



Transformation and Reconstruction of Rural Area through Tourism Urbanization: A Case Study of Simatai Village, Beijing

Linlin Dai¹, Jiaming Fu¹, Xiao Rong², Dong Li¹, Ling Yang¹

¹College of Urban and Environmental Sciences, Peking University, Beijing, China

²Department of Architecture, Shanghai University, Shanghai, China

Corresponding author: Xiao Rong, Department of Architecture, No. 149 Yanchang Road, Shanghai University, Jing'an District, Shanghai, China 200072. Email: xiaorong17@shu.edu.cn

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ABSTRACT

Tourism urbanization has become an important means of urbanization in China. Taking the example of Simatai Village, Beijing, this study used empirical research and morphological typological analysis methods to explore the urbanization process driven by tourism based on the dimensions of physical space, functional space, and social space. It has been identified that: (i) the physical space has been completely reconstructed, and this is reflected in the overall layout, texture, and architectural form; (ii) the functional space has been transformed from a single function to a composite function, and this is reflected in the land use and the function of houses; and (iii) the social space has been transformed as the population is urbanized, and this is reflected in the aspects of population composition, lifestyle and communication mode, and collective organization. Overall, tourism development is an effective way to realize urbanization in rural areas that are on the fringe of cities and have good resources. However, in practice, we must be cautious about the introduction of large-scale external capital and pay particular attention to the marginalized disadvantaged groups and the historical and cultural value of the village.

Keywords: tourism urbanization, spatial transformation, spatial reconstruction, rural vitalization

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1. INTRODUCTION

Urbanization, which is the driving force of social and economic development worldwide, has entered a new stage. The UN statistics report states that by 2035, urbanization across the world will increase by 9% ^[1]. At this stage, urbanization is primarily being seen in developing countries in Asia and Africa, and the process is expected to be fairly fast. In particular, an unprecedented wave of urbanization is being seen in China and the country has been going through a stage of rapid development since the reforms and opening up in 1978 ^[2]. The urbanization rate increased from 17.9% in 1978 to 60.6% in 2019 ^[3], and is attracting much international attention ^[4]. After the introduction of the “The National New Urbanization Plan” in 2014, China began to explore sustainable new urbanization paths ^[5]. It is important for other developing countries to learn from the experience and lessons of China’s urbanization process as this would assist in identifying the path that would be in accordance with their national requirements.

Tourism is an important driving force for China’s urbanization ^[6], especially in areas that have rich tourism resources. Tourism development can promote the transformation of the rural economic model to a small-town economic model, leading to important changes in the village’s economic model, regional landscape, lifestyle, and social structure ^{[7],[8]}. Tourism urbanization can be considered as a type of new model for the country, which is not the same as industrial urbanization. It closely associates tourism development with the urbanization process to ensure integration and support in the industry. Furthermore, it is based on consumption and is therefore a model based on hedonic sales and consumption ^[9]. It has positive and far-reaching significance for in-situ urbanization, as it solves the employment problem of farmers, adjusts the structure of economic development, and promotes regional sustainable development. If tourism activities can be logically guided and the rural landscape can be effectively controlled, it would assist in avoiding problems such as

environmental pollution, waste of arable land, and hollowing out of villages, which are caused by industrial urbanization ^[10]. With the rapid development of China’s tourism industry, especially rural tourism, a number of new practices have been introduced that should be explored. Scientifically guiding the urbanization of rural areas has become an important and realistic demand, and is an important proposition for China’s new urbanization and rural sustainable development ^[11].

There has been much research on tourism urbanization since Mullins first proposed the concept ^[12]. The research horizon has gradually expanded from the city to the countryside, focusing on the impact of urbanization and tourism development on the cultural landscape, community participation, and sustainable development of villages ^{[13],[14]}. Studies have focused on the characteristics, changes, and motivations of this form of urbanization in rural areas ^[15]. Tourism urbanization in rural areas is different from that in urban areas. It begins from the nascent stage, and has brought significant changes to villages particularly in terms of population, land, industrial structure, landscape, and so on. ^[16] Research conducted by Western scholars is based on rural areas in developing countries, such as Mexico and Brazil ^{[17],[18]}. Chinese scholars have categorized the models of tourism urbanization that have been implemented in several rural areas in the country as follows: government or capital-led, community-led, and multi-subject interaction ^[19]. Currently, this is an important matter of concern for the planning and management of the country.

Few studies have analyzed tourism-driven urbanization development models from a micro perspective ^[20]. Furthermore, research regarding the process of village tourism urbanization primarily on physical space, as well as the systematic evolution characteristics of physical space, functional space, and social space, from a comprehensive perspective is lacking. Most research is confined to studying living space, especially the architectural style, public space

transformation, and spatial form optimization. In rural areas, production and ecological space are important components in addition to the living space. However, existing studies lack comprehensive research on living space, production space, and ecological space^[21].

