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2011

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A History of Dispossession: Governmentality and the Politics of Property in Nanjing,
1927 - 1979

By

Chung Man Tsui

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Architecture

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Nezar AlSayyad, Chair

Professor Greig Crysler

Professor You-tien Hsing

Fall 2011

A History of Dispossession: Governmentality and the Politics of Property in Nanjing,
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Abstract

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Professor Nezar AlSayyad, Chair

This dissertation aims to provide a history of dispossession in China from 1927 to 1979. It discusses the ways the property politics in the Nationalist and Socialist regimes have shaped the urban development of a Chinese city, Nanjing. Drawing upon the insights of Michel Foucault's governmentality studies, this dissertation tries to make sense of the shifts in relations between knowledge, power, and subjectivity in China's management of urban property, urban spaces, and urban population.

The studied period from 1927 to 1979 marked the transition from sovereignty to governmentality in China. In western liberal societies, this transition was characterized by the limitation of state power and the increasing protection of individual rights. Curiously, in China, the growth and expansion of governmentality was accompanied by massive property dispossession. To examine the co-evolution of modern statehood and modern subjectivity in China, I have identified four dispossession practices adopted or invented during the studied period: eminent domain, slum clearance, socialist transformation, and communization. By studying these practices and the logic that informs them, this dissertation seeks to understand the significant shifts in how logic and objects of government are understood and acted upon, due to changing political rationality in modern China. It argues that the Chinese governmentality and the psychological, biological, sociological, and economic processes that constitute them are property-related. The control of real property has been considered by both the Nationalist Government and the Socialist Government as prerequisite to the production of governable subjects and governable spaces. This dissertation analyzes this property-based governmentality in terms of: (1) how reality of modern China was translated into governmental thoughts leading to the state monopoly of real property, and how these thoughts were rationalized; (2) how thoughts about governing real property were turned into practices, and what technologies and techniques of governments were adopted or invented to achieve these goals; (3) how the government of real property had at the same time rendered

the Chinese population governable; and (4) the production of new governable spaces out of dispossession.

This dissertation concludes that the Nationalist and the Socialist regimes have different political rationalities, which produced two kinds of property politics respectively: “biopolitics” and “biographic politics.” The first, “biopolitics,” concerns the politicization of biological life. Under “biopolitics,” the objective for property-government is to produce a sanitary urban environment so as to maintain the biological welfare of the population. The second one, “biographic politics,” concerns the socio-political biography of individuals. Under “biographic politics,” the objective for property-government is to remove property privileges from the people with particular biographies in the perspective of the state. Corresponding to this shift, city planning and property redistribution were employed in the two political regimes, respectively, as the main technologies of government to manage urban property, urban spaces, and the urban population.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- NTSG *Nanjing tebieshi shizheng gongbao [Administration Report of the Nanjing Special Municipal City]*. September 1927 - September 1928 (vols. 1-20, and an unnumbered volume published prior to the numbered volumes [April-August 1927])
- SSG *Shoudu shizheng gongbao [Administration Report of the Capital]*. October 1928 – September 1931 (vols. 21-91).
- NSG *Nanjing shizhengfu gongbao [Report of the Nanjing Municipal Government]*. September 1931 - June 1937 (vol2. 92-178).

NOTE ON ROMANIZATION

This dissertation employs the pinyin form of Romanization throughout, except in cases of personal names that are familiar in the West. Thus, in the text, Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek are used instead of Sun Yixian and Jiang Jieshi. The Romanization of some personal names follows the form used by the individuals themselves in their published works: examples are Hsiao Tseng for Xiao Zheng, and Thomas Tchou for Zhu Maocheng. In such cases, the pinyin Romanization is provided in parentheses when the name first appears.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my Heavenly Father, from whom all blessings flow. According to His words in *Psalms 75: 6-7*, “No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt themselves. It is God who judges: He brings one down, He exalts another.” I give all the glory and praises for this dissertation to Him. Without God I would be nothing.

I would never have been able to finish my dissertation without the guidance of my committee members. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Nezar AlSayyad, who has supported me throughout my study with his patience and guidance, while allowing me the room to work in my own way. I am fortunate to have worked with Nezar, whose broad knowledge and great passion for teaching I always admire. I am indebted to Greig Crysler for his time, interest, and support. His insightful comments have helped me to define, and refine, my research. I am sincerely grateful to Hsing You-tien, who inspired me to study the politics of property in China. You-tien was always generous whenever I was in need of her help. I am sure this dissertation would have not been possible without her guidance and encouragement.

I would also like to thank the other two members of my qualifying exam committee, Yeh Wen-hsin and Andrew Shanken, for their time and insightful questions. The staff at the College of Environmental Design and the Center for Chinese Studies have helped me tremendously over the course of my study. My heartfelt thanks to Lois Koch for always being helpful to graduate students.

I am very lucky to have many mentors who have unselfishly shared with me their knowledge, life experience, and advice during my study and professional training. I am grateful to Ho Puay Peng, Jeffrey Cody, Tunney Lee, Wallace Chang, Alex Lui, Connie Yuan, Allan Wong, Jeff Kan, and Guymo Wong. I am also thankful for the support and prayer from brothers and sisters in Christ. My gratitude goes to the Shatin Methodist Church, the Berkeley Chinese Community Church, the Hong Kong Emmaus, the Architects and Planners Fellowship, and my Bible study group.

Research, by nature, is a very lonely process. I am lucky enough to have many good friends who always give me unfailing love and encouragement. I have to thank May Ho, Dick Wong, Zenith Lam, Rex Choi, Peg Chan, Jason Cheung, Winnie Fong, Victor Fung, Ko Shan, Gary Yeung, Keith Tam, Bob Shiu, Vinci Leung, Devin Tai, Wilfred Au, Frankie Cheung, Willie Cheng, Yam Chi Keung, Eddie Ng, Vicky Chan and Tam Ka Chai. My time at Berkeley was made enjoyable in large part due to the companionship of Selina Lam, Jeffrey Chan, Jiathwee Chang, Cecilia Chu, Yishi Liu, Jieheerah Yun, Susanne Cowan, Iris Hui, Franklin Wong, and Wong Hiu Yung.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family for their infinite tolerance, patience, and support all along. Although they do not understand the nature of my research, they allow me the freedom to be away from home for so long, and to pursue my dream. I love them from the bottom of my heart.

1

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 DEVELOPMENT AND DISPOSSESSION IN MODERN CHINESE CITIES

1.1.1 The Grievances of Development and Dispossession

Weng Biao, a 39-year-old part-time laborer with a bad leg, could not believe his eyes when he returned home from buying lunch in a nearby market on August 22, 2003. His two-roomed shack at Dengfu Lane, in an old neighborhood at the heart of Nanjing, was razed by the government's demolition office to give way for the construction of a shopping mall. All inhabitants of the neighborhood were asked to evict by August 30, but many of them, including the Wengs, refused to leave because compensation had yet to be settled with the government. Nevertheless, before the deadline arrived, the demolition office decided to take an early action. Demolition workers came in the morning without prior notice, barged into Weng's shack, forced his wife to leave, pushed his father to the floor, and bulldozed the shack. (Fig. 1.01) Having found out what had happened, the angry Weng Biao limped into the demolition office, with a jerrycan of gasoline he brought on the way. He entered into a heated argument with the officers and threatened to set himself on fire. Security guards tried to restrain him, but in the scuffle his lighter was somehow ignited. Both Weng and a guard were seriously burned. Weng died 15 days after the incident. The tragedy was reported widely in Chinese media.¹

¹ Yang, "Nanjing zifen shijian diaocha [Investigation to the Self-Immolation Incident in Nanjing]."



(Source: Yang, "Investigation to the Self-Immolation Incident in Nanjing.")

Fig. 1.01 Dengfu Lane after demolition.

After the death of Weng Biao, similar incidents followed. On September 15, 2003, Zhu Zhengliang set himself on fire in the Tiananmen Square of Beijing in objection to the compulsory requisition of his house. On September 14, 2006, Xie Shulan drank a bottle of pesticide in protest of the inadequate compensation for her house taken for the expansion of the Hunan Agricultural University campus. On September 10, 2010, Luo Zhifeng, Ye Zhongcheng, and Zhong Ruqin from the Fenggang Township of Fuzhou confronted demolition workers who planned to raze their houses for the construction of a bus station. They doused their bodies with gasoline, lighted themselves, and were seriously injured. These tragedies are not rare incidents. Property rows were common in China over the course of the 20th century and have continued to be a major conflict between the State and the people today; the Chinese people have been nursing a grievance they have no way to air other than committing in desperate, violent protests.

Focusing on one city Nanjing, this dissertation reconstructs the recent history of Chinese urbanism with a strong focus on how property politics have shaped the development of Chinese cities and the dispossession of urban residents. Drawing upon the insights of Michel Foucault's governmentality studies, this dissertation tries to make sense of the shifts in relations between knowledge, power, and subjectivity in China's management of urban property, urban spaces, and urban population. What were the political rationalities that enabled state intervention in real property, and how did such rationalities turn into practices? During the process, who profited, who lost, and what difference did the changing property relation make to the Chinese

understanding of ownerships and rights within a shared urban landscape? What were the governable spaces and governable subjects thus produced?

The temporal parameter of this dissertation is set to cover the period from 1927 to 1979. During a short span of 50 years, China had experimented with two forms of government. After a decade of warlordism, Kuomintang (the Nationalist Party, or KMT) reunified China in 1927 and was dedicated towards the idea of establishing a full-fledged republican form of government. This has begun the institutionalization of property rights in modern China. Nevertheless, the republican experiment was aborted in 1949 when the Nationalists lost in the civil war with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Since then, the Communist Government had converted China into a socialist state with a self-sustainable economy that prioritized the redistribution of resources including real property. The situation changed in 1979, when Chinese leaders declared the shift to a socialist marketism and restored private ownership.

The studied period marked the transition from sovereignty to governmentality. In western liberal societies, this transition was characterized by the limitation of state power and the increasing protection of individual rights. Curiously, in China, the growth and expansion of governmentality was accompanied by massive property dispossession. To examine the co-evolution of modern statehood and modern subjectivity in this period, I focus my discussion on the most contentious governmental practices in property politics, the practice of dispossession, as it involves the exercising of state power over urban property, urban spaces, and the urban population. I have identified four dispossession practices adopted or invented during the studied period: eminent domain, slum clearance, socialist transformation, and communization. By studying these practices and the logic that informs them, this dissertation seeks to understand the significant shifts in how logic and objects of government are understood and acted upon, due to changing political rationality in modern China. I argue that the Chinese governmentality and the psychological, biological, sociological and economic processes that constitute them are property-related. The control of real property has been considered by both the Nationalist Government and the Communist Government as prerequisite to the production of governable subjects and governable spaces. Nevertheless, the two governments have different political rationalities, which produced two kinds of property politics: “biopolitics” and “biographic politics.”

The first, “biopolitics,” concerns the politicization of biological life. Under “biopolitics,” the objective for property-government is to produce a sanitary urban environment so as to maintain the biological welfare of the population. The second one, which I termed as “biographic politics,” concerns the socio-political biography of individuals. Under “biographic politics,” the objective for property-government is to remove property privileges from the people with particular biographies in the perspective of the state. (Note: Some historians coined the term “biocracy” to denote similar concept.² I found the term “biocracy” confusing because it is more commonly

² The term “biocracy” is coined by Lutz Niethammer. It has been discussed by some scholars who studied East European socialist history. See Niethammer, “Biographie und biokratie: nachdenken zu einem westdeutschen oral history-projekt in der DDR fünf Jahre nach der deutschen vereinigung”;

used by political and life scientists to denote a concept that recognizes nature as the force regulating political behaviors.³⁾

1.1.2 Urban Property, Urban History, and Urbanism

Although this dissertation has a strong focus on the state presence in property politics, it is first and foremost a historical study about the urban transformation of Nanjing over the course of the 20th century. The studied period was the time when China cities expanded rapidly in both size and population. How to govern the increasing urban population and urban property was a big subject of statecraft. As the property relation is the result of the interaction between physical environment, human inhabitation, productive practices, and government policies, studying its history will add an important dimension to our understanding of the past of Chinese cities.

By the end of the imperial period, state-owned land virtually disappeared in Qing China;⁴ before the economic reform in 1979, all urban land has been nationalized and private housing has reduced to below 10 per cent of the total housing stock.⁵ In a country that has experienced such dramatic changes, the history of property relation in Chinese cities has been curiously neglected. Most of the scholarly studies have focused on the agrarian land reform from the 1940s to the 1950s, but a systematic research on the property relation in the urban context is still lacking.⁶ For this reason, people have taken the nationalization of urban property for granted, assuming that private ownership was eliminated because it contradicted the socialist system of China. This assumption is too simplistic for three reasons. First, the compulsory requisition of private property was theorized and practiced in China before Communist rule. Since the 1920s, the Nationalist Government had introduced the modern city planning concept from the West to control the spatial development of then capital Nanjing. In order to realize the new urban plan, the government had created a modern property system which empowered the state to compulsory requisition private property. To what extent did the Nationalist urban theories and practices influence the property politics of the Socialist era? Second, private

Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR; Mark, "Discrimination, Opportunity, and Middle-Class Success in Early Communist Hungary"; Pudal, "Récits édifiants du mythe prolétarien et réalisme socialiste en France (1934-1937)."

³ See Caldwell, "Biocracy and Democracy"; Illich, "Brave New Biocracy: A Critique of Health Care From Womb to Tomb"; Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*.

⁴ See Liang, *Qingdai xiguanfa: shehui yu guojia [Customary Laws of Qing Dynasty: Society and State]*.

⁵ Zhang, "Chinese housing policy 1949-1978," 440.

⁶ For China's agrarian reform, see Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*; Shue, *Peasant China in Transition*; Wong, *Land Reform in the People's Republic of China; Institutional Transformation in Agriculture*; Yang, *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition*.

ownership was never outlawed in China. Although many private properties have been nationalized since 1949, the Communist Party has never completely eliminated private ownership. The question that is worth further exploration is how did the Party select which property to be nationalized, and how did it rationalize such selection? Lastly, the analysis of China's property politics should not be limited by the conventional class struggle approach, which focuses mainly on the class conflicts between the propertied and the propertyless. Although class struggle did play an important role in the massive dispossession in China, I argue that it is a technique of government rather than a reason for government (as shown in Chapter Four). In fact, as this dissertation seeks to illustrate, the property politics in Chinese cities affect not only property owners but different social groups in the society.

The absence of literature on the history of property relation affects our understanding to present-day issues. It is hoped that this dissertation will contribute a historical dimension to three areas of studies:

Post-reform scholarship. After the economic reform in 1979, a great amount of studies which discuss the effect of the reform to the property relation of China have flourished. Nevertheless, the preconditions for the growth of the real estate market after the economic reform in 1979, the social and political forces behind its formation and operation, and the changing social relations between public and private real estate actors, cannot be understood unless the workings of property relation in recent history are studied. Without a firm grasp on history, post-reform scholars tend to assume the capitalist mode of development as the ideal model for China with little consideration on its history and context.⁷

Neoliberal scholarship. David Harvey raises the "accumulation by dispossession" argument that neoliberal policies enhance the accumulation of wealth by dispossessing others of their rights and their wealth, especially through the privatization of common property and natural resources.⁸ It will be interesting to see how this argument applies to present-day China, where most resources are in the hands of the State due to the dispossession effort in recent history. Furthermore, many scholars argue that the increasing forces of neoliberalism and the introduction of foreign capital have led to the commodification of housings,⁹ the "villalification" of suburban residential enclaves,¹⁰ the sustained increase in the real estate price,¹¹ and the marketization of Chinese cities.¹² They conclude that the market has replaced the

⁷ For example, David Dowall, who was a consultant to the China department of the World Bank from 1989 to 1992, follows the ideal market model and suggests that the creation of the real estate market in post-reform China requires broader institutional reforms in the pricing of land, in the financing of construction, and in the mechanism of distributing housing. See Dowall, "Establishing Urban Land Markets in the People's Republic of China."

⁸ Harvey, *The New Imperialism*.

⁹ Zhou and Logan, "Market Transition and the Commodification of Housing in China."

¹⁰ King, *Spaces of Global Cultures Architecture, Urbanism, Identity*.

¹¹ Jiang, Chen, and Isaac, "The Effect of Foreign Investment on the Real Estate Industry in China."

¹² Broudehoux, "Selling the Chinese City: Theory and Practice of Urban Image Construction."

State in directing China's urban development, as the neoliberal studies in the West often suggested. In fact, there is a strong continuing state presence in what others think of as the neoliberal market economy.¹³

Civil right scholarship. Dispossession, by nature, concerns the competition of resources between the State and the people. In recent years, people who have been dispossessed in the past have become allied with civil right lawyers and activists. They petition to reclaim their lost properties.¹⁴ This has aroused great attention in Chinese society today. The study on the history of property relation helps us understand the root causes of these claims and the grievances of these house owners.

1.2 THEORIZING A PROPERTY-BASED GOVERNMENTALITY

1.2.1 Governmentality as an Analytical Perspective

Michel Foucault proposed the concept of governmentality in a series of lectures in the 1970s as a “necessary critique of the common conceptions of ‘power’,” through studying the genealogy of modern states in Western liberal contexts.¹⁵ The term “governmentality” is a combination of the words “govern” and “mentality,” and is frequently defined as the “art of government.” Here, the word “government” is defined in a comprehensive sense to denote the close link between forms of power and processes of subjectification. In other words, the term “government” is not limited to mean a political form but “a form of activity aiming to shape, guide, or affect the conduct of some person or person.”¹⁶ This includes self-control, guidance for the family and for children, management of the household, directing the soul, etc. Hence, the “government” is often defined as “the conduct of conduct.” The art of government thus concerns how to shape human conducts and how we think about governing others and ourselves, both as members of the population and as individuals, usually with a rational attempt.

The significance of the Foucaultian concept of governmentality, and why it is applicable to this dissertation, is that it allows a systematic inquiry to understand why

¹³ For example, in urban China as a whole in 1990 (a decade after the housing reform), 59 percent of housing space was in housing owned and managed by work units. See Yang, *Housing Reform: Theoretical Rethinking and Practical Choices*. On the discussion of state presence in urban development, see also Bian and Logan, “Market Transition and the Persistence of Power.”

In the same year, 86 percent of new investment capital for public housing construction in Shanghai was raised by work units, increased sharply from 55 percent in 1980. See Bian, Logan, and Lu, “Work Units and Housing Reform in Two Chinese Cities.”

¹⁴ Hsing, “Reclaiming Chinese society.”

¹⁵ Foucault, “Subjectivity and Truth,” 88.

¹⁶ Gordon, “Governmental Rationality: an Introduction,” 2.

specific forms of intervention is necessary and practicable, and its restricted sphere of action. Four analytical perspectives can be drawn from governmentality studies:

First, governmentality studies do not juxtapose politics and knowledge but articulate a “political knowledge” of governmental rationalities and rationalization. Foucault used the term “rationality of government” almost interchangeably with “art of government.”¹⁷ A rationality of government means “a way of system of thinking about the nature of the practice of government (who can govern; what governing is; what or who is governed), capable of making some form of that activity thinkable and practicable both to its practitioners and to those on whom it was practised.”¹⁸ The art of government usually involves bringing any form of rationality to the calculation about how to govern. The government defines a discursive field in which exercising power is “rationalized.” It enables a problem to be addressed and offers certain strategies for handling the problem. In other words, governmental rationality connotes representation, rendering reality into domain of thoughts. As there are different ways of thinking in a fairly systematic manner, of making calculations, of defining purposes and employing knowledge, there is no single form of rationality but a multiplicity of governmental rationalities.

*Second, governmentality studies “look for the systematic ties between forms of rationality and technologies of government.”*¹⁹ Governmental rationality, by nature, concerns the translation of reality into thoughts. Nikolas Rose points out that “[w]hen thoughts becomes governmental to the extent that it becomes technical, it attaches itself to a technology for its realization.”²⁰ Technologies of government denotes the assemblages of practices, materials, techniques and agents that are deployed to put the abstract rationalities and programmes into effect so that the ends of government are to be realized. It was invented to transform governmental rationalities into particular governmental programmes, such as types of schooling and medical practices, systems of income support, forms of administration and corporate management, systems of intervention into various organizations, and bodies of expertise. Mitchell Dean reminds us that it is important to distinguish technologies of government to techniques of government. The latter are all the means, mechanisms, and specific instruments which make possible forms of administration, power, and rule, such as systems of accounting, methods of the organization of work, forms of surveillance, methods of timing and spacing of activities in particular locales, etc.²¹ Technologies are, however, techniques of government contingently assembled through particular programmes of government.

Third, governmentality studies explore the process of subjectification and the management of the population. Governmental studies problematize, or calling into

¹⁷ A remark by Colin Gordon. See *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 13.

²⁰ Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, 15.

²¹ Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault’s Methods and Historical Sociology*, 187–188.

question, the particular aspects of who can govern, what governing is and what or who is governed and how. In other words, governmentality is the effort to create “governable subjects” through various techniques developed to control, normalize and shape human conduct. Since the 18th century, there has been a growing emphasis on the management of not individual conduct but the conducts of the population as a whole. Thus, the ends of government are to maintain the welfare of the population. To achieve such goals, modern governments become directly involved in the species problems of health, sanitation, birth rate, longevity, and race. As a result, a new biopower is formed which enables state intervention upon vital characteristics of human existence; at the same time, new kinds of political struggles emerge, in which “life as a political object” was turned back against the controls exercised over it, in the name of claims to a “right” to life, to one’s body, to health, to the satisfaction of one’s need.²²

Last, governmentality studies explore the spatialization of government and the production of governable spaces. Foucault showed that there is a governmental dimension to the constitution of spaces. Through his analysis of Bentham’s Panopticon model, Foucault demonstrated the importance of spatial practice to the operation of modern forms of power.²³ Following Foucault’s idea, Nikolas Rose points out that governing “is a matter of space, of the making up of governable spaces.”²⁴ According to Rose, governable spaces are “modalities in which a real and material governable world is composed, terraformed, and populated”²⁵ He argues that governmental thoughts has been territorialized, by “making out a territory in thought and inscribing it in the real, topographizing it, investing it with power, bounding it by exclusions, defining who or what can rightly enter.”²⁶ Each governable space is modeled in thought through the distributions and relations of concepts that open zones of cognition and configure their typography. Then, the government re-implant these conceptual models in the spaces of the real and hence remodel space itself.²⁷

These four analytical perspectives can be deployed to examine the Chinese art of property-government. In this dissertation, I analyse the property-based governmentality in terms of: (1) how reality of modern China was translated into governmental thoughts leading to the state monopoly of real property, and how these thoughts were rationalized; (2) how thoughts about governing real property were turned into practices, and what technologies and techniques of governments were adopted or invented to achieve these goals; (3) how the government of real property had at the same time rendered the Chinese population governable; and (4) the production of new governable spaces out of dispossession.

²² Rabinow and Rose, “Biopower Today,” 196.

²³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 195–228.

²⁴ Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, 31.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

1.2.2 Applying Governmentality Studies to China

Foucault developed the theme of governmentality by tracing the history of state power in western liberal context, mostly in European countries. In the past, the feudal state governed its subjects through sovereignty and pastoral power. The former denotes the king's authority over a territory and the latter concerns the imposition of moral standards by the Christian Church. Both sovereignty and pastoral power controlled the subjects through violence, constraint, discipline and punishment. But the transition from a feudal to a modern liberal society has led to the transition from sovereignty and pastoral power to governmentality. A characteristic of modern governmental practices is that they rarely operate by direct command and control. Rather, it would be more effective for modern states to govern through "freedom." In other words, modern states direct their populations to govern themselves, to give them positive incentives to act in a certain way and understand themselves as free objects. The governing through freedom "always contains a division between those who are capable of bearing the responsibilities and freedoms of mature citizenship and those who are not."²⁸ Although discipline and punishment still existed in modern society in the name of crime control or the administration of welfare benefits, it has been reshaped upon the ground of freedom, so that particular kinds of political rationalization have to be provided for such practices. Political rationalization, therefore, is immanent to the practice of liberal governments.

Because of its origin from the western liberal context, Foucault's studies overlook the possibility of non-liberal forms of governmentality. How can one apply governmentality in contexts of unlimited state power where familiar tactics of "government through freedom" do not exist? Recent efforts have brought Foucault's insights of governmentality to colonial studies.²⁹ David Scott, for example, seeks to understand the political rationalities of colonial power, its targets and field of operation. Scott argues that "colonial political rationality characterizes those ways in which colonial power is organized as an activity designed to produce effects of rule."³⁰ His studies contribute to a critical interrogation of the practices, modalities, and projects through which the varied forms of Europe's insertion into the lives of the colonized were constructed and organized. This recent collection of colonial governmentality contributed by Scott and other scholars has successfully demonstrated that the government of subjects at home and those abroad are closely intertwined.

²⁸ Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 171.

²⁹ For examples, Scott, "Colonial Governmentality"; Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism Delhi's Urban Governmentalities*; Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*.

³⁰ Scott, "Colonial Governmentality," 4.

Extensive discussion of governmentality, however, has yet to open up to other authoritarian and socialist contexts. Foucault once raised the question of socialist governmentality: “What would really be the governmentality appropriate to socialism? Is there a governmentality appropriate to socialism?”³¹ His answer is that if there is such a thing as socialist governmentality, it remains to be invented.³² Mitchell Dean, however, points out that “authoritarian governmentality,” like liberal rule, is made up of elements assembled from bio-politics and sovereignty.³³ At the same time, authoritarian governmentalities are distinct as “they do not accept a conception of limited government characterized by the rule of law that would secure the rights of individual citizens.”³⁴ Dean identifies three different forms of non-liberal political rationality: (1) those non-liberal forms of thought and practice that are a component of liberal rationalities; (2) those non-liberal forms of thought that will gain a certain legitimacy within liberal democracies; and (3) non-liberal forms of rule power.³⁵ Disappointingly, Mitchell Dean has not elaborated on how these three forms of non-liberal governmentalities have led to particular forms of interventions.

In more recent years, some scholars begin to apply the perspective of governmentality to study China.³⁶ This includes a special issue in the journal *Economy and Society* (November 2006) and an edited book called *China’s Governmentalities* (2009).³⁷ Both studies focus on the post-reform era, showing how neoliberal discourses on governance, development, education, the environment, community, religion, and sexual health, have been raised in China. In summing these efforts, Gary Sigley points out what is unique in the Chinese case is the continued high status of technoscientific and administrative reasoning amongst officials and scholars and an accompanying belief in the strong necessity for the Party-state to remain the primary driving force behind national development.³⁸ He claims that China governs not through familiar tactics of “freedom and liberty,” but through a distinct planning and administrative rationality, and which is nonetheless a product of the same processes that Foucault partly outlines in the governmentality lectures.³⁹

Nevertheless, most of the studies on Chinese governmentality so far were focused on the post-reform era, while the period before 1979, when the

³¹ Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1978-79*, 94.

³² O’Leary and Falzon, *Foucault and Philosophy*, 212.

³³ Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 154.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 173.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 158–159.

³⁶ For examples, Dutton, *Policing and Punishment in China*; Greenhalgh and Winckler, *Governing China’s Population*; Jeffreys, *China, Sex and Prostitution*; Sigley, “Liberal Despotism: Population Planning, Subjectivity, and Government in Contemporary China.”

³⁷ Jeffreys, *China’s Governmentalities: Governing Change, Changing Government*.

³⁸ Sigley, “Chinese Governmentalities,” 494.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 491.

governmentalization of the state had disabled older forms of life and constituted new categories of the governed and new modes of living, is largely understudied. A good exception is David Bray's book which discusses how *danwei* (work unit) contributes to the spatial production and governance in socialist China. He excavates the spatial genealogy of *danwei* and traces the system's strategic connections to "power, knowledge, discipline, government and subject formation in urban China"⁴⁰ Bray argues that the logic of the *danwei* system means that the organization and its leadership sustained itself by protecting its own production and consumption. Such interests had to be met in order to retain the support of each *danwei*'s member. As a result, *danwei* became both an organ of control and means of resisting control. While Bray's study informs us how the entire *danwei* system works as a governmental technology, I am more curious about the Chinese population who were not employed by *danwei* or were not living in *danwei* spaces. Without a strong physical built form and spatial confinement, how did the government manage the urban population who lived in private dwellings? By looking at how modern Chinese State produce governable subjects and governable spaces through the intervention on urban housing outside the system of *danwei*, this dissertation seeks to complement this emerging study of Chinese governmentality.

1.2.3 Rationalities for State Intervention in Real Property

Overall, there are three major schools of theories on property rights; they advocate very different ideas on how the State should intervene in the management of real property: (1) state to protect private property rights; (2) state to nationalize ownership for social protection; and (3) state to maintain the economic effectiveness of the property system.

State to Protect Private Property Rights

Thomas Hobbes and John Locke were two of the pre-industrial English philosophers who articulated the social contract theory and advocated property rights as a natural right. Although their viewpoints shared many commonalities, they were also significantly different from each others.

Thomas Hobbes pointed out that there is no such thing as property right in the "state of nature," a term he used to describe the hypothetical condition before the foundation of the state. In a state of nature people cannot know what is theirs and what is someone else's; as a result, men are condemned to endless violent conflict and war. Thomas Hobbes believed that it is human nature to pursue one's interests as vigorously as possible, thus rendering the humankind vulnerable to violent warfare. Nevertheless, humans are also driven by two and only two impulses: the fear of death and the desire of power. These two impulses have prompted people to draw up a

⁴⁰ Bray, *Social Space and Governance in Urban China: The Danwei System from Origins to Reform*, 9.

social contract, which requires them to concede all authority and sovereignty to a single power in exchange for security from each other and from foreign invaders. People are able to retain their right to self-preservation by endowing the sovereign with all of their other rights. It is through this transfer of power that the society, and by extension the state, is formed.

John Locke, on the contrary, believed that property right is a kind of natural rights. He argued that private property is created when a person mixes his labor with raw materials of nature. That means when a person cultivates a land, invested his labor to produce food, he can claim to own this piece of land and the food produced. Because humans are also subject to the moral law, which is the law of God, there is a limit to how many natural resources a person can consume -- he has to make sure there is enough left for others in the society. Problem arises when land has become scarce. Rules are needed to ensure that the moral law is kept so that no one consumes scarce resources beyond the limit or invades others' property. People agree to delegate such ruling function to a superior power, the government. They unit into a political society and put themselves under government for the preservation of their property. Therefore, John Locke declared in his *Two Treatise of Government* that "government has no other end but the preservation of property."⁴¹

Although Hobbes and Locke differ in their understanding of the nature of property rights, they both agree that the government is instituted into a social contract with the people to protect their properties. As such, if such protection failed, people have the right to reject a particular government and construct another. In other words, the power of the government is limited by the social contract.

State to Nationalize Ownership for Social Protection

Unlike the early English philosophers, who suggested that the role of the state is to protect people's property rights, some scholars believe that it would be better for the society as a whole if the state could nationalize land and property. Henry George and Karl Marx are two of the most important thinkers who advocated public ownership. Although the two contemporaries viewed each others as opposite sides, they were in fact "clashed over method rather than goal."⁴²

Henry George proclaimed in his *Progress and Poverty* that the root cause of poverty is land monopoly by individuals. Even though the productive power is increased, wages of common people remain a minimum because rent tends to even greater increase, thus producing a constant tendency to the forcing down of wages. As a result, the hard earnings of the people are extorted to the landlord in the form of rent. The best way to prevent rent exploitation is therefore to make land a common property. However, Henry George was well aware that land confiscation will lead to social unrest. He then counter-proposed the confiscation of rent instead of the confiscation of land. The argument is that the increase in land value and rent is an "unearned increment" aroused from social evolution without expenditure of any kind

⁴¹ Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 329.

⁴² A remark in George and Wenzer, *An Anthology of Henry George's Thought*, 139.

on the part of the landlord and should therefore be reverted to society. By confiscating ground rent in the form of land tax, Henry George believed that the state can prevent exploitation even though land remains privately owned.

To Karl Marx, Henry George was “utterly backward” as the confiscation of ground rent did not touch the core of the problem of exploitation, which is capitalist production.⁴³ He criticized that Henry George shared the same mistake of many socialist thinkers: “they leave wage labour and therefore capitalist production in existence and try to bamboozle themselves or the world into believing that if ground rent were transformed into a state tax all the evils of capitalist production would disappear of themselves.”⁴⁴ Using the United State as an example, Karl Marx claimed that by making land accessible to the people alone could not liberate the working class from enslavement,

How did it happen that in the United States, where, relatively, that is in comparison with civilized Europe, the land was accessible to the great mass of the people and to a certain degree (again relatively) still is, capitalist economy and the corresponding enslavement of the working class have developed more rapidly and shamelessly than in any other country!⁴⁵

For Karl Marx, the root cause of exploitation is capitalist production, which alienates workers from the means of production. Workers no longer own what they need to make a living and so must sell their labor to employers. To truly eliminate exploitation on the working class, Karl Marx believed that it is necessary for the state to nationalize the means of production.⁴⁶ The role of the state, therefore, is to control production and distribution of resources and to ensure the social protection of its people.

This same principle applies to land and property. Karl Marx agreed with Henry George that private land ownership serves as the basis of pure exploitation, because landlords are able to extract rent simply by occupying a piece of natural resource without making significant efforts to improve the land. As such, the state should monopolize land ownership to eliminate exploitation. Nevertheless, Karl Marx pointed out that private land ownership and private home ownership were different in nature and should be treated differently. Homeowners make substantial contribution to their properties and thus deserve to receive rent as a return for their investment. Because of such difference between private land ownership and private home ownership, Karl Marx advocated the nationalization of the former and the recognition of the latter. This separation of land ownership and home ownership advocated by Karl Marx has later influenced the property system in China.

State to Maintain the Economic Effectiveness of the Property System

⁴³ Marx, “On Henry George.”

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ See Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*.

In the past 50 years, the Chicago School economists such as Ronald Coase, Armen Alchian, and Harold Demsetz have explored three important attributes of the nature of property rights. The first attribute of property rights is exclusiveness. Property right is the exclusive authority to determine how a resource is used, whether that resource is owned by government or by individuals.⁴⁷ Such exclusive right is supported by the force of etiquette, social custom, ostracism, and formal legally enacted laws supported by the state's power of violence or punishment.⁴⁸ Property rights thus define the relationship between the owner and the owned. By claiming ownership over a property, the owner owns socially-structured rights to use the property in certain ways and excludes the others from the access and use of that property without his permission.

The second attribute of property rights is that it can be partitioned into a bundle of rights, including the rights to use, to earn income from, and to transfer or exchange the assets and resources.⁴⁹ The conceptualization of property rights to have multiple dimensions has an important economic implication: it allows several parties to hold partitions of rights to particular facets of a single resource.⁵⁰ As Alchian and Demsetz point out, "It is not *the* resource (emphasis in original) itself which is owned; it is a bundle, or a portion, of rights to *use* (emphasis in original) a resource that is owned."⁵¹ Then, the society will devise a configuration of property rights that is posited to be an economically efficient response to a contractual situation. The partitions of property rights will be grouped into appropriate bundles and be assigned to the transacting party who is most capable of efficient production, and the property rights that compose those bundles will be grouped so that appropriate economic incentives are created for owners of each bundle of property rights.⁵²

The third attribute of property rights is that the efficiency of a system depends on the amount of transaction cost. Ronald Coase points out that in the case of property rights dispute in the presence of an externality, the two contractual parties tend to reach an efficient solution through negotiation before taking the case to court. If the transaction cost is negligible, an efficient outcome will occur regardless of legal entitlement. He points out, "if market transactions were costless, all that matters (question of equity apart) is that the rights of various parties should be well-defined and the results of legal actions easy to forecast."⁵³ But in reality, market transactions are very costly, making it difficult for the contractual parties to reach an agreement. When the case is taken to court, the court's decision may lead to inefficient economic

⁴⁷ Alchian, "Property Rights."

⁴⁸ Alchian, *Economic forces at work*, 129.

⁴⁹ See Libecap, *Contracting for Property Rights*.

⁵⁰ See Alchian, *Economic forces at work*; Alchian and Demsetz, "The Property Right Paradigm."

⁵¹ Alchian and Demsetz, "The Property Right Paradigm," 17.

⁵² Kim and Mahoney, "Property Rights Theory, Transaction Costs Theory, and Agency Theory: an Organizational Economics Approach to Strategic Management," 226.

⁵³ Coase, "The Problem of Social Cost," 10.

outcomes. From the point of view of economic efficiency, Ronald Coase's theorem suggests that the role of the state is to create institutions which minimize transaction costs, so as to allow misallocations of resources to be corrected as cheaply as possible.

In sum, these three theories of property inform us three different kinds of rationalities for state intervention in real property. The issues underlying these three rationalities, which can be used to examine China's case, are (1) the power and limitation of the Nationalist State and the Socialist State respectively, (2) the resource management and social protection by the two states in relation to China's political economy; and (3) the economic efficiency of the property rights system adopted in the two regimes respectively. However, it would be too simplistic to assume that the Nationalist State or the Communist State followed a particular rationality. In fact, multiple rationalities conjoined and created the dominance of the State in China's property relation.

1.3 THE FOUR DISPOSSESSION PRACTICES: METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE OF RESEARCH

The Foucaultian analysis of governmentality focuses strongly on the study of practices. It centers on the question of how practices and thinking about these practices constitute themselves mutually or translate to each other. The focus is not to investigate if practices conform to rationalities, "but to discover which kind of rationality they are using."⁵⁴ Following this line of inquiry, this dissertation looks into China's dispossession practices to traces what kind of rationalities they are using and what technologies of government have assembled them. I have identified four practices of dispossession adopted or invented during the Nationalist and the Socialist era:

- (1) Eminent domain: the power of the state to compulsorily requisition private properties for the public interests without the consent of property owners. It was legislated and practiced in Nanjing since 1928 and survived through the Socialist era until today.
- (2) Slum clearance: the state effort to override property rights and remove properties that are defined as substandard. Slum clearance was extensively practiced in Nanjing during the 1930s and is still commonly practiced today.
- (3) Socialist transformation: the process by which socialist states convert private ownership into state ownership. This practice was introduced to Chinese cities by

⁵⁴ Foucault, "Omnes et Singulatim: Toward a Critique of Political Reason," 226.

the Communist Government from 1956 to 1979. After this process, the percentage of private real property was greatly reduced in China.

- (4) Communization: the state action to organize the population into collective production force and to collectivize resources into state ownership. Chinese cities were communized between 1958 and 1962. This involved mainly the reorganization of urban neighborhoods into collective production units.

This dissertation adopts a longitudinal study to examine the urban transformation of one particular city, Nanjing, over a period that span across two political regimes. The chapters are organized in a chronological fashion but not in a chronology of any particular institution. Instead, each chapter is a chronology of various events and efforts that enable particular governmentalities to turn into dispossession practices. Each chapter thus adds new layers to the emerging shapes of the property relation, eventually allowing us to see the complex structure, pluralistic, changes and continuities of Chinese art of property-government in its totality. Each chapter has also extended to include an epilogue about the legacy of the practice to present-day China. Together, they can be read as an urban history of Nanjing.

Chapter Two traces the Chinese's theorization of the eminent domain and analyzes the governmental rationality that enabled the Nationalist State to dispossess common people's homes for the reconstruction of the new national capital Nanjing from 1927 to 1949. Modern city planning was institutionalized for the first time in China and served as a technology of government to produce an orderly and aesthetic urban environment. To obtain land for the planning projects, Nationalist leaders enforced the eminent domain policy in Nanjing, using the public interest and the public obligation to rationalize compulsory requisition.

Chapter Three situates the slum clearance in Nanjing during the 1930s in the changing bio-politics of China, which prioritized rational life, sanitary city, and the moral community. It explores how slums, which emerged in Chinese cities around the 19th century as a result of China's industrialization and urbanization, were problematized as detrimental to hygiene, sanitation, safety and social morality. This brings out a bigger question of why and how had the state interfered into the private sphere of the people by making housing into a domain of government. I analyse how the government planned residential segregation in Nanjing by relocating the worker class and slum dwellers outside the walled city.

Chapter Four focused on the socialist transformation of private housing after the Communist victory in 1949. It discusses how the Communist Party used class struggle as a technique of government both to rationalize and to mobilize the redistribution of resources from the propertied to the propertiless in order to solve China's urban housing shortage. The Party constantly redefined who constituted the "class enemies" to suit changing state goals, which led to different stages of property dispossession in China. This signals a shift to biographic politics, that the biography of a person had determined this person's property rights.

Chapter Five traces the short-lived Urban Commune Movement from 1958 to 1962 to agglomerate surplus urban population and small production units into big,

collectively owned organizations. The Party conceptualized urban communes as the basic-unit to organize the cities, especially the urban neighborhoods, paving ways for China to transition into the ownership by the whole people. I explore how the urban communes changes urban neighborhoods, creating a new urbanism that fused working life with personal life.

Chapter Six is the conclusion. It highlights the features of property-government in China. I analyze the shift from biopolitics in the Nationalist period to the biographic politics in the Socialist period, as well as the change of technologies of government from city planning to property redistribution.

The theorization and enforcement of the four dispossession practices in Nanjing was studied through a vast collection of historical sources from local archives and libraries, including the Second Historical Archives of China, the Nanjing Municipal Archives, the Gulou District Archives, the Nanjing Construction Archives, and the Nanjing Municipal Library.

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CHAPTER 2 EMINENT DOMAIN: THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND PUBLIC OBLIGATIONS OF URBAN RESIDENTS

"The new road passes your shop. What is your name, old man?" The officer rapidly consulted a sheet of paper drawn from his pocket. "Ah, yes, Lu! Thirty feet off your house. Fifteen days from today your shop must be gone. Else we will tear it down for you." He folded the paper carelessly and put it back into his pocket. Then he turned to go away. At his heels were three common soldiers, and they turned also and fell into step. Lu Chen could not speak. He swallowed but his throat was dry. No sound came forth. One of the soldiers glanced back at him, a curious, pitying glance...

"Four days," said the officer, "and your shop must gone. Tear it down yourself, and you will have the materials. Otherwise we will confiscate it."

"But the money?" faltered Lu Chen.

"Money?" repeated the officer sharply, tapping his shining leather boot with a small stick he carried.

"The price is ten thousand dollars," said Lu Chen a little more firmly, gathering himself together.

The officer gave a sharp, short laugh. "There is no money," he replied, each word as clear and cold as steel. "You are presenting this to the Republic."

Lu Chen looked wildly about. Surely there was some redress. Surely someone would help him. He began to scream out in a broken, shrill voice to the passers on the street. "Do you see this, sirs? I am to be robbed --- robbed by the Republic! Who is this Republic? Will it give me food and my wife and my child?"

(Excerpted from *The New Road* (1933) written by Nobel laureate Pearl S. Buck.)⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Buck, "The New Road," 261–270.

INTRODUCTION

Eminent domain denotes the power of the State to compulsorily requisition private properties in the name of the public interests without the consent of property owners. As the practice of the eminent domain originates in the West, a systematic scholarly study on how the seemingly democratic phrase the “public interest” has been manipulated in an authoritarian context is still lacking. This chapter traces the Chinese adaptation of eminent domain and analyzes the governmental rationality that enabled the Nationalist State to dispossess common people’s homes for the reconstruction of the new national capital Nanjing from 1927 to 1949. I highlight the discursive production of the public interest and the public obligation as essential steps in the Chinese art of property-government.

Several scholars have studied how the Nationalist Government attempted to reconstruct Nanjing during the Nationalist period. Jeffrey Cody focuses on the American influence to modernize city planning in China,⁵⁶ while Charles D. Musgrove examines the Chinese idea of modernity through studying Nanjing’s planning.⁵⁷ Studies by Wang Chun-hsiung and William Kirby tell us about the technocratic nature of the Nationalist Government. Wang discusses the institutionalization of city planning in modern China and analyzes that there were two planning discourses during the Republican era, namely “scientific rationalism” and “nationalism,”⁵⁸ while Kirby argues that the statist ideology of Republican China was in fact “industrial modernity,” as evidenced by the state’s enthusiasm in electrification and technological development.⁵⁹ Although these studies help us understand the symbolism, the monumentality, and the developmentalism that the Nationalist Government sought to invest in Nanjing, they have never considered city planning as a technique of government which allows modern states to intervene in the everyday lives of their subjects. Furthermore, what was missing in current scholarship about was how the massive spatial restructuring as a result of city planning was actually carried out in Nanjing: How did the State obtain land for development? How did the State render private properties governable? This chapter, therefore, provides an historical account to the politics of property when Nanjing encountered the first wave of urbanization.

Under the Qing land system, land was divided into “civil land” and “banner land.” The former was placed under the control of such civilian offices as county magistrates whereas the latter was placed under the control of the banner office. Chinese civilians were permitted to own only civil land. Only the Qing court, its nobles, and its bannermen were allowed to own banner land.⁶⁰ When the Nationalists

⁵⁶ Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy’s “Adaptive Architecture,” 1914-1935*.

⁵⁷ Musgrove, “Remaking the Chinese City.”

⁵⁸ Wang, “On the Capital Plan of Nanking in the Nationalist Era of China, 1928-1937.”

⁵⁹ Kirby, “Becoming Chinese.”

⁶⁰ “Bannermen” refer to members of the Eight Banners, the administrative division of the Qing military organization. On the problem of banner land in Nanjing, see Wan, *Problems of Banner*

came into power in 1927, it vowed to assure private property rights, even though there were calls for state socialism and land nationalization in the society. Under this premise, this chapter examines the power and limitation of eminent domain in Nationalist China. First, I explore the ways the Nationalist Government used “the public interest” to rationalize the infringement of individual rights. The public interest became the principle governing the conducts of both urban residents and the government. Second, I discuss the special characteristics of eminent domain in Nationalist China. Specifically, I analyse how the government shifted the emphasis from public interest to public obligation when its eminent domain power encountered limitations. The discursive productions of the public interest and the public obligation enabled the Nationalist State to demand supports from urban residents towards Nanjing’s reconstruction programs.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section analyzes public interest as a form of governmental rationality and traces the origin of the eminent domain in both Anglo-American and Chinese contexts. The second section examines the political reasons behind the reconstruction of Nanjing and the use of modern city planning to create a rational and aesthetic city. The third section discusses the massive dispossession in Nanjing as a result of the ambitious reconstruction program. I trace the beginning of the eminent domain policy and the modern property system in Nanjing. The last section explores how the government formed the discourse of public obligation and turned it into the practice of a public works levy. I analyse the shift of emphasis from the public interest to the public obligation, reflecting the expansion of state power in property-government.

2.1 EMINENT DOMAIN AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST

The concept of the public interest is often used in legal and political discourse, lending an air of legitimacy and respectability to exercises of power. However, the term is rarely defined in any meaningful sense. There is no coherent account given to the meaning of the term so far. In general, scholars understand the public interest in three different ways: the majority’s interest, the common interest, or the summation of individual interest.

Majority’s interest: Many scholars believe that the public interest represents the interests of the majority in the society. For instance, Meyerson and Banfield argue that a decision “is said to be in the public interest if it serves the ends of the whole public rather than those of some sectors of the public.”⁶¹ Such understanding of the public interest encounters the problem of counting: how many members of the public

Land in Nanking. On the Qing banner land system, see Sudō, *Shindai Manshū Tochi Seisaku No Kenkyū Toku Ni Kichi Seisaku O Chūshin to Shite*. See also Enatsu, *Banner Legacy*. On the imperial land system in general, see Barreira, *Land Ownership in China before the Communist Revolution*.

⁶¹ Meyerson and Banfield, *Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest; the Case of Public Housing in Chicago*, 322.

must benefit from an action before it can be declared as the public interest? It may require a big survey or poll to find out the answer.

Common interest: Other scholars, like Brian Barry and Virginia Held, perceive the public interest as the common interest among the people. Virginia Held argues that “which results in satisfying those wants which all members of a community share constitute the public interest.”⁶² The problem of this understanding of the public interest is that it is difficult for everyone in the society to reach consensus. Some cases are easier than the others for people to come to an agreement. For example, everyone in the society wants clean water and fresh water. But in many cases, there is no one interest which all members of a given society share. Postmodernist critiques have also rendered the public interest problematic in a world of difference, claiming that “class, gender, and race-based critiques have left this particular notion of ‘the public interest’ in tatters.”⁶³

Summation of individual interest: the English utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham argues that the public interest is “the sum of the interests of the several members who composed it.”⁶⁴ This suggests that in large areas of national life a “sum” of the self-interests of individual members of society is considered identical with the public interest.⁶⁵ The aggregation of individual interests depends upon an on-balance assessment of the position of individuals considered in isolation. Hence, the public interest is a “policy resulting from the sum total of all interests in the community -- possibly all of them actually private interests -- which are balanced for the common good.”⁶⁶ The fundamental problem of this understanding of public interest is that it is impossible to sum up perceived individual interests as Jeremy Bentham suggested. John Rawls, in his *A Theory of Justice*, rejects the idea that the happiness of two distinct persons could be meaningfully counted together because this entails treating a group of many as if it were a single sentient entity, mistakenly ignoring the separation of consciousness.⁶⁷

The common definitions of the public interest as the majority’s interest, the common interest, or the summation of individual interest are problematic. In fact, the public interest is not a substantive concept at all. It could never be given “operational meaning,” either by political actors or by political scientists. Although the phrase has an air of democratic propriety, the absence of any identifiable normative content renders the concept insubstantial, and “hopelessly vulnerable to annexation or

⁶² Held, *The Public Interest and Individual Interests*, 4.

⁶³ Sandercock, *Towards Cosmopolis*, 197. Cited in Campbell and Marshall, “Utilitarianism’s Bad Breath?” 164.

⁶⁴ Bentham, *A Fragment on Government; and an Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, 126.

⁶⁵ Flathman, *The Public Interest; an Essay Concerning the Normative Discourse of Politics*, 33.

⁶⁶ Marks, Leswing, and Fortinsky, *The Lawyer, the Public, and Professional Responsibility*, 51.

⁶⁷ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 22–27.

colonization by those who exercise power in society.”⁶⁸ David Truman therefore dismisses “public interest” as a mere “datum” of politics.⁶⁹

If it is apparently impossible to give a substantive content to the phrase the public interest, the main question is -- as Richard Flathman has asked -- why would this concept be so persistent in political discourse and in policy making?⁷⁰ Rather than trying to define the public interest, it is more important to understand not the meaning but the function of the concept.

Here in this dissertation, I conceptualize the public interest as a form of governmental rationality, providing reasons for modern states to exercise power over their subjects. Richard Flatman argues that the primary function of the concept of the public interest is to convey approval or commendation of public policy.⁷¹ The diversity in society means that government cannot assign rights and duties or make any authoritative decision without serving some interests, demands, and needs, and restricting others. Individual citizen may be obligated to obey government actions that conflict with his interests, but the government, as a public agent, is expected to rationalize its decisions and actions in terms of a standard appropriate to the position which requires those decisions. The public interest provides such a standard, and its logic corresponds to those functions.⁷² Nevertheless, this standard is only nominal. It is socially produced to make certain forms of behavior more probable than others.

In sum, the public interest serves a double function: on the one hand, modern states used the public interest to rationalize public policies; on the other hand, the public interest provides a nominal standard for individuals to govern themselves as well as others.

2.1.1 The Anglo-American Origin of Eminent Domain

Existing literature on the application of the public interest in urban development focused mostly on the practices of the eminent domain. Although the right to own private property was cherished in Anglo-American tradition, it has always been limited by the power of the sovereign when called upon to surrender one’s property. The Magna Charta⁷³ of Britain written in 1215 stipulated that “no freeman shall be taken, or imprisoned, or be disseised of his Freehold... but by lawful judgment of his

⁶⁸ Feintuck, “*The Public Interest*” in *Regulation*, 33.

⁶⁹ Truman, *The Governmental Process; Political Interests and Public Opinion*, 50–51.

⁷⁰ See Flathman, *The Public Interest; an Essay Concerning the Normative Discourse of Politics*.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷³ The Magna Carta was issued on June 19, 1215. Its primary purpose was to curb royal prerogative in regard to the barons by specifying certain laws according to which a king should interact with the barons and others. See Benson, “The evolution of eminent domain,” 426.

Peers, or by the Law of the Land.”⁷⁴ This constitutional provision, on the one hand, protects private property from random seizure; and on the other hand, imposes a lawful restriction to private property right upon the hegemony of the State.

The term “eminent domain” was first enunciated by the Dutch Jurist Hugo Grotius in 1625. In his *De Jure Belli et Pacis [The Right of War and Peace]*, which laid out the basis for what would become later known as international law, Grotius pointed out,

The property of subjects is under the eminent domain of the state, so that the state or he who acts for it may use and even alienate and destroy such property, not only in the case of extreme necessity, in which even private persons have a right over the property of others, but for ends of public utility, to which ends those who founded civil society must be supposed to have intended that private ends should give way. But it is to be added that when this is done the state is bound to make good the loss to those who lose their property.⁷⁵

While Hugo Grotius recognized that the state possessed the eminent domain power, he also stressed that “the state is bound to make good the loss to those who lose their property.” Therefore, anyone whose property is taken by the state is entitled to just compensation.

The British carried the practice of eminent domain to their American colonies. During the American Revolution, many Loyalists’ properties were confiscated, debts owed to British subjects by the tobacco states were cancelled, and a number of other takings were made.⁷⁶ So when the revolution was over, early republicans believed that it was necessary to protect private property from governmental taking power. Hence, they introduced two taking restrictions to the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution: (1) private property can only be requisitioned for public use; and (2) the owners must be provided with just compensation. Although eminent domain policies in different countries varied, they usually composed of these two components or the variants of them, if not exactly the same.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Magna Carta (1297), XXIX, available at <http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/content.aspx?activeTextDocId=1517519>.

⁷⁵ Cited in Paul, *Property Rights and Eminent Domain*, 75.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the “public use” proviso stipulated in the Fifth Amendment was challenged by a case in New London in 2005. The City of New London supported a private developer’s plan to redevelop an old area into a comprehensive redevelopment which promised 3,169 new jobs and \$1.2 million a year in tax revenues. Unfortunately, existing home owners refused to move out of the area; they sued the City on the basis that the public use proviso in the Fifth Amendment used to mean property could not be for private use. In other words, the requisitioned land should be turned into state-owned property, not transfer to the hands of another private owner. The central issue in the New London case is whether economic development fell within the scope of “public use.” In the end, the Court held that the general benefits a community enjoyed from economic growth qualified such redevelopment plans as a permissible “public use.”

2.1.2 Equalization of Land Rights: Theorization of the Eminent Domain in China

Sun Yat-sen, provisional president of the Republic of China and founder of the party Kuomintang (KMT), was the first person in modern China who systematically theorized about the state's eminent domain power over private property rights and the government of urban properties.⁷⁸ During his lifetime, Sun proposed two land theories to China. The first one, the "equalization of land rights (*pingjun diquan*)" was a taxation policy for urban land, whereas the second one, "land to the tiller (*gengzhe youqitian*)," was a rent reduction policy for rural land.⁷⁹ In this dissertation, I focus mainly on urban land issues in modern China and have left the study of agrarian land problems to other scholars.⁸⁰ However, it is important to point out that the bifurcation of land, originated from Sun Yat-sen, has survived in China until today. Present day China is administratively bifurcated into urban and rural land, each regulated by different sets of laws and policies.

Curiously, the bifurcation of land seems more like an afterthought than an intentional decision from Sun Yat-sen.⁸¹ Harold Schiffrin believed that Sun's early

⁷⁸ The eminent domain clause first appeared in modern China in 1915 under the Land Requisition Law of the Beiyang Government, which was under the control of warlords in North China. The law empowered the government to requisition or rent private land for works of the public interest. These works included defence and military works, railways, roads, markets, telecommunication works, parks, bridges, canals, dikes, docks, ferry piers, waterways and ditches, graves and government office, and works for the purposes of education and charity, hydro-engineering, hygiene, climate survey, ocean exploration, wind protection, and fireproofing, and "any other works that were not listed above." See Article 1, *Land Requisition Law*.

⁷⁹ The "land to the tiller" was based on the idea that those who work the land will be given the land. It was a rent reduction program with an ultimate goal to gradually transfer ownership of land to the tenant who tilled it. The "land to the tiller" was being written into the national Land Law of 1930 but had never been widely implemented. On the contrary, it had become the basis for CCP's agrarian land reform during the anti-Japanese war years.

On the details of the "equalization of land rights" and "land to the tiller," and the social context of which they were formulated, see Xiao, *Truth Meaning of the Equalization of Land Rights*; Xiao, *50 Years of Land Reform: Memoirs of Dr. Tseng Hsiao*; Xiao, *History of China's Land Politics*; Zhu and Hou, *Historical Records of Land Reform: 1927 - 1960*; Barreira, *Land Ownership in China before the Communist Revolution*.

⁸⁰ On rural land reform in Communist China, see Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*; Yang, *Chinese Communist Society*; Shue, *Peasant China in Transition*; Vogel, "Land Reform in Kwangtung 1951-1953"; Zhang, "Land Reform in Yang Village: Symbolic Capital and the Determination of Class Status."

⁸¹ Schiffrin points out that it was until 1924, a year before Sun Yat-sen's death, when there were "few explicit references to the excesses of rural landlordism and the maldistribution of landholdings," finally prompted him publicly declared the "land to the tiller" policy. Schiffrin, "Sun Yat-sen's Early Land Policy: The Origin and Meaning of 'Equalization of Land Rights'," 549-550.

According to Xiao Zheng (often translated as Dr. Hsiao Tseng), Director of the Graduate School of Land Economics (*Dizheng xueyuan*), Sun had delivered as many as 14 speeches on the

concern for the land problem was primarily on an urban context. His “equalization of land rights,” first proposed in 1905, and the Western doctrines from which it was derived, indicated “a definite preoccupation with the potential problems of a future capitalist order rather than concern with the aberrations of China’s current agrarian structure.”⁸² Curiously, when most parts of China were yet to be urbanized at that time, what made Sun Yat-sen so concerned about potential urban land problems? He explained,

On my tour of Europe and America, I saw with my own eyes the instability of their economic structure and the deep concern of their leaders in groping for a solution... After comparing various schools of economic thought, I have come to the realization that the principle of state ownership is most profound, reliable and practical. Moreover, it will forestall in China difficulties which have already caused much anxiety in the West.⁸³

Sun Yat-sen’s interest in socio-economic reform was provoked by his social and intellectual experiences during his two-year sojourn in Europe (1896-1898).⁸⁴ Sun believed that the greatest problems emerged in the West during the past century was the “fluctuation in land value” and “land squabbling” resulted from capitalist development.⁸⁵ “If the land problem can be solved,” Sun believed, “one-half of the problems of livelihood will be solved.”⁸⁶ Therefore, on return to China, Sun began to propose the theory of “equalization of land rights” to “nip economic unrest in the bud.”⁸⁷

Sun Yat-sen developed his “equalization of land rights” based on the theories of American political economist Henry George.⁸⁸ In his *Progress and Poverty*, Henry George proclaimed that the root cause of poverty was land monopoly by individuals. He disliked the fact that even though productive power was increased, wages of common people constantly remained a minimum. It was because “with increase in productive power, rent tends to even greater increase, thus producing a constant

“equalization of land rights” since he relinquished the presidency in 1912, reflecting the importance of this policy in the late president’s heart. Xiao, *History of China’s Land Politics*, 247–248.

⁸² Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy: The Origin and Meaning of ‘Equalization of Land Rights’,” 549–550.

⁸³ Sun, “History of the Chinese Revolution,” 81–82.

⁸⁴ See Teng and Fairbank, *China’s Response to the West; a Documentary Survey, 1839-1923*, 226; Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy: The Origin and Meaning of ‘Equalization of Land Rights’,” 550.

⁸⁵ Sun, *The Three Principles of the People*, 173, 176.

⁸⁶ Published in *Guangzhou Minguo Daily*, July 24, 1924.

⁸⁷ Sun, “History of the Chinese Revolution,” 81–82.

⁸⁸ On how Henry George’s theories influenced Sun Yat-sen, see Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen*; Lin, “Sun Yat-sen and Henry George: The Essential Role of Land Policy in Their Doctrines”; Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy: The Origin and Meaning of ‘Equalization of Land Rights’”; Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-Sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution*.

tendency to the forcing down of wages.”⁸⁹ As a result, large sums were extorted from the earnings of laborers to landowners. Henry George therefore argued that land should remain common property. Knowing that the confiscation of land would involve a needless shock to present customs and habits of thought and would require a needless extension of government machinery, Henry George counter proposed the confiscation of rent by taxation.”⁹⁰ Since the increase in rent was aroused from social evolution without expenditure of any kind on the part of the landowner, this “unearned increment,” Henry George argued, should revert to society. The remedy was to abolish all taxation save that upon land value, for two reasons: first, the abolition of all other forms of taxation would shift taxes from labor and capital onto the value of land and natural resources; second, a high land value tax would discourage landowners from speculation, thus providing them with an incentive to use the land in a productive way. If rent were taken by the State in taxes, George asserted, “Land, no matter in whose name it stood, or in what parcels it was held, would be really common property, and every member of the community would participate in the advantages of its ownership.”⁹¹

Inspired by Henry George, Sun Yat-sen proposed the “equalization of land rights” in the 1905 manifesto of Tongmenghui, the party he founded in Guangdong.⁹² The manifesto declared, “The present value of the land shall still be considered the property of the owner, but all increases in value resulting from social reform and progress after the revolution shall belong to the state, to be enjoyed by all the people, in order to establish a socialist state where each family will be well-provided for...”⁹³ Sun argued that the rise in land value should be confiscated because it was an “unearned increment” resulted from public effort:

For it was because of the people in the community chose this section as an industrial and commercial center and made improvements upon it, that this tract of land increased in value and gradually reached such a high price [...] the property owner, however, simply holds what he has, does not use a bit of mental effort, and reaps huge profits. Yet, what is it that makes the value of his land rise? The improvements which people make around his land and the competition which they carry on for possession of his land. When the price of land rises, every single commodity in the community also rises in price. So we may truly say that the money which the people in the community earn through their business is indirectly and imperceptibly robbed from the property owners.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ George, *Progress and Poverty*, 201.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 287–288.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 288.

⁹² The manifesto proclaimed the four planks of the revolution and the fundamental plan for future administration of the nation: (1) to expel the Manchus, (2) to restore China, (3) to establish the Republic, and (4) to equalize land rights.

⁹³ Translated and cited in Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy: The Origin and Meaning of ‘Equalization of Land Rights’,” 551.

⁹⁴ Sun, *The Three Principles of the People*, 175–176.

The “equalization of land rights” involved four steps: (1) self-assessment of land values, (2) land taxation according to the declared values, (3) state purchasing of private land according to the declared value, and (4) expropriation of unearned increment.⁹⁵ In a nutshell, the method required landowners to self-assess and declare the value of his land, which formed the basis of land tax. If land value rose in future, the State would confiscate the unearned increment in land value.⁹⁶ At the same time, the State reserved the rights to compulsorily purchase private land according to the declared land value. This twin-measure assured that the declared value would neither be too low nor too high. “[W]hen necessary,” Sun Yat-sen proclaimed, “the state may buy over the land according to the value reported by the owner.”⁹⁷ But under what circumstances that the compulsory purchase of private land would be deemed necessary?

Sun Yat-sen pointed out that “not all land should be owned by the State, but only those parts of the land which were needed for public purposes.”⁹⁸ He gave examples: “If, in building roads or opening markets, it is necessary to pass through fields, gardens, or houses or to use certain pieces of land for the purpose, the land in question may be purchased by the Government from its owner according to the value he had declared in his initial application for a property ownership certificate.”⁹⁹ In this sense, what Sun Yat-sen suggested was to grant the State with the “eminent domain power” to requisition private property for any urban project developed in the name of the public interest.

Sun Yat-sen’s “equalization of land rights” had tremendous influences to China’s modern land policies. It was first institutionalized in the national capital Nanjing.

2.2 CREATIVE DESTRUCTION: THE RECONSTRUCTION OF CAPITAL NANJING

2.2.1 Capital Reconstruction as a Political Statement

Nanjing literally means the “southern capital.” The name refers to the city’s glorious past as imperial residence of the first Ming emperor, who drove off the Mongols and

⁹⁵ Sun, “Fundamentals of National Reconstruction for the National Government of China,” 11–12.

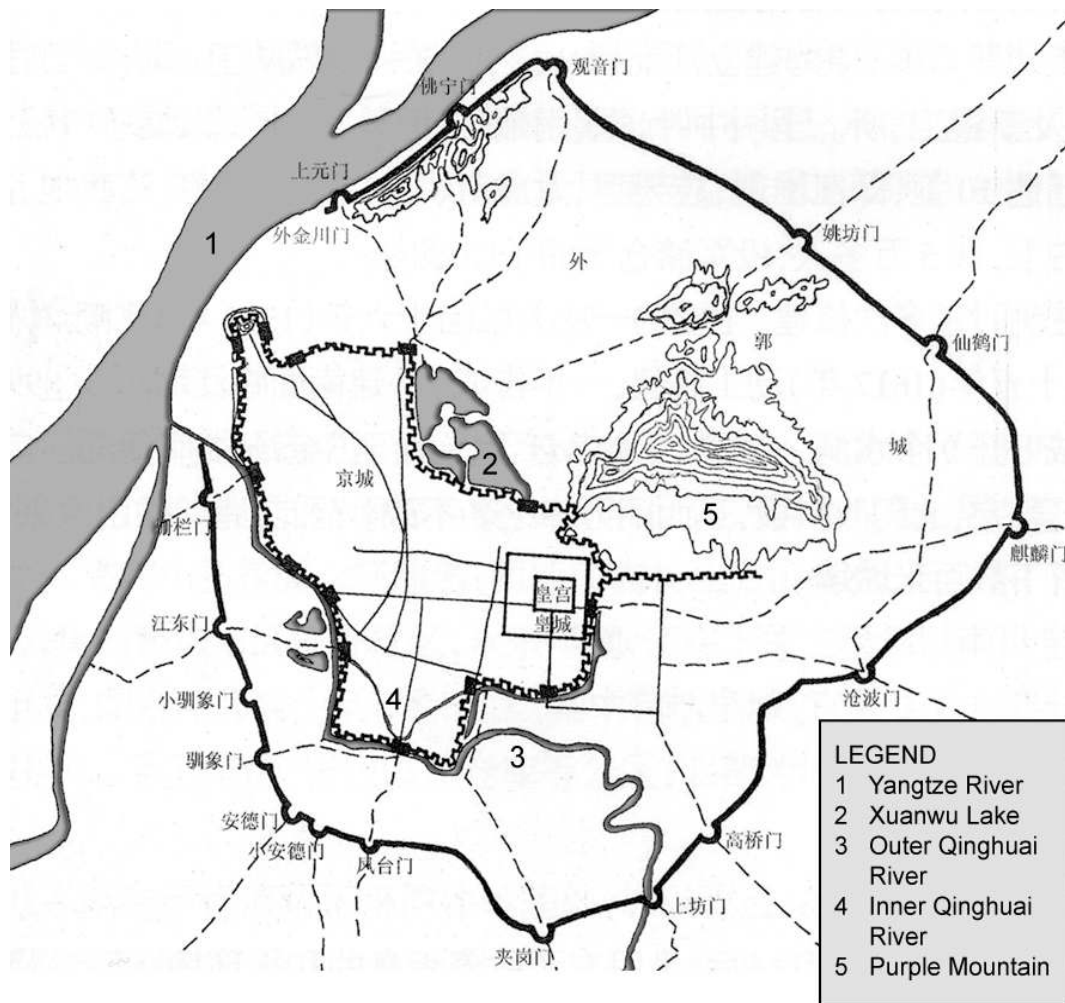
⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁹⁷ Sun, “Kuomintang’s Political Program of 1924,” 60.

⁹⁸ Sun, “Concrete Measures for Equalizing Land Rights.” Translated and cited in Chen, *Land Reform in Taiwan*.

⁹⁹ Sun, “How to Carry Out the Principle of People’s Livelihood.” Translated and cited in Chen, *Land Reform in Taiwan*, 11–12.

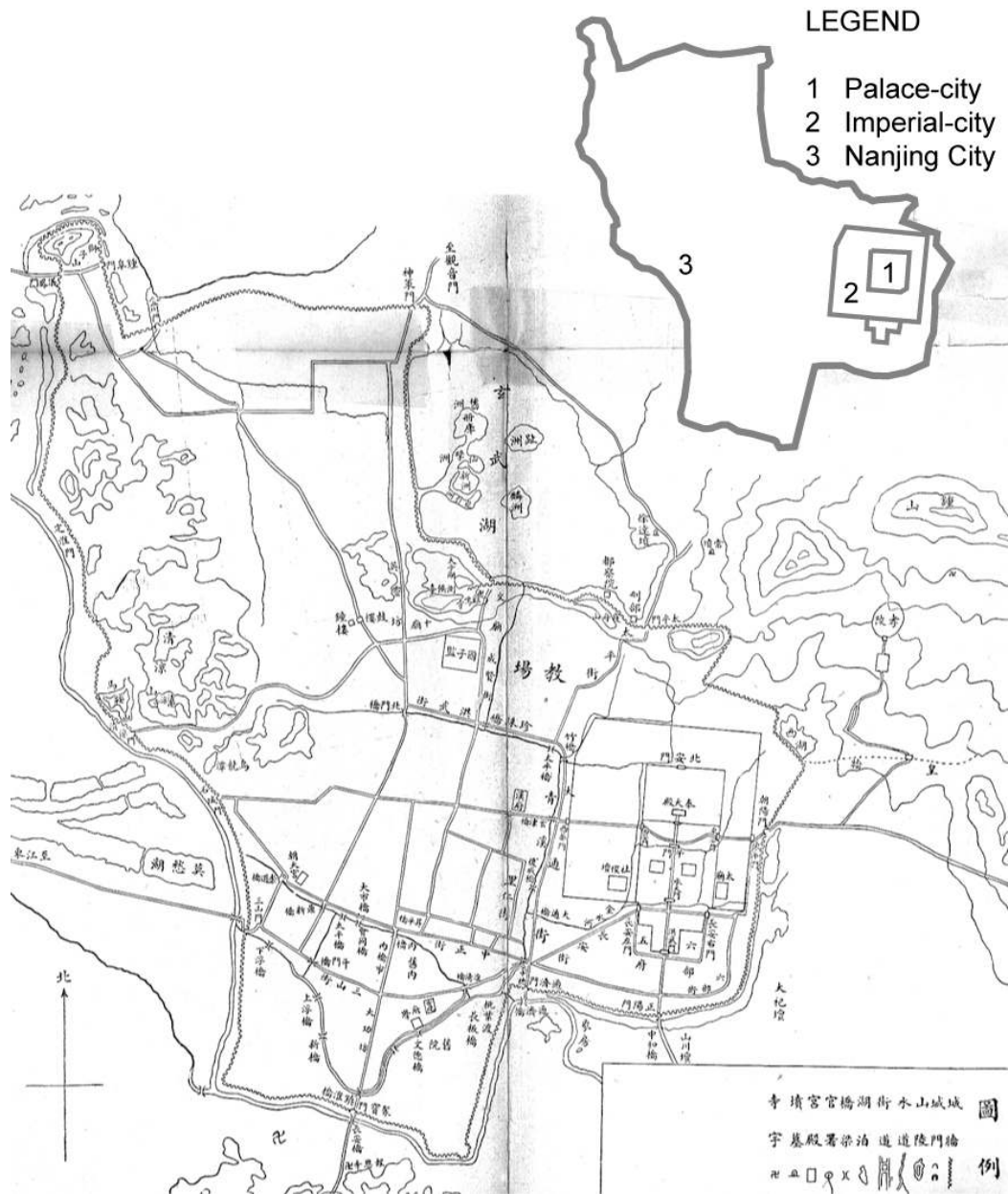
brought China back to the hands of mainlanders. The city was protected by the Purple Mountain in the east, the Xuanwu Lake in the northeast, the Yangtze River in the northwest, and the natural moat Qinhuai River in the south.¹⁰⁰ The massive city wall of Nanjing, which survived until today, was constructed in the 14th century. (Fig. 2.01) Shaped by the natural landscape, the city appeared irregular, but the imperial-city and the palace-city of the Ming court were planned in square shape in strict adherence to the imperial model. (Fig. 2.02)



(Source: Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's City Planning*, 1:87.)

Fig. 2.01 Nanjing and its relation with surrounding natural landscape.

¹⁰⁰ For detail discussion on the planning of Nanjing during the Ming dynasty, see Mote, "The Transformation of Nanking, 1350-1400."



(Source: Zhu, *Drawings of Historic Sites in Nanjing*, 193.)

Fig. 2.02 Multiple layers of city walls in Nanjing in the Ming Dynasty.

Nanjing was a city with a revolutionary aura. It was the capital of the short-lived Taiping Kingdom of Heaven (1851-1864), founded by the radical rebel Hong Xiuquan who wished to overthrow the Manchu-ruled Qing Empire and turn China into a nation of Christianity. Although the kingdom was finally suppressed by the Qing court in 1864, historians believe that the rebellion had planted the seed to a series of revolutions in the turn of the century.¹⁰¹ On October 10, 1911, an uprising at

¹⁰¹ See Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China*.

Wuchang finally led to the collapse of the Qing. Regional revolutionaries gathered in Nanjing, founded the Republic of China, and elected Sun Yat-sen as the provisional president. Sun handpicked Nanjing as the new national capital. Unfortunately, the provisional government survived only for a few months. Warlords in the North restored an authoritarian regime in China and moved the capital to Beijing, leaving Nanjing at the fringe of power.¹⁰²

In 1927, the Guangdong-based Kuomintang (KMT, or the Nationalist Party), a party founded by Sun Yat-sen before he died in 1925, successfully drove off the Northern warlords and reunified China. Leaders of the infant Nationalist Government decided to install the capital at Nanjing so that China could be freed from the shadows of the Manchus, the Northern warlords, and the foreign diplomatic powers residing in Beijing. By abandoning Beijing, they hoped to automatically cancel out the hated provisions of the Boxer Protocol, an unequal treaty signed between Qing China and various European nations in 1901, which permitted these nations the right to establish garrisons in Beijing. Proponents of Nanjing also criticized that “there was something in the atmosphere of Peking which militated against the development of Republican Government.”¹⁰³ They referred to Beijing as “foreign city, formerly Manchu... the Capital of the Foreign Powers as represented by the Diplomatic Body functioning in the ‘foreign’ Diplomatic Quarter.”¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, many foreign ministers laughed off the idea to move the capital from Beijing to Nanjing, instancing the total absence of accommodation and the expense of building new ministerial quarters in Nanjing being a distinct handicap. They speculated that it would take 12 to 18 months to design and construct the necessary government buildings, which would easily cause chaos to the infant republic.¹⁰⁵ Some even proclaimed that it was extremely unlikely that any of the foreign nations would consider shifting their legations to Nanjing, “until a sufficient time should have elapsed to prove that the Republican regime was at last stabilized and not likely either be defeated by some warlord adventurers or suddenly decide to shift from Nanjing to Wuhan, Guangzhou, or elsewhere.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Only 44 days after his inauguration, Sun Yat-sen resigned the presidency to Yuan Shikai, a former Qing official and General of the powerful Beiyang Army who seized power in the North and threatened the stability of the infant republic. Sun Yat-sen appended to his resignation a number of conditions to prevent possible treachery on the part of Yuan Shikai. One of these conditions was to have Nanjing remained as the capital of the republic so as to remove Yuan Shikai from his military and bureaucratic networks in the North. Aware of the trap, Yuan Shikai insisted to transfer the capital to Beijing. At Beijing, Yuan Shikai’s ambition to install an authoritarian regime gradually revealed. He dismissed the provisional government and proclaimed himself the new emperor of China. His Beiyang Government was internationally recognized as the legitimate polity of China at that time. See Bergère, *Sun Yat-Sen*, 221–222.

¹⁰³ J. B. P., “Political Significance of the Capital Location Question,” 174.

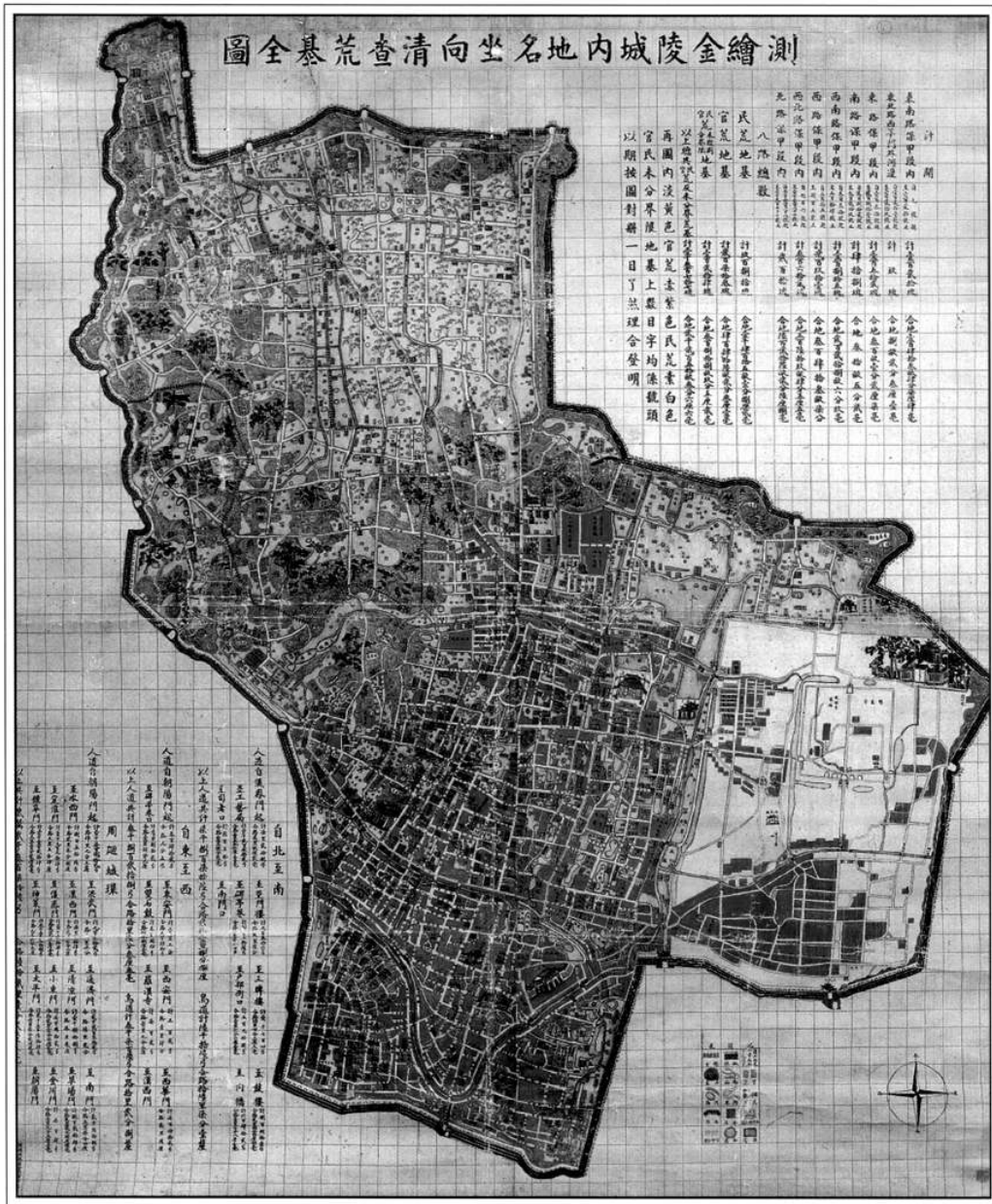
¹⁰⁴ Quotation of an elder leader of Kuomintang, Wu Tingfang. Cited in *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Impev, “The Move from Peking to Nanking,” 235.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

The opposition to Nanjing was not without grounds. Unlike most imperial Chinese capitals, Nanjing had narrow and crooked streets and alleys, particularly in area south of the Drum Tower. (Fig. 2.03 & Fig. 2.04) The street pattern became very irregular when approaching the undulating Qinhuai River in the south. (Fig. 2.05) The riverbanks -- where the Confucius Temple, the Examination Hall, markets, restaurants, shops and dwellings were located -- were the busiest and crowded area in the city. People squatted randomly on streets, alleys, bridges, and public land; slum settlements could be seen all over the city. There were no modern facilities, too. People peddled water on the street in buckets and carried these over the shoulder and in water carts. On the contrary, areas outside the traditional southern core were empty. The old imperial palace-city of Nanjing was largely destroyed during the Taiping Rebellion. A journalist had described the area as having “collapsed walls, ruins and rubbles all over the place.” It was “no longer as prosperous as in the old time... What remains was only a rugged path of rubbles.”¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, the northern area was mostly farmland and lacked modern developments.

¹⁰⁷ “Rugged Roads near the old Ming Palace.”



(Source: Nanjing Planning Department, *Urban Traces - Selected Old Maps of Nanjing*, 47.)

Fig. 2.03 Map of Nanjing in the Qing Dynasty.



(Source: Ye, *Old Nanjing: Reflections of Scenes on the Qinhuai River*, 15.)

Fig. 2.04 A street in the southern part of the city, 1888.



(Source: Zhu, *Photographs of Historic Sites in Nanjing*, 8.)

Fig. 2.05 The southern city gate of Nanjing in adjacent to the moat, the Qinhuai River, and a large number of Chinese dwellings, 1936.

The poor cityscape of Nanjing did not match its capital status. A writer of a popular magazine in Shanghai urged the Nationalist Government to “improve the aesthetic quality” of Nanjing to “compete with famous cities in other parts of the world, such as Paris, London, Washington, etc,” so that China, after a long era of humiliation by foreigners, could regain its prestige internationally.¹⁰⁸ The mayor of Nanjing, He Minhun, commented, “Comrades from all provinces who hadn’t come to Nanjing before might think Nanjing was some kind of a lustrous, magnificent place; but the minute they arrived, they were disappointed.”¹⁰⁹ He vowed to reconstruct Nanjing into “a scientific (*kexue hua*), artistic (*yishu hua*), and garden-like (*tianyuan hua*) new city,” so that the capital would become “the only metropolis in the East” and “a model city in the world.”¹¹⁰

It was very common for Nationalist leaders and the Chinese media to compare Nanjing with other modern cities in the world. They desperately wanted Nanjing to overtake these cities. By reconstructing Nanjing, Charles D. Musgrove remarks that the Nationalist Government chose to enter a “widely recognized international competition to construct magnificent capitals, complete with grand symbols and rituals to express new ideals of nationhood.” This modern-era competition, which took place in the late 19th to early 20th centuries, began with Haussmann’s Paris and spread through Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Washington, St. Petersburg, and Madrid.¹¹¹ Among all these foreign precedents, Turkey presented itself as the most relevant to China. Both nations came out of the ashes of imperial empire and went through a protracted war of independence. After founding the Republic of Turkey in 1923, Turkish leaders rapidly set into motion a number of societal reforms to build a modernized and westernized nation-state. To create a strong political statement, they decided to build the new capital at a small town Ankara from the ground up to become a major city and cultural center.¹¹² The planning of Ankara was regularly reported by the Chinese media, who demanded the Nationalist Government to simulate Turkey and forge from the ruins of an imperial empire a thoroughly modern nation-state.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Chen, “The Necessity to Beautify the City of Nanjing,” 36.

¹⁰⁹ Translated and cited in Lipkin, “Keeping up Appearances: The Nanjing Municipal Government and the City’s Elements Déclassés, 1927-1937,” 52.

¹¹⁰ He, “Publication Manifesto for the Capital Municipal Administration Weekly.”

¹¹¹ Musgrove, “Remaking the Chinese City,” 88–89.

¹¹² For the planning and construction of Ankara, see Kacar 2010.

¹¹³ Wang, “New Capital of Turkey - Ankara.”

2.2.2 City Planning: the Modern Technique of Government

Reconstructing Nanjing became an urgent task for China.¹¹⁴ *Shirong*, literally the city's appearance, was a phrase commonly mentioned by Chinese leaders. They were concerned about the appearance of the capital, arguing that an aesthetic capital would help China gain prestige.¹¹⁵ They claimed that "the active reconstruction of the capital was to create uniformity and order."¹¹⁶ They believed the task to create a beautiful, rational capital could be achieved through modern city planning.¹¹⁷

Modern city planning was imported to China around the mid 19th century. European nations imposed urban plans to concessions and treaty ports, such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Tianjin, etc., for easy land management and land sale.¹¹⁸ Large scale urban planning began in China since 1896. The Qing court granted construction concessions, first to Russia and later to Japan, allowing them to construct and operate railways and developing land around the railway stations in Manchuria, the north-easternmost region in China.¹¹⁹ Since then, Russia and Japan imposed grandiose plans to turn the Manchurian cities, such as Dalian, Harbin, and Changqun, into modern railway cities. They introduced zoning as a city planning device to control land uses in these cities. For instance in 1899, Russian planners imposed to Dalian a grandiose plan, which basically employed a Baroque design with circular plazas and radiating boulevards. The plan divided Dalian into an administrative zone, a European zone, and a Chinese zone.¹²⁰ (Fig. 2.06) Similar features were presented in the Japanese railway city Chanqun. On top of a grid plan, Chanqun had four circular plazas, which served as locations of main government offices, hotels, and banks. These plazas were connected by diagonal boulevards, which divided the city into residential, commercial, and shopping uses.¹²¹ (Fig. 2.07)

¹¹⁴ *NTSG*, 1927, vol. 10, tezai 1-4.

¹¹⁵ Yin, "Wuzhong quanhui yu shoudu jianshe [The Fifth Plenary Session and Capital Reconstruction]."

¹¹⁶ *SSG*, 1930, vol. 57, yanlun 1.

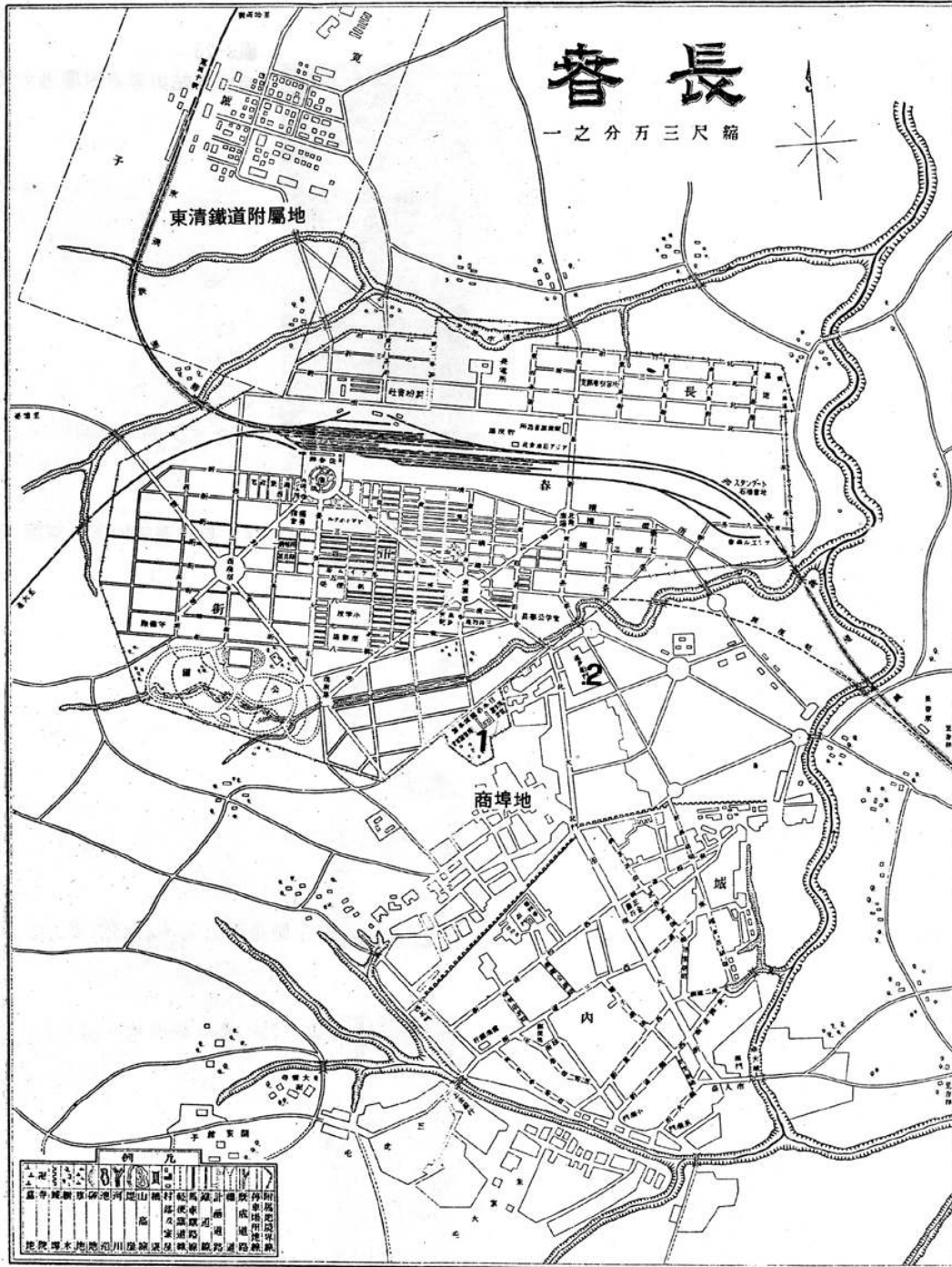
¹¹⁷ *NTSG*, 1930, vol. 57, yanlun 1; *Ibid.*, 1928, bubian, xuanyan 1-2; *SSG*, 1930, vol. 57, yanlun 1.

¹¹⁸ For instance, in Guangzhou, a small island called Shamian was divided into two concessions given to France and the United Kingdom since 1859. The two European countries had overlaid a grid plan to Shamian, dividing the island into numerous regular land plots for easy land sale. The British occupied 82 land plots, in which 6 were reserved for the embassy, one for the church, and the remaining 55 were open for auction. See Yang and Zhongguo jindai chengshi yu jianzhu bianzhuzhu, *City and Architecture in Modern China: 1840-1949*, 17.

¹¹⁹ At first, the Russians built the Chinese Eastern Railway to connect Harbin with Vlavostok. After Russia lost its control over Manchuria to Japan in 1905, most of the southern branch of the Chinese Eastern Railway was transferred to Japan and became the South Manchurian Railway. See Elleman and Kotkin, *Manchurian Railways and the Opening of China*.

¹²⁰ The Russian Vladimir Saharoff was the chief planner. He pulled in two German planners into the team. See Koshizawa, *Zhongguo dongbei dushi jihua shi [Shokuminchi Manshū no toshi keikaku/ History of Urban Planning in Northeastern China]*, 49-51.

¹²¹ Buck, "Remaking the Chinese City," 76.



(Source: Koshizawa, *History of Urban Planning in Northeastern China*, 39.)

Fig. 2.07 City plan of Changchun, 1917.

Compared to these foreign efforts, the Chinese had fallen behind in the area of modern city planning, until Sun Yat-sen, of all the people, who between 1910s and 1920s fervently advocated a national policy of urban reconstruction to spearhead

China's development.¹²² Sun Yat-sen actively published his ideas of developing modern ports, planning a garden city with attractive parks, remodelling Chinese housing, etc.¹²³ The southern city where Sun Yat-sen's power was based, Guangzhou, became his testing ground to experiment new urban interventions. By 1918, Guangzhou launched a series of urban improvement projects, including the demolition of city walls, the widening of existing roads, the construction of markets and parks, etc.¹²⁴ His son Sun Ke (often translated as Sun Fo), a graduate from Columbia University, became the mayor of Guangzhou in 1921 and wanted to adopt modern city planning theories from the West. He came to know Henry Murphy, an American architect who had been designing university campuses and banks in Changsha, Nanjing, Shanghai, and Beijing since 1914. Henry Murphy helped Sun Ke to prepare the blueprint for Guangzhou, which was comprised of a Baroque city plan with a splendid central group of buildings.¹²⁵ Although the plan was not realized in Guangzhou due to wars, the good partnership forged by Sun Ke and Henry Murphy had been carried on to Nanjing.

2.2.3 Planning a Rational and Aesthetic City with Scientific Methods

In December 1, 1928, the Nationalist Government authorized Sun Ke and Lin Yimin, a Harvard-trained engineer, to set up the Office of Technical Experts for Capital Design (*guodu sheji jishu junyuan banshichu*; hereafter, the Expert Office) as a subcommittee to the National Capital Reconstruction Commission (*Shoudu jianshe weiyuanhui*).¹²⁶ Sun Ke recruited to the Expert Office four American consultants who had worked with him in Guangzhou -- Henry Murphy, Ernest Goodrich, Colonel Irving Moller and Theodore McCrosky -- "to avoid mistakes and to offer guidance."¹²⁷ Henry Murphy also helped the Expert Office to gain international attention. His grand views of Nanjing's future graced the pages of newspapers and magazines overseas, such as the *New York Times* and *Asia*, where Murphy proclaimed an "architectural renaissance" was underway in China.¹²⁸

¹²² See Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "Adaptive Architecture," 1914-1935*, 177-180.

¹²³ Sun Yat-sen's proposals can be found in Sun, *The International Development of China*.

¹²⁴ See Zhang, *Studies and Preservation of Modern Chinese Architecture: Anthology of 2004 Conference on Modern History of Chinese Architecture*, 472.

¹²⁵ For works of Henry Murphy in China, see Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "Adaptive Architecture," 1914-1935*, 181.

¹²⁶ The job to plan Nanjing had been changed hands for many times. For the political battle between the Office of Technical Experts for Capital Design and the National Capital Reconstruction Commission, see Wang, "On the Capital Plan of Nanking in the Nationalist Era of China, 1928-1937."

¹²⁷ *Guodu sheji jishu junyuan banshichu, SDJH*, preface.

¹²⁸ Musgrove, "Monumentality in Nanjing's Sun Yat-sen Memorial Park," 109.

By the end of December 1929, the Expert Office submitted a comprehensive planning proposal, the *Capital Plan [Shoudu jihua]*, to the Nationalist Government. The *Capital Plan* covered a range of projects to cater to an anticipated population increase from 497,500 in 1928 to over two million in a hundred years' time. Table 2.01) Lin Yimin, Director of the Expert Office, declared, "It will promote urban design to all cities in China. The influence will be massive!"¹²⁹

Table 2.01 Proposed projects under the *Capital Plan*.

Projects	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Central Administrative Zone (1 st phrase)	■	■				
Municipal Administrative Zone				■	■	■
Road, Drainage and Sewage System	■	■	■	■	■	■
Railways	■	■				
Ferry and Piers	■					
Airports		■	■			
Ports			■			
Plumbing System	■	■	■	■	■	■
Improvement to Xuanwu Lake and waterway						■
Garden at Xinjiekou	■	■				
Schools (6 numbers)				■	■	■
Employees' and Poor People's Housing	■	■	■	■	■	■

(Source: Wang, "On the Capital Plan of Nanking in the Nationalist Era of China, 1928-1937," 175.)

According to Lin Yimin, an urban plan was "the use of scientific methods to guide both the active construction and the passive tidying of all urban artifacts."¹³⁰ Although Lin never clearly explained the meaning of "scientific methods," a possible interpretation was the use of zoning as a basis of development control. Zoning helped to restructure the chaotic urban environment into segregated areas based on functions, creating new rationality to understand the modern city. This method was foreign to the Chinese, who used to plan their cities according to cosmology, social hierarchy and ceremonial order.

In the *Capital Plan*, the Expert Office proposed a zoning plan and a corresponding zoning regulation, patterned upon American zoning ordinances (notably New York's Zoning Act of 1916), to restrict land use, density, size of land plot, permissible built area, building height, and site coverage.¹³¹ (Table 2.02) The walled city was mainly reserved for the Residential Zones, the Commercial Zones, and the Municipal Administration Zone. Outside the city wall, two Industrial Zones were planned on both sides of the Yangtze River, whereas the Central Administrative Zone was located at the foot of the Purple Mountain. Furthermore, parks were planned in numerous places inside and outside the walled city. Greenery would

¹²⁹ Lin, "City Planning and Nanjing."

¹³⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹³¹ Cody, "American Planning in Republican China, 1911-1937," 362.

occupy 14.4 per cent of the city area, a ratio similar to that of Washington and far outnumbered that of London and New York.¹³² (Fig. 2.08)

Table 2.02 Functional zones under the *Capital Plan*.

Name	Sub-category	Location	Remarks
Central Administrative Zone		To the east of the walled city, on the foot of the Purple Mountain, close to the Tomb of the Ming Emperor and the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum.	To accommodate the Nationalist Government with an expected employee population of 100,000.
Municipal Administrative Zone	Administrative area	At Dazhongting	For government offices.
	Cultural area	At Wutaishan	For cultural buildings.
Park Zone		Inside the walled city.	In numerous places.
		Outside the walled city.	In numerous places.
Residential Zone	Residential Zone One	East-western area.	For single family houses.
	Residential Zone Two	Usually along the Zhongshan Avenue.	For multi-family houses.
	Residential Zone Three	Southern area.	For multi-family houses.
Commercial Zone	Commercial Zone One	Numerous small areas scattered around the city and mixed with the residential areas.	Allocated for small business.
	Commercial Zone Two	At the Ming Palace area.	Allocated for big business and wholesaling.
Industrial Zone	Industrial Zone One	To the west of the walled city.	Normal industry.
	Industrial Zone Two	Across the Yangtze River.	Big and polluting industry.

(Source: Summarized from Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, 145-170.)

¹³² Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *SDJH*, 63-64.

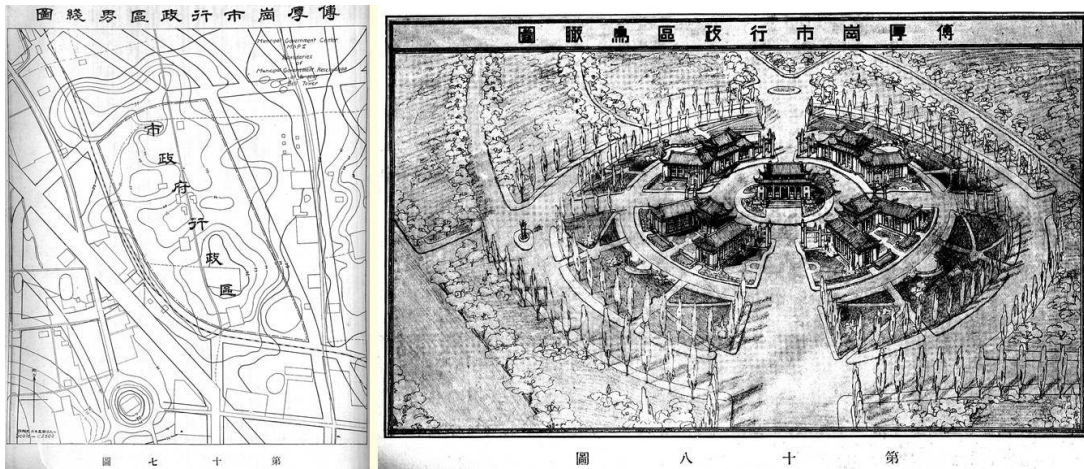


(Source: redrawn after Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 56.)
 Fig. 2.08 Proposed zoning plan under the *Capital Plan*.

As Nanjing was the seats for both the Nationalist and Municipal Governments, the Expert Office suggested locating them at separate sites. The Municipal Administration Zone was planned at two locations at the heart of the city, one for government offices and the other for cultural and recreational facilities. (Fig. 2.09 & Fig. 2.10) On the contrary, the Central Administrative Zone was planned outside the boundary of the city wall, at the foot of the Purple Mountain near two national monuments, the historical Tomb of the First Ming Emperor and the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum. (Fig. 2.11) Citing Canberra of Australia, Ankara of Turkey, and New Delhi of India as precedents, Lin Yimin argued that it was more flexible to plan the Central Administrative Zone on the outskirts of Nanjing, where adequate land could be acquired for the 77,580-acre zone -- bigger than the National Mall at Washington -- to accommodate an anticipated staff population of 100,000.¹³³ Claiming that “the capital was the center of politics of the entire nation,” the Expert Office demanded that buildings at the Central Administrative Zone “must be solemn and visually impressive to both Chinese and foreign visitors.”¹³⁴

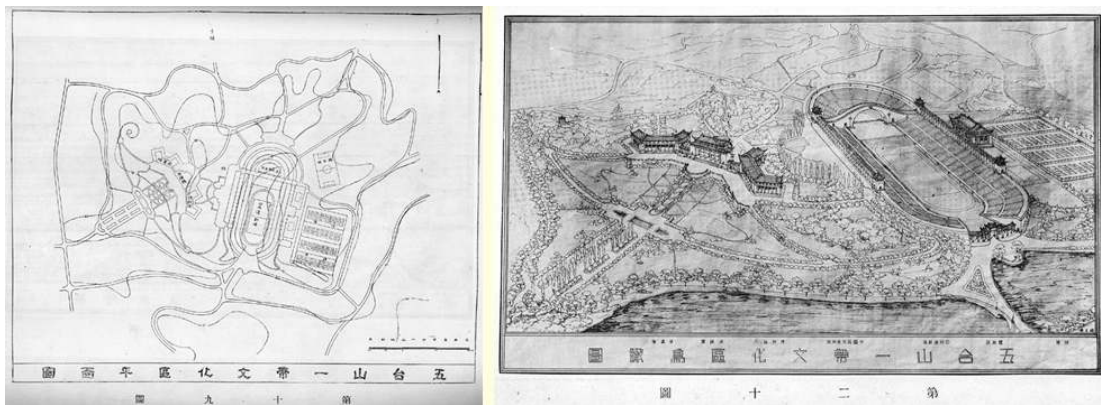
¹³³ Lin, “Submission to the National Capital Reconstruction Commission.”

¹³⁴ The Expert Office organized an international planning competition for the Central Administrative Zone, and invited Henry Murphy and six other local and foreign experts as the judges. The competition explicitly asked for a Chinese design, which to some of the judges like Henry Murphy, was the key selection criteria. The competition received nine entries from four Chinese teams. Nevertheless, according to the judges’ opinion, none of the submissions deserved the top and



(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 17 & 18)

Fig. 2.09 Proposed Municipal Administrative Zone at Dazhongting for government offices.

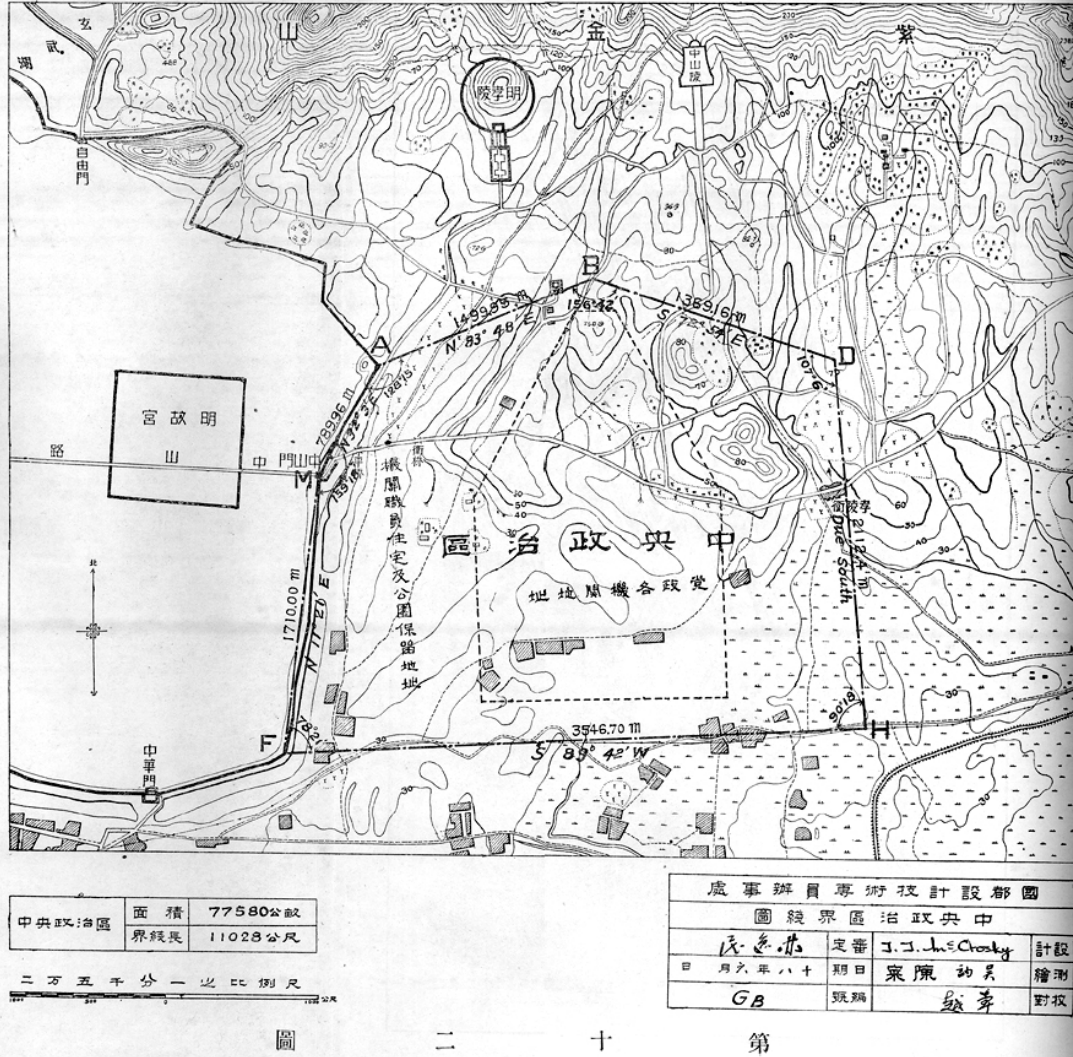


(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 19 & 20.)

Fig. 2.10 Proposed Municipal Administrative Zone at Wutaishan for cultural and recreational uses.

second prizes. In the end, they only awarded two third prizes and two fourth prizes. Overall, most of the judges criticized that the two winning designs ran far over the 6 million *yuan* budget set by the Expert Office. Ibid.

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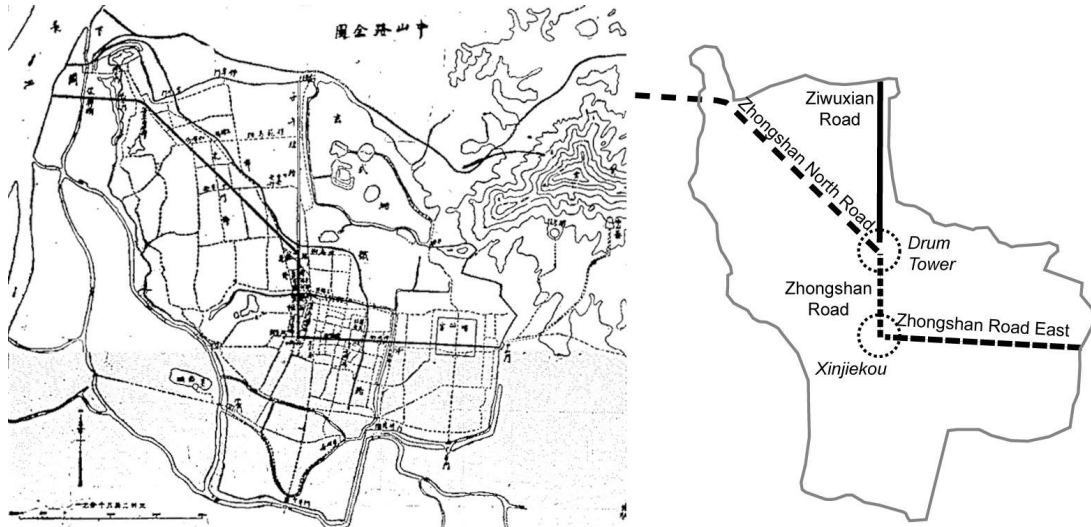
(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 12)

Fig. 2.11 Proposed Central Administrative Zone on the foot of the Purple Mountain.

A new road map was overlaid by the Expert Office on the proposed new zoning plan. By the time the *Capital Plan* was made, a 12 kilometre-long, 40 meter-wide boulevard called Zhongshan Avenue (*Zhongshan dadao*) had already been completed in Nanjing. Named after Sun Yat-sen,¹³⁵ the avenue was specially constructed for the parade of casket and mourners on Sun Yat-sen's funeral in June 1929.¹³⁶ It connects the pier at the Yangtze River all the way through the city center

¹³⁵ Sun Yat-sen has another name, Sun Zhongshan.

to the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum on the Purple Mountain. (Fig. 2.12) The entire avenue was lined with trees similar to the Parisian boulevards. (Fig. 2.13 & Fig. 2.14)



(Source: *Capital Administration Weekly*, September 3, 1928.)

Fig. 2.12 Map showing the proposed Zhongshan Avenue and Ziwuxian Road.

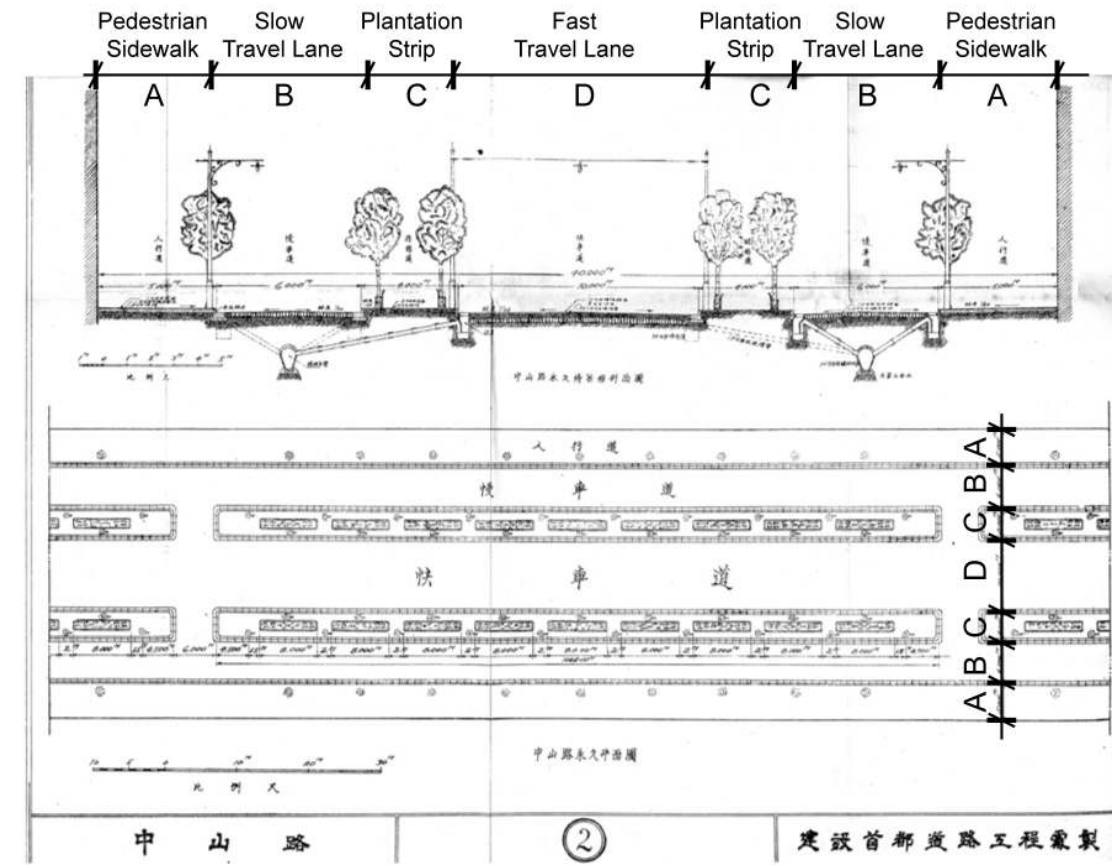


(Source: Ye, *Old Nanjing: Reflections of Scenes on the Qinhuai River*, 59.)

Fig. 2.13 The Zhongshan East Road with five lanes, 1936.

¹³⁶ Sun Yat-sen died of cancer in 1925. His body was preserved and housed at the Baiyun Temple in Beijing. After reunifying China in 1927, Nationalist leaders decided to move Sun's body back to the national capital Nanjing. The funeral was held in June 1, 1929. Sun's casket was paraded through the Zhongshan Avenue. Hence, the avenue was also called "Welcome the Casket Avenue (*Yichen dadao*)."

For details of the parade, see Chang, "Entire Chinese Nation to Mourn during Period of State Funeral," 588. See also Howard, "China Pays Homage to Sun Yat-sen in Great Burial Ceremony," 57.



Name	Commence	Complete*	Total Length	A	B	C	D	Total Width
Zhongshan North Road	Aug 1928	May 1929	5662	5.0	6.0	4.0	10.0	40.0
Zhongshan Road	Aug 1928	April 1929	1762	5.0	7.5	1.5	12.0	40.0
Zhongshan East Road	Dec 1928	April 1929	4067	5.0	6.0	4.0	10.0	40.0

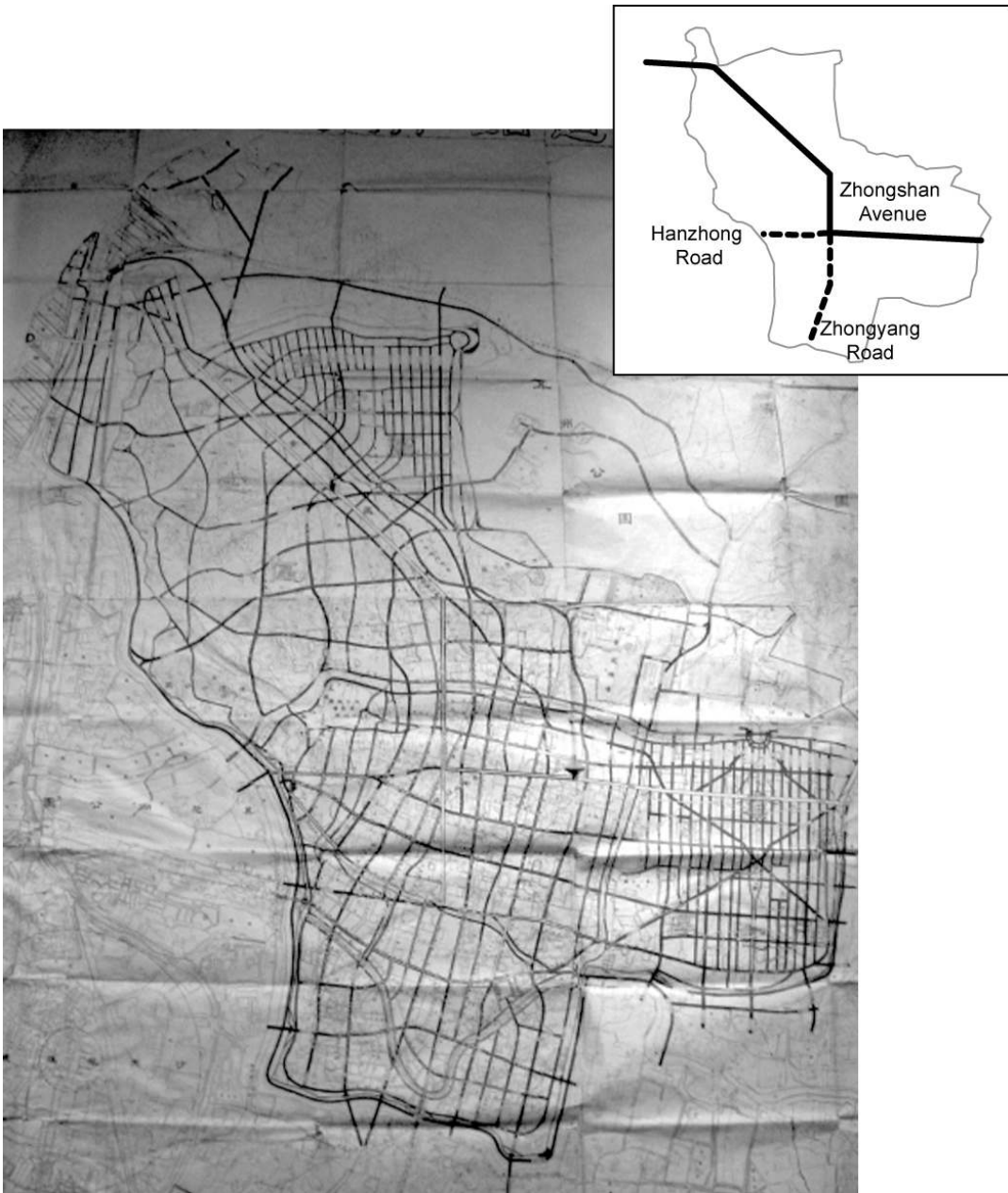
* The completion of the fast lane (d) only.

(Source: Image from Jianshe shoudu daolu gongcheng chu, *Work Report of the Capital Road Works Department*, no page no.; The figures are based on Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing's Roads*.)

Fig. 2.14 A typical section of the Zhongshan Avenue.

In the *Capital Plan*, the Expert Office added Zhongyang Road and Hanzhong Road as the southern and western extensions to the Zhongshan Avenue. (Fig. 2.15) These roads, which formed the main axes of Nanjing, met at the junction Xinjiekou (literally, the new road junction), where a plaza was created. (Fig. 2.16 & Fig. 2.17) Jeffrey Cody remarks that the design of Xinjiekou was strikingly similar to Eugene

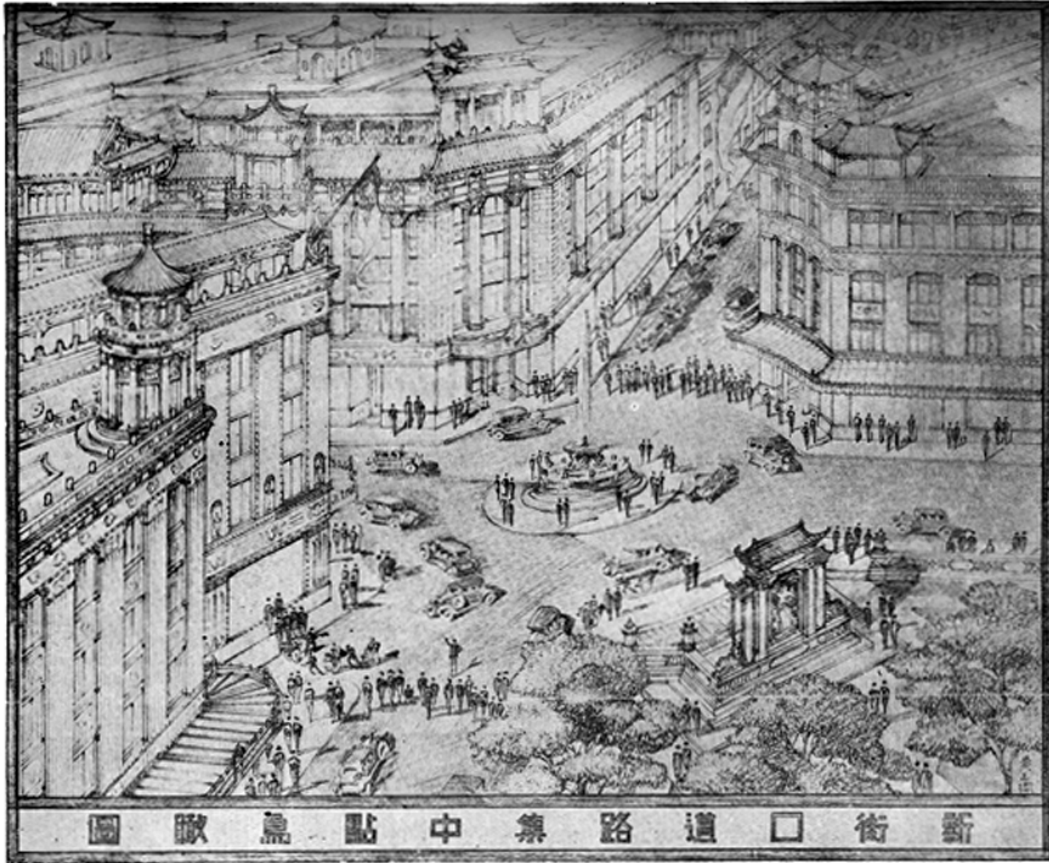
Henard's design for Paris.¹³⁷ (Fig. 2.18) Only the most prestige enterprises, such as banks, cinemas, department stores, etc., could share the precious land at Xinjiekou. Until today, Xinjiekou remains an epitome of Nanjing's modernity.



(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 21)

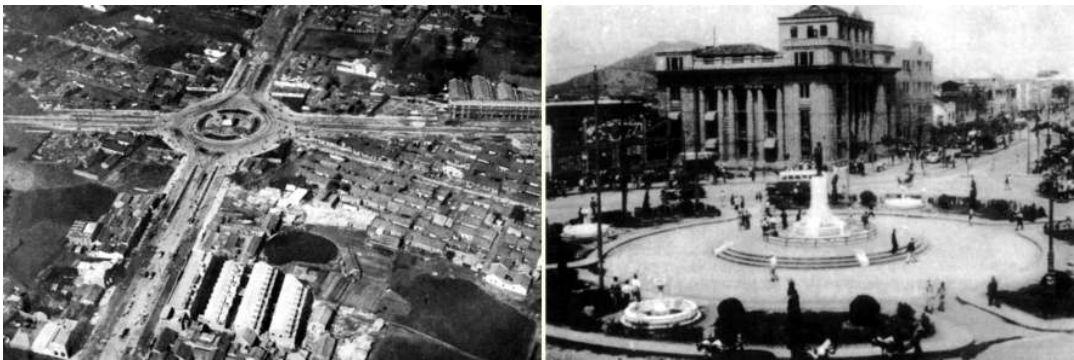
Fig. 2.15 The proposed *Capital Road Network Map*, 1929.

¹³⁷ Cody, "American Planning in Republican China, 1911-1937," 358.



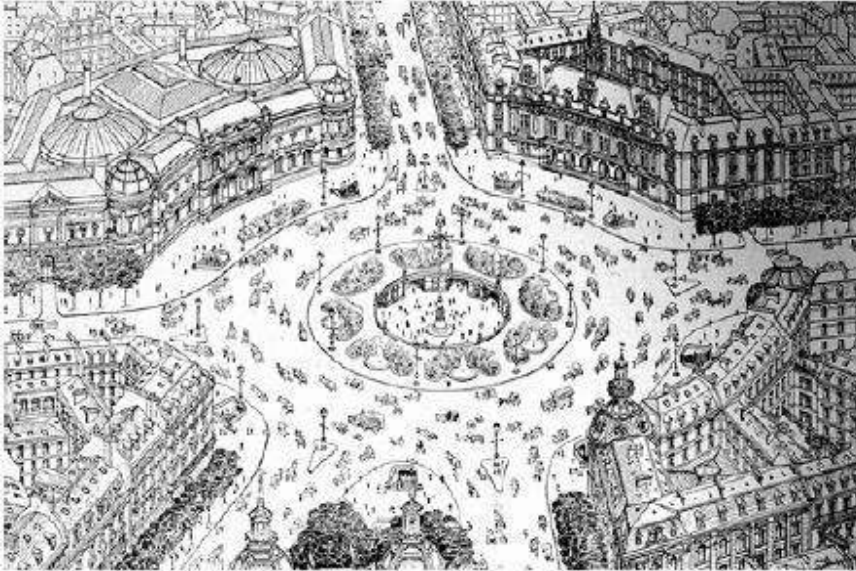
(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 23.)

Fig. 2.16 The Xinjiekou traffic plaza proposed in the *Capital Plan*.



(Source: Ye et al., *Capital Gazetteer*, 1: 230)

Fig. 2.17 Xinjiekou in the late 1920s.

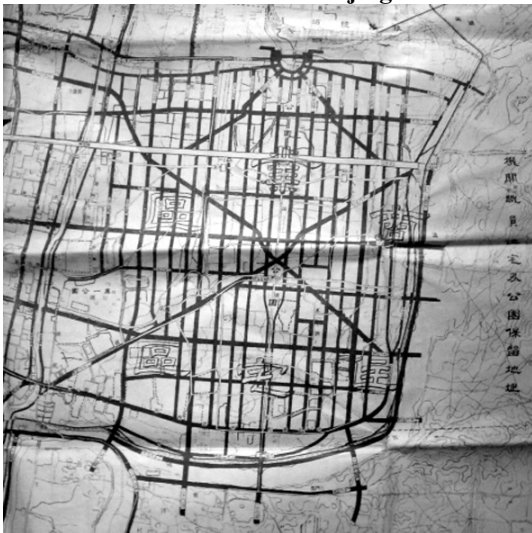


(Source: Henard, *Etudes sur les Transformations de Paris*, 79.)

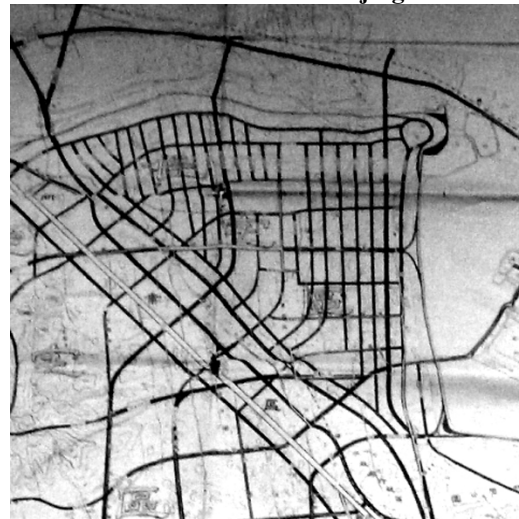
Fig. 2.18 Eugene Henard's roundabout in Paris.

Roads were planned in a regular grid pattern in both the Commercial and Residential zones. The grid plan divided the zones into regular city blocks for easy land development. (Fig. 2.19) In the case of the Commercial Zone, each city block measured as big as 320m by 100m.¹³⁸

Commercial Zone in East Nanjing



Residential Zone in North Nanjing

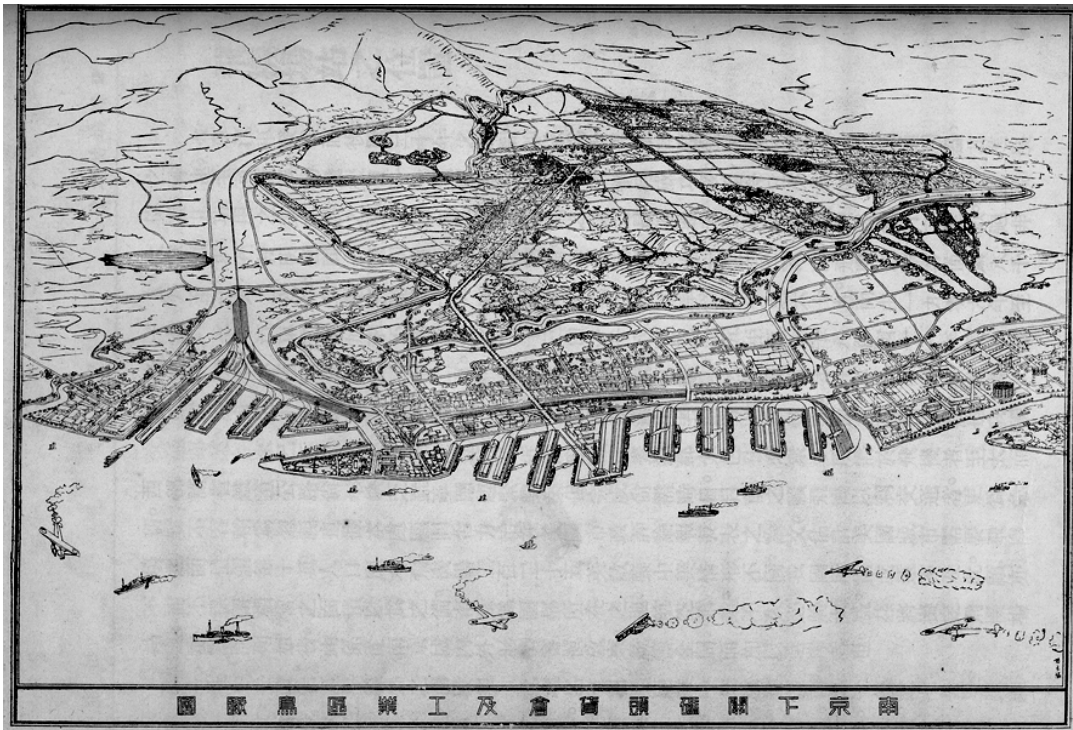


(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 21.)

Fig. 2.19 Proposed road patterns for the Commercial and Residential Zones respectively.

¹³⁸ Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *SDJH*, 41.

The *Capital Plan* paid great emphasis on infrastructure development, reflecting the strong engineering background of the Expert Office. The old piers at Yangtze River would be developed into a modern port. The capital would have two train terminals and four airports. (Fig. 2.20) In additions, *Capital Plan* devoted lengthy sections to modern services, covering topics such as electricity, street lights, drinking water, drainage and sewage.



(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 44.)

Fig. 2.20 The future development of Nanjing under the *Capital Plan*.

The *Capital Plan* was the most comprehensive planning proposal ever made in Nationalist China. It epitomized the modern, rational, and aesthetic city that the government envisioned. This process required great amount of money, effort, and above all, land.

2.3 DISPOSSESSION IN THE NAME OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST

2.3.1 Compulsory Land Requisition for Public Works

The reconstruction of Nanjing presented an inevitable creative destruction process: to create a rational and an aesthetic city, the government had to first raze hundreds, if not thousands of homes, shops, and farms. “This kind of destruction is the first step of

reconstruction,” the government propagandized, “reconstruction follows destruction.”¹³⁹ When more and more public works got underway, resistances from inhabitants against land requisition and forced eviction became frequent. For instance, in the summer of 1927, the Public Works Bureau set to clear all illegal shelters and food stalls on all the bridges in Nanjing to ensure smooth traffic. Having squatted on the bridges for decades, most inhabitants considered themselves possessing the right to stay, or at least, to be compensated. They ignored the eradication order and refused to move out. On the day of the clearance, violence between squatters and the officials broke out; some devastated squatters committed suicide as a form of protest.¹⁴⁰ Incidents like these were widely reported in the press and embarrassed the government.

The tension between the government and the Nanjing people intensified during the construction of the long Zhongshan Avenue. The avenue cut across the busiest part of Nanjing and deviated significantly from existing street patterns. (Fig. 2.21) To facilitate the construction, the Municipal Government demanded the removal of all existing structures on the proposed route -- no matter if publicly or privately owned.¹⁴¹ In the end, the project necessitated the requisition of 65,000 sq. meters land, the demolition of 95,000 sq. meters houses, the relocation of 497 households, and the destruction of 90,000 sq. meters farmland.¹⁴² Among the requisitioned properties, almost 80 per cent were privately owned.¹⁴³ Affected inhabitants were compensated by the government only if they could provide proof of land titles.¹⁴⁴ (Table 2.03)

¹³⁹ “Propaganda Outline of Nanjing Special Municipal City’s Newly Constructed Road.”

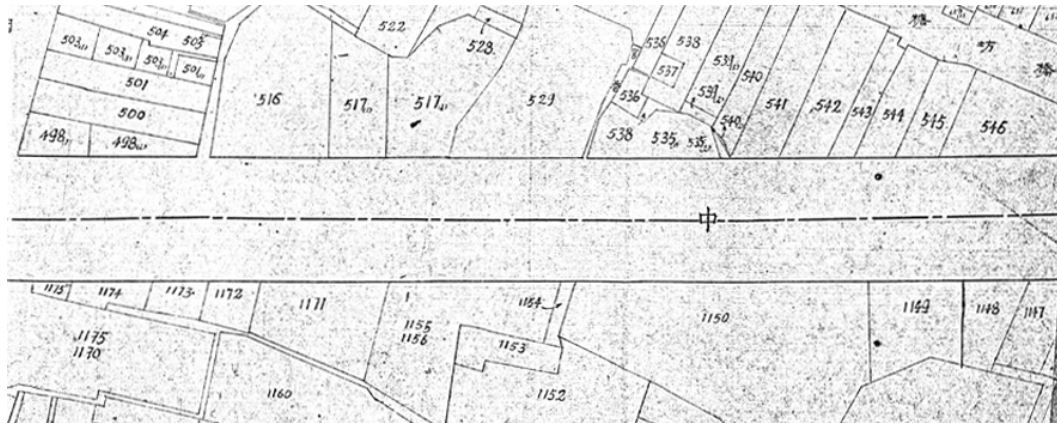
¹⁴⁰ Wang, “Licheng beishi.”

¹⁴¹ “Ceremony to be held for the opening of Welcome Coffin Avenue,” 1.

¹⁴² Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing’s Municipal Administration and Construction*, 36; Luo, *Historical Materials on National Reconstruction before the War: Capital Construction*, 2:142–143.

¹⁴³ Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing’s Municipal Administration and Construction*, 36; Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, 59–62.

¹⁴⁴ “Ceremony to be held for the opening of Welcome Coffin Avenue,” 1.



(Source: “Land Registry Drawings along the Zhongshan Avenue,” Nanjing City Archives file 1001-3-469.)

Fig. 2.21 The Zhongshan Avenue had cut across existing urban fabric.

Table 2.03 Number of properties affected by the construction of the Zhongshan Avenue.

Land Ownership	Area (square <i>zhang</i> *)	%	No. of Household Affected	%
State Land	3,594.9002	18.30	40	8.05
Public Land	731.3103	3.72	17	3.42
Private Land	15,321.8011	77.98	440	88.53
Total	19,648.0116	100.00	497	100.00

* One *zhang* equals approximately 3.33 meters.

(Source: The figures are based on Luo ed., *Historical Materials on National Construction before the War: Capital Construction*, 2:142-143.)

Over 10,000 inhabitants organized petition and distributed pamphlets against road works and land requisition in Nanjing.¹⁴⁵ They asked to see Chiang Kai-shek, the Generalissimo of the Nationalist Government, but Chiang refused.¹⁴⁶ The Nanjing Merchants Association also publicly criticized the Municipal Government for giving an unreasonably short notice to affected inhabitants “without even mention of the amount of compensation, making the public doubtful.”¹⁴⁷ The association therefore requested the government to: (1) re-route the Zhongshan Avenue and minimize the

¹⁴⁵ Mayor Liu’s response to the petitions and pamphlets could be found in Liu, *Excerpts of Mayor Liu’s Administration Report*, 58–63.

A number of petitions were filed in “Nanjing Municipality Requisitioned Land to Improve City Appearance and to Construct State Buildings.”

¹⁴⁶ Feng, *Chiang Kai-shek as I Know Him*, 17.

¹⁴⁷ “Petition from the Nanjing Merchant Association to the Municipal Government against Demolition.”

extent of land requisition; (2) give landowners with just compensation; and (3) provide adequate time for relocation.

Mayor Liu Jiwen further angered inhabitants in October 1928 by proposing the nationalization of all land within 60 meters from the edges of the new Zhongshan Avenue.¹⁴⁸ There were two reasons behind this proposal. First of all, Mayor Liu foresaw that land price would be hugely increased upon the completion of the avenue. Plausibly influenced by Sun Yat-sen's theory of unearned increment, Liu believed that the rise in land value was a result of public efforts and had nothing to do with individual landowners. He therefore suggested nationalizing the land when the price was still low, so that the State could profiteer in the future. Second, Liