Regulation. Xihu District has gained some grassroots governance experience in the redevelopment. The 16 work teams were divided, and each was in charge of a different house at Baishaquan; Zhuantang had a fixed-price plus full-disclosure system. Therefore, there was less information asymmetry and rent-seeking, and the decision could be made sooner.

Build Multistakeholder Co-governance. At present, the system is still a vertical chain connecting the district government, sub-district offices, and villages. The future direction should be a horizontal governance network of government guidance and multilateral negotiation. Organize tenant meetings to hear the people living here talk before rebuilding. During the redevelopment, a consultation platform should be set up that involves the village collective, villager representatives, new urban residents, market actors, etc., to discuss the selection of functions and compensation. After the redevelopment, the neighborhood co-governance committee will jointly manage the results.

Adjustment of Central-Local Relations. Redevelopment of urban-rural areas is a typical case of central-local cooperation. The central government issues the policy direction, and the local government will formulate the actual measures in accordance with it. As one of the main areas in Hangzhou City, Xihu District is an excellent location for policy experiments. Local experience and experimentation can be used to develop a toolkit of rules that will guide the design of national policies.

5.4 Summary of the Localized Model: Revising Brenner's Framework

Many changes have been made to Brenner's theory of planetary urbanization in the practice of Xihu District, as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Comparison of Western planetary urbanization theory and the localized practice of Xihu District

Dimension	Western planetary urbanization (original framework)	Localized practice in Xihu District (revised framework)
Spatial configuration	Capital-driven unbounded expansion and emphasis on density and agglomeration.	Differentiation of Strategy and Industry-first Planning; Coordination of Efficiency and Equity; Attention to Architectural Culture and Ecological Conservation.
Everyday life	Gentrification and the Spatial Dispersal of the Disadvantaged.	Inclusive Renovation and privately-owned rental houses; Protection of the housing rights of new urban residents; Promotion of social integration and preservation of social networks.
Territorial regulation	The dual Logic of global capital and the state apparatus.	Consultative governance for all sides under the leadership of the Party; Grassroots governance innovation; A community of shared interests among the government, the market, villagers and tenants.
Core logic	A city with no outside; an end to the urban-rural division.	Gradually introduce the urban-rural dual-track structure in line with the actual circumstances and recognize the collective land ownership and the will of the rural population.

6. Discussion and conclusion

According to the theory of planetary urbanization developed by Brenner and Schmid, this paper will examine more than 20 years of urban-village redevelopment in Xihu District, Hangzhou. Based on the above analysis, the following three problems were found.

First, it turns the usual story around. Urban villages have been moved from the negative framing of an antithesis or ‘cancer’ of urbanization and are now considered local manifestations of Chinese differential urbanization. They represent the active participation of Chinese rural areas in urbanization under certain institutional conditions and have played an indispensable role in history.

Second, it is also a theory construction. The three-dimensional framework of spatial configuration, daily life, and territorial regulation was used to classify the three representative redevelopment paths in Xihu District systematically: demolition and reconstruction in Fangjiafan and Hengqiao; comprehensive improvement in Baishaquan; and the ongoing 2025 redevelopment in Shuangpu. The above framework is an analysis system for various practices and has provided some explanations in China.

Thirdly, it has a plan. In accordance with Ye Yumin’s idea of Inclusive Urban Village Redevelopment 4.0, three localized strategies have been put forward in this paper for the actual situation of Xihu District: differentiated redevelopment, inclusion of privately-owned rental housing, and multi-scale regulatory innovation. The above strategies can offer some practical references for urban-rural planning, architectural design, and urban governance to address the serious problems of conservation and renovation, efficiency and fairness, as well as the lack of coordination among departments of the government and the market.

However, the research is not perfect. First, it is only one area. Although the analysis is in detail, it is not extensive. In the future, it will be possible to compare Xihu District with Xian Village in Guangzhou, Dachong Village in Shenzhen, and the urban villages around Zhongguancun in Beijing to test the explanatory scope of a Chinese localization of planetary urbanization. Secondly, with the development of digital technology, rental platforms, ride-hailing, and on-demand delivery services have changed the rhythm of life for ordinary people and adjusted the way space is valued. Research on the digital dimension has not been carried out to this day.

By 2025, from the perspective of history, urban-village redevelopment has gone far beyond the purpose of making cities look good. It is an important work that promotes the development of Chinese modernization. It is to see whether the new dual structure can be established and how to build high-quality human resources for the next stage of development. The experience of Xihu District shows that China should not merely follow the trend of planetary urbanization in the world. It should still have theoretical self-awareness. Only by integrating the theoretical system of the West with China’s original institutional environment can a truly people-oriented path for urban renewal be established. This road is not only for Hangzhou but for all the rapidly urbanizing cities in China.

Disclosure statement

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