Therefore, this study takes the example of Simatai Village in Beijing suburbs, and uses empirical research and morphological analysis methods to explore the basic characteristics of rural transformation and development driven by tourism, from the perspective of simultaneous and comprehensive analysis of physical space, functional space, and social space. It will provide a sound base for decision-making and a point of reference to identify the most suitable tourism-driven urbanization path for developing countries and for the sustainable development of rural areas.

Simatai has been selected as the case study site based on the following considerations. Simatai village is next to the Simatai Great Wall, which is a scenic location on the outskirts of Beijing. It has natural, historical, and cultural resources and is a typical suburban tourist village driven by tourism. Tourism began in this area in the 1980s, and it has a relatively complete time clue and spatial context, with distinct time and space imprints. Over time, it has transformed from a tiny mountainous village to a new rural

community. The development of this area is not a general evolution, but rather a mutational reconstruction, and the transformation and development are typical and representative. Simatai has adopted different modes, such as spontaneous behavior, community guidance, and capital dominance, at different stages of tourism development. In recent years, capital has been the main driving source of tourism urbanization, which is typical in China.

2. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Case study area

Simatai village is located in Gubeikou Town, Miyun County, Beijing, at the foot of the Simatai Great Wall, and is formed from the Simatai Fort, which was built in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) for guarding the border [Figure 1]. The Simatai region, in this study, includes three different areas as follows: the Simatai old village; Gubei Water Town, which was built on the site of Simatai old village; and the Simatai new village that was rebuilt on Shalingzi Village [Figure 2]. The development of rural tourism in this area can be categorized into three stages as follows: (i) the early embryonic stage in the 1980s and the 1990s, (ii) spontaneous growth stage from 1990 to 2010, and (iii) the organized development stage after 2010.

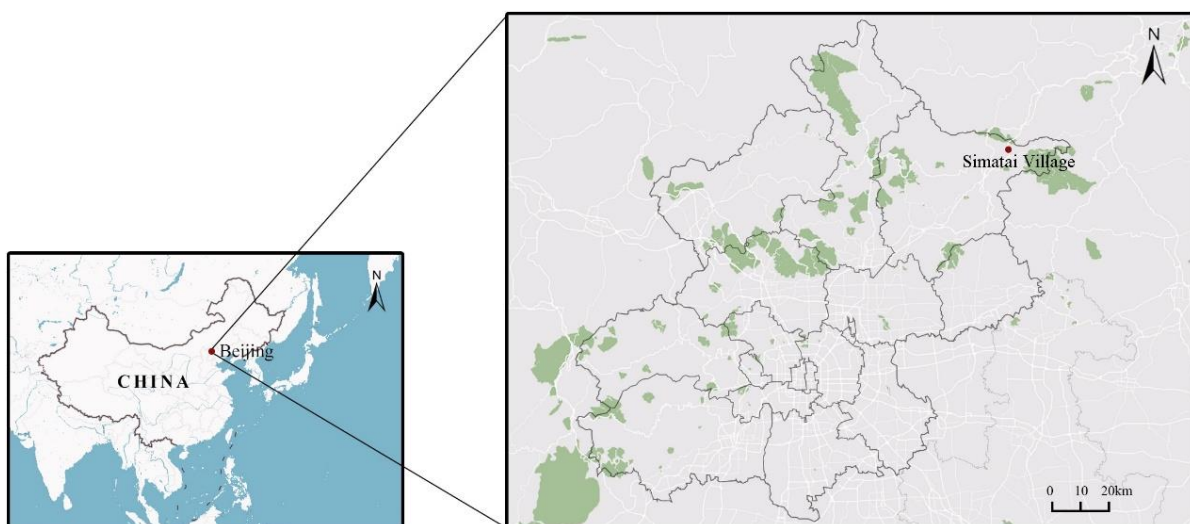


Figure 1. Case study area. Source: Map by the authors

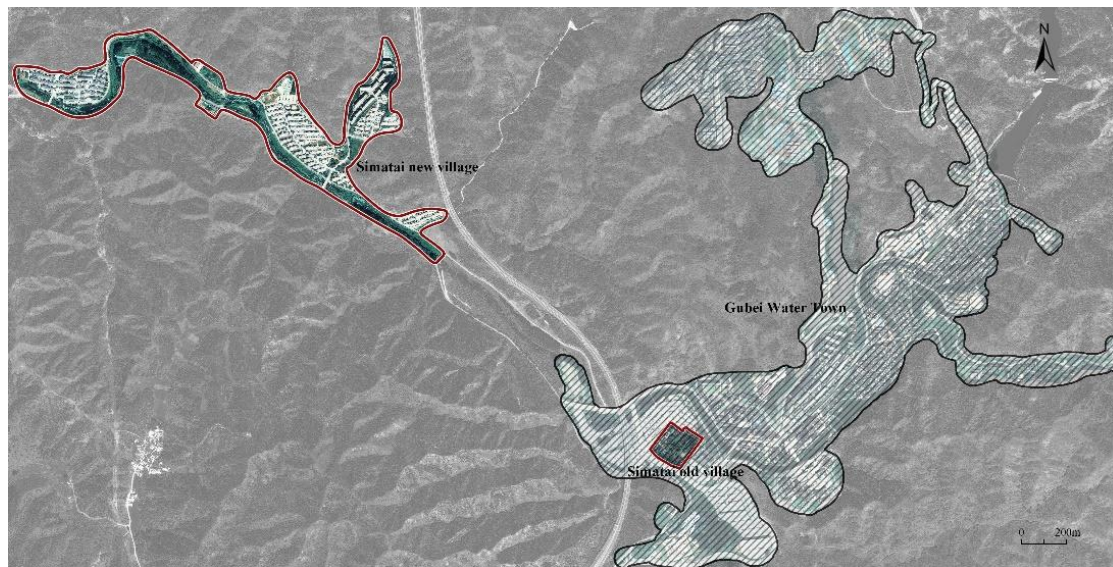


Figure 2. Spatial relationship of Simatai old village, Gubei Water Town and Simatai new village. Source: Based on Google Earth map, 2019

Rural tourism began developing in Simatai Village in 1986, mainly for external backpackers who were interested in the Simatai Great Wall, which has been well-preserved over the years [22]. The Simatai Great Wall was ranked first in the “World’s Most Unmissable Scenery” list released by British Reuters in 2011. At this stage, rural tourism developed sporadically based on the initiative of the villagers. A small number of villagers chose different ways to operate businesses based on their economic situation, family composition, and the location of their residences around the entrance of the Great Wall’s scenic spot or roads. Some offered catering services, others provided hotel accommodation, and some even sold local products at the tourist spots. Farm stays were the most common format of business but were usually small scale and relatively backward in terms of tourist reception facilities and service quality. However, the tourism industry has been a source of income for some of the villagers and has helped in alleviating poverty.

At the beginning of the 20th century, with the increasing popularity of the Simatai scenic spot and the gradual improvement of the facilities, including the completion of the Jingcheng Expressway, the rural tourism industry in the area entered a period of rapid development, and the number of tourists increased significantly. Most villagers began

to consider tourism as their primary source of livelihood, and stopped considering farming or working in cities as their main source of livelihood. The number of family hotels, farm stays, and mobile vendors also grew rapidly. To better communicate with external tourists, the villagers began to learn English, and some of them began to work as tour guides and photographers. The tourist reception facilities and service quality also improved greatly. Some villagers were certified as “Beijing folklore tourist households.” During this period, the local county government began to organize folk tourism cooperatives to guide the spontaneous tourism operations. For example, the folklore tourist households were unified in facility standards, raw materials of food, service standards and prices, and market development. They were also given financial subsidies to decorate, renovate, and upgrade the existing facilities.

Rural tourism in Simatai Village transformed from autonomous to organized operations in 2010. The entire village underwent drastic changes and was relocated by corporate investment. An international tourist resort was built at the original site, and the villagers were moved to a location that is a kilometer away from the original site. A new village was formed with the other villages in the area. Villagers handed over their homestead and contracted agricultural

land to the village collective through land transfer, and the village collective leased the land to the town government. The government transferred the land to enterprises and utilized the money generated to build new houses, which farmers bought at a preferential price. In 2012, all the villagers moved into the new village. The planning and construction of this area was based on the villagers' needs for developing rural tourism, and various types of houses and reserved public reception areas were designed. In 2014, the newly built Gubei Water Town officially opened. During this period, the entire Simatai Village transformed from a primitive traditional village to a new countryside, the original site became a new international tourist resort, and the tourism industry entered a new stage of development. The construction density and intensity of the international tourist resort built on the original village site are much higher than before. The land ownership has changed from the original village collective ownership to state ownership, and then leased to enterprises. Tourism products were improved from original sightseeing tours only to holiday tourism. Most villagers continued to engage in the tourism reception industry in the new village. They continued operating farmhouses or family hotels, and could now engage in tourism reception at the tourist resort. Some villagers even chose to work in the tourist resort and operate farmhouses at the same time. Additionally, the village collective established a special organization to manage the business activities of the villagers uniformly. During this period, the villagers' income, which was primarily generated from tourism, has significantly increased. Their improved social status has established a model that can be followed for Beijing's new countryside construction.

2.2 Data collection and analysis

The research includes field survey data, spatial data, and historical document data. Two field surveys were carried out for the study, from August 21 to 22, 2007, and October 5 to 6, 2018. The survey content included spatial changes, architectural age,

and tourism development history. The spatial data was primarily collated from Google Earth high-definition image maps and local government's survey and mapping data. GIS software has been used to vectorize the drawings, including roads, nodes, boundaries, and main building elements, and these were corrected based on the site surveys. Historical documents were mainly collected from the county and village chronicles. Data were compared and analyzed in a comprehensive manner to ensure completeness and accuracy of information.

This research utilizes morphological analysis methods to analyze the evolution of the village's spatial morphology, including physical space, social space, and functional space. Form, resolution, and time are the three most important components of morphological study. The form of the area can be cognized from four factors: region, city, street or block, and plot ^[23]. Additionally, different morphological periods correspond to different cultural or social periods. The characteristic change in the urban form can reflect the economic and cultural needs of society during the period ^[24]. This study adopts Conzen's ^[25] and Chen et al.'s ^[26] methods to analyze morphological characteristics of Simatai Village as identified during the field survey. It proposes an analytical framework composed of building, plots, roads, and other elements, and analyzes social and economic developments based on changes in morphology.

This research uses the analytical and conceptual cognitive framework of urban morphology to understand the structure, characteristics, and the evolution of village morphology, specifically the transformation from the original traditional village to the new rural community during the reconstruction period. It summarizes the changes in characteristics of the village in terms of building volume, plots, and plot combinations. It identifies the dramatic changes in the morphological types and characteristics of the village, and analyzes the logical relationship between the formation and the changes of

these forms from the perspective of evolution in typology.

3. RECONSTRUCTING OF THE PHYSICAL SPACE

3.1 Overall layout

An assessment of the overall layout of Simatai Village indicates that the developer has divided the aboriginal agricultural production space and living area into a scenic space known as the Gubei Water Town (GWT) and a reception service area known as the Simatai New Village through unified planning, construction, management, and operation. The new village has adopted the spatial organization model of an urban community by relocating and reorganizing

the original scattered natural villages, which were surrounded by mountains and rivers [Figure 3]. Furthermore, a concentrated, large-scale, modern urban community has been built in a valley. In the process of this transformation, all small villages scattered on the hillside were relocated to Shalingzi Village at the foot of the mountain, forming a new community that consists of eight villages in total. The site of the relocated village was replaced with a scenic spot. To ensure that land is available for the development of tourism supporting facilities, the residential area should adopt an intensive development model, and should be laid out along roads and water systems, if possible, based on the topographical characteristics.

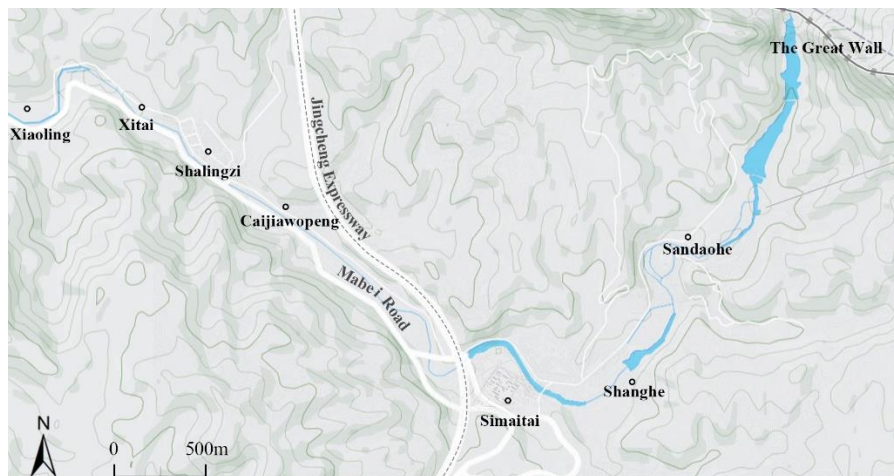


Figure 3. Location of scattered natural villages. Source: Based on China's digital elevation model data

The ownership of the village land also changed during this period. The original land belonged to the village collective, and farmers had corresponding rights to use it. The right to use farmers' residential land and agricultural and forestry land was transferred to the village collective, and then transferred to the town government, through the official land transfer procedure. The town government transferred the right to use to the enterprise through land transfer and lease. In this process, the land was state-owned, and land use rights were transferred from farmers to enterprises. The land of the new village site originally belonged to the collective of Shalingzi Village; however, as the

government requisitioned the collective land of these villages to build a community of eight villages, where the villagers resettled together, individual village collective ownership was transferred to eight villages collective ownership. Farmers were given the right to use this residential land and the property rights of houses, while the rest of the land belonged to the village collective.

3.2 Texture of village

The population of the old village primarily comprised soldiers who guarded the Great Wall. The village was mainly a square that was enclosed by stone walls [Figure 4]. Farmhouses were arranged in rows like

barracks. Courtyards were adjacent to each other, and the internal roads were relatively narrow. There was some vacant land and a few sporadic vegetable plots between farmhouses. As the population grew, vacant land decreased and the number of buildings increased. Gradually, the village expanded outside the walls and a number of new farmhouses were built. These farmhouses adopted a similar plan structure, distributed along the road, but slightly different according to the size of the plot. The new village has a layout with functional divisions, combined with topography and various types of buildings that are divided into different small blocks [Figure 5]. Each block has a row layout. There is enough distance between the buildings to ensure sunshine and it is equipped with public garden [Figure 6]. The road between the buildings in the new village is also wider to ensure that fire trucks can be

accommodated and is paved with asphalt. This indicates that the old village mainly adopted a bottom-up filling and spreading growth method to form the texture of the village, while the new village has a top-down approach and has functional divisions.

In terms of public space, the open space for residents to interact in the old village are mainly located at the intersection of the road and the gate of the wall at the entrance of the village. Gates of the courtyards are also located where farmers usually interact. In the new village, taking into account the needs of tourists, an enlarged public square has been built at the entrance of the village, and a landscape reflecting the rural life is designed to enable tourists to have a better rural experience. It also serves as a place for tourists to gather, disperse, and temporarily park.

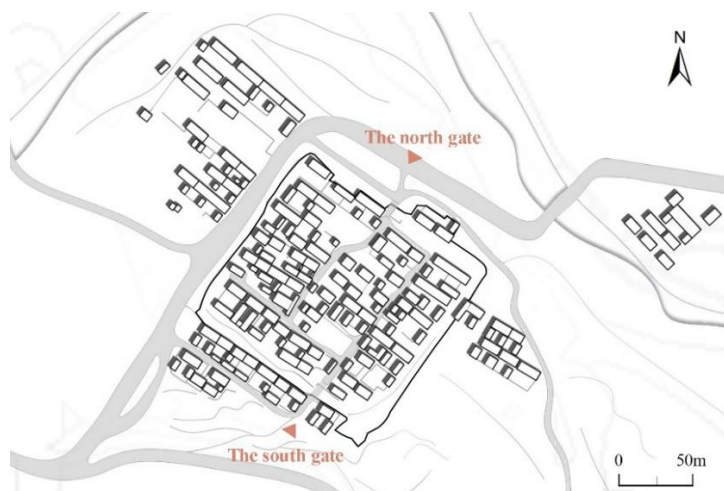


Figure 4. Plan of the old village. Source: Map by the authors

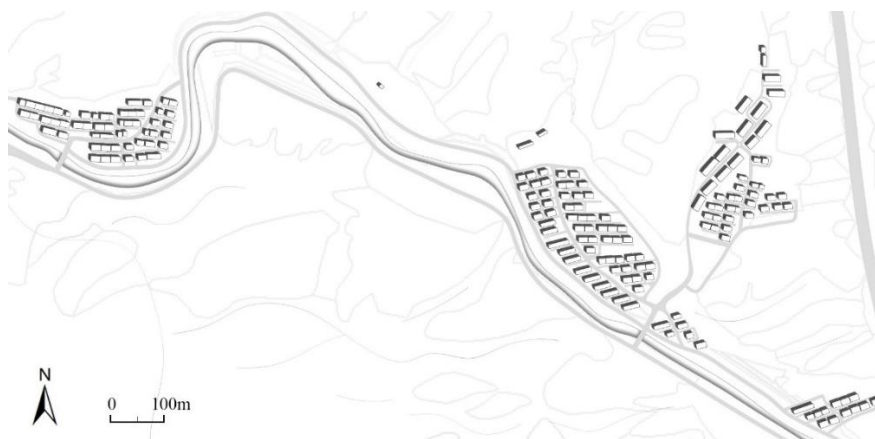


Figure 5. Plan of the new village. Source: Map by the authors

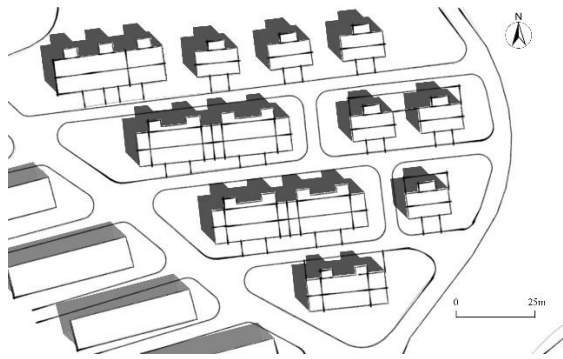


Figure 6. Plan of a block in the new village. Source: Map by the authors

3.3 Architectural form

As compared to the old village, the new village adopts a diversified architectural model. In the old village, the houses were all one-story courtyard buildings and each household had an independent courtyard. It had three main south-facing rooms, with a wing room or kitchen on each side [Figures 7 and 8]. The new village has a variety of

building types, including two types of villas and apartments, to meet the needs of different tourism reception activities, and families of different sizes and economic conditions [Figure 9]. All villas have two floors, and are either detached houses, semi-detached houses, or terraced houses, the size of which are about two hundred square meters. The apartments have six to seven floors, with an area of 60 to 70 sqm in small units, or of more than a hundred square meters in large units.

The new village absorbed the traditional architectural elements of the old village to a certain extent. For example, the original gray tones of the village are used, and the sloped roof form is still maintained. However, in terms of building material and structure, a brick and concrete structure suitable for mass production and rapid construction was adopted, instead of the original adobe, stone, and brick walls, while aluminum windows replaced wooden windows.

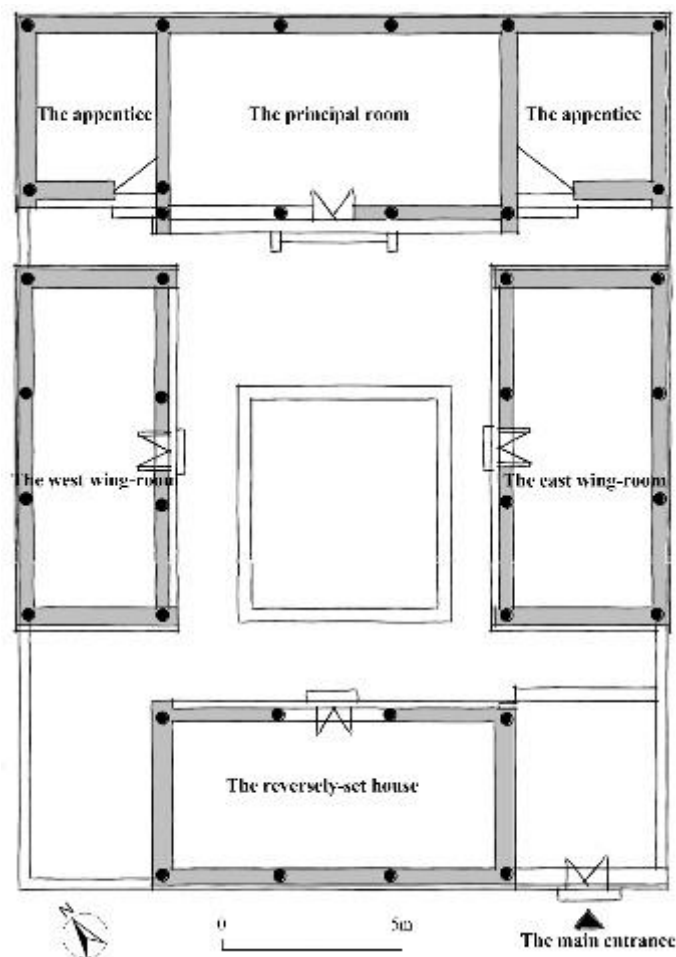


Figure 7. Plan of a courtyard in the old village. Source: Plan by the authors



Figure 8. Architecture in the old village. Source: Photo by the authors, August 21, 2007



Figure 9. Architecture in the new village. Source: Photos by the authors, October 5, 2018

4. TRANSFORMATION OF THE FUNCTIONAL SPACE

4.1 Land use

The overall function of the village construction gradually transformed from a relatively single function, which worked as residences for villagers, to a complex function that offered accommodation, shopping, dining, and entertainment that could meet the varied needs of tourists. The change in land use well demonstrated this transformation.

The original land use included land for construction, agriculture, and forestry. The former offered a living space for villagers, while the latter is the production space for villagers. After the large-scale construction, the land inside or near the village has been converted into commercial service land [Figure 10]. As a part of the business site for developers, the agricultural and forestry land outside the village has also been transformed into parks and landscaped areas, which has also been reported elsewhere^[27].

The popularity and usage of traditional rural spaces, like elementary schools, has reduced, and the tourism reception functions, such as tourist service centers, have gradually increased. The open space at the entrance of the village was originally used for family gatherings, etc. However, this area has become a functional space for exhibitions, festivals, parking, and other tourist activities. The land originally used for agricultural functions, such as irrigation water systems and vegetable plots around the houses, is now used for the purpose of landscape recreational functions. The lands in front and behind the houses is no longer used for agricultural purposes and now reflects an exquisite urban landscape. Small haystacks made of straw are seen in the square, which are in fact high-voltage electric boxes. Streetlights have a square pattern that is similar to traditional residential windows, and store signs have been planned and designed.

4.2 Function of houses

In the old village, the farmhouses were mainly for villagers to live in, the kitchen and toilet of which were relatively of poor condition due to the constraints of municipal infrastructure such as lack of proper sewage. In the new village, the housing has been designed to integrate the tourism reception function with the villagers' residential function. Consequently, a number of suites with attached bathrooms and a relatively large living room with a large, round dining table that can accommodate about 10 people were designed. The first floor is primarily used as a tourist service function, while the second



Figure 10. Land use of the old village and the new village. Source: Map by the authors

floor is the owner's private space. In fact, the non-operating private space accounts for a very small proportion of the entire farmhouse. The old village had a closed inner courtyard, which mainly meet the needs of four generations living together and addressed the agricultural (family breeding and vegetable planting) and residential functions. The new village courtyard is an open space that does not have walls. It can be used as a place for outdoor dining when the weather is good, or as a temporary parking lot. Family courtyards are gradually being replaced by seasonal reception spaces.

In general, the function of the villagers' farmhouses has changed from being a private space to a semi-private or semi-public space, and the residential and tourism service functions have been assembled and grafted. To meet this change, the planning and design of the new village has unified infrastructure such as water supply, drainage, communication, electricity, and gas. The use of air-source heat pumps for heating, solar streetlamps for lighting, and new energy-saving brick bodies and windows supports ecological energy saving and ensures green and healthy lifestyles.

5. TRANSITION OF THE SOCIAL SPACE

5.1 Population composition

The spatial distribution of the population in Simatai Village has also changed with the construction of the new village. In fact, the

population density has increased. The old village was primarily based on agriculture, such as grain or fruit planting, and small-scale animal husbandry. For economic reasons, many young people had to go out of the village to work, which has led to the loss of labor and hollowing of the village. The new village has created the trend of population return; that is, some of the villagers who worked in cities have returned to the village to work in tourism services. Some of these people run farmhouses, while others work in Gubei Water Town. The Water Town provides villagers with coveted job opportunities, such as tour bus drivers, logistics, cleaning, and other grassroots positions, while some villagers also work as managers.

The composition of the population has gradually become more complex, as it has transformed from locals only to "locals + tourists + migrant workers + external investors," similar to other rural tourist villages [28]. During the peak tourist season, due to the substantial increase in the number of tourists, the villagers in the new village often hire nearby villagers or their relatives, which further leads to seasonal density changes in the spatial distribution of the population. This change is synchronized with the changes in the tourist season. On the whole, due to the transfer of agricultural land and the development of tourism, the villagers' occupations have transformed from the agriculture and service industry to a pure

service industry, realizing people's in-place urbanization, transforming them from farmers to community residents and service industry workers.

Subsequently, the composition of social classes has also become more complex than before. Before this urbanization, the villagers' main source of income was from agriculture, and therefore they were at the same social and economic level. With the development of the tourism industry, the income of rural households engaged in tourism reception has greatly improved. Most villagers in the old village did not belong to the low-income class anymore. After the completion of the new village, families with a certain financial foundation could purchase villas, engage in more diverse and large-scale tourism, and could be categorized as a high-income class. An ordinary homestay has a net income of more than 100,000 yuan per year. If 50,000 to 60,000 yuan as salary from the Water Town is added to this, the income of a typical family of three could reach or exceed 200,000 yuan, which is far more than the average income level in other suburban counties in Beijing. Families that have a relatively weak economic foundation could only buy apartments with a relatively small area. Their scale and type of tourism activities is restricted, but they can still be categorized as the middle-income class. Some elderly people lack the ability to independently engage in tourism reception services and lack sufficient economic capability to invest in facilities. Therefore, these people still maintain a relatively low-income level. The overall situation indicates that after the completion of the new village, the per capita income of the residents has increased; however, the income gap has also gradually widened. Villagers who do not engage in tourism are marginalized and have become "bystanders" in the development of tourism.

5.2 Lifestyle and communication mode

Tourism has facilitated the transformation of villagers' lifestyles, and the construction of buildings and facilities in the new village provided the material framework required for

this lifestyle. Modern toilets and kitchens, as well as the improvement of heating, water supply, and gas supply conditions, not only meet the needs of tourists, but also improve the living conditions of the villagers. The traditional way of life in the countryside is gradually changing. The daily schedule of villagers has also changed, as they now sleep late at night to maintain the same schedule as the tourists. Their working hours are mainly limited to weekends, and during the year, they mainly work in the tourist season and play cards or *mahjong* for leisure, and even travel during the off-season. Many residents have bought houses in the town or county and spend the winter there. Additionally, the availability of the internet has also had an impact on their lives. To obtain higher tourism income, villagers promote their farmhouses through photos, videos, etc., and pay attention to the popularity of shops on social media. They even communicate with tourists online. In a way, the internet has become a part of their daily lives.

Changes in the demographic structure have also brought about changes in the mode of interaction as has been seen in many tourist villages ^[29]. People in the old village were connected by blood relationships, and the way of communication was rather natural as the relationship functioned as the link between them while the family or clan was the main body. With the arrival of tourists, commercial relationships have been formed and these have started playing a decisive role. The entry of migrant workers made the mode of communication even more complicated, and informal employment relationships emerged. The arrival of external investors further complicated the social relationships; lease-based relationships were also formed, and the entire village transformed into a heterogeneous society centered on economic interests, from a homogeneous traditional society centered on family relationships.

5.3 Collective organization

Both the new village and old village have village collective organizations, but their original administrative functions have been

transformed into economic organizations and service functions. Unlike ordinary folk villages, all tourism operators in the new village are managed by the tourism cooperative, which is similar to a hotel front desk, in a unified manner. All tourists who visit the village have to first check in at the cooperative, and the cooperative informs tourists about the bed availability in each household. Folk households in the village have unified prices, bedding, menus, personnel clothing, etc. Tourism reception training for the villagers is organized collectively. The entire village is managed in the same way as a hotel-styled resort to improve the overall service level.

Additionally, the reserved residences in the village are integrated, designed, decorated, and operated in accordance with the rural hotel management model. While increasing the village collective income, this also provides demonstrations for villagers. Furthermore, supporting service agencies have also been established, including environmental service teams, party building studios, village and town affairs studios, financial management centers, asset management centers, and property management centers.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Driven by the development of tourism, especially the one-time injection of large-scale external capital around 2012, Simatai Village has transformed from a scattered traditional village with a single residential function to an urban community with agglomerated functions and has adopted functional zoning. Public spaces and landscape design have been customized to serve the needs of tourism services. In terms of architectural form, the style of the old village is maintained in terms of architectural color and roof form. However, considering the needs of tourist services and reception, improvements have been made in the architectural structure, house design, and internal facilities.

The overall function of the village has gradually transformed from pure residential

function to a compound function that meets the needs of tourists. The villagers' houses have also changed from the original private living space to an integrated living space which function as semi-private and semi-public spaces for tourism, and thereby realizing the grafting of the residential and tourism service function.

The population of the village has increased, become more complex and further stratified. The lifestyle of the villagers has directly transformed into being more modern, and the village has changed from a homogenous traditional society centered on family relationships to a heterogeneous society centered on economic interests. New collective economic organizations and supporting service agencies have been established in the new village, and these play a role in guaranteeing and guiding the tourism services and the daily life of the villagers.

Simatai Village has realized the urbanization of land and people through the transformation of physical space, functional space, and social space. This new urbanization path is fairly successful. From the perspective of residents, their living conditions and environment have improved; their income has increased; family members can work and live together. From the perspective of the village, the overall environmental quality and the function of the village have improved, and the income of the village collective organization has increased.

However, this new urbanization path is not perfect. Firstly, the traditional village has been completely replaced. Although attempts have been made to maintain the traditional style to a certain extent through architectural design in the construction of the new village, it is evident that the original village with traditional agricultural landscape cannot be completely reproduced. It should be noted that the villagers did not realize the cultural value of the old village and have adapted to the form of the new village.

Secondly, a segment of marginalized people emerged as a result of the tourism industry. In a village where the leading industry is tourism, the disadvantaged groups

that cannot engage in tourism reception activities and only rely on the government-issued subsistence allowance are more marginalized, and the income gap has become extremely wide. These villagers have lost their original agricultural land and cannot grow their own rations and vegetables. In the new community life, all daily necessities have to be purchased and the cost of living has increased. The original self-sufficient small-scale peasant economy has been destroyed. For this group of people, in addition to the town government and county government, proper care must be provided by the village collective organization.

Thirdly, multiple subjects participate insufficiently in the transformation process. The overall relocation from the old village to the new village is a typical top-down development model. The government and developers grasp the right to speak, play a leading role, strictly control the process of the entire project and the balance of related interests, and often use their administrative authority to directly intervene to obtain benefits, and they are quite powerful^[30]. This is quite different from Western countries, where communities have many choices and can voice their opinion^[31]. In this process, the village collective acts more as the executive agency and helper of the government, and it does not adequately express the interests of the villagers. It is also difficult for individuals to formally express their demands. Therefore, during the relocation, disputes and conflicts between villagers and the government were also observed. After the completion of the new village, the originally scattered villages were combined. The complex population composition led to new challenges, although the new village collective economic organization bridged this gap to a certain extent. However, it is imperative to build a benign autonomous management system with complex functions and to enhance the community identity of diversified residents.

Based on the example of Simatai, it is evident that tourism development is an important way to realize the urbanization of rural areas that have good resources and are

located near cities. Compared to other types of urbanization, tourism urbanization can assist farmers to find jobs in the area that they live, increase family income, promote the development of surrounding areas, and can avoid environmental pollution from economic growth and even improve the rural landscape. However, in the process of specific practice, caution has to be exercised when large-scale external capital is being introduced, and further in-depth research is still needed. On the one hand, the village collectives have to be effectively used in planning, construction, and operation management to fully reflect the demands of the villagers^[32]. While doing so, it is important to consider the interests of disadvantaged groups that are marginalized by tourism and to guarantee that they have the means for sustainable livelihood. On the other hand, professionals should help villagers to understand the historical and cultural values of the village in addition to the economic value. This would help in avoiding the silent loss of these values under the collective neglect of the village's historical and cultural values. In addition, due to the limitations of historical data collection, this article has insufficient precision in the microscopic depiction of spatial transformations and reconstructions. The relevant research conclusions need to be further refined, deepened and verified.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was reported by all authors.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

L.D. conceived idea of the study and wrote the article. X.R. assisted in writing, revised previous draft and the article. D.L. and L.Y. were responsible for the fieldwork and data collection. J.F. was responsible for mapping and other data presentation. L.D., J.F., D.L.,

and L.Y. are members of College of Urban and Environmental Sciences, Peking University. L.D. is an associate professor, supervisor of J.F., who is a graduate student and teacher of D.L. and L.Y.; X.R. is a lecturer of Department of Architecture, Shanghai University.

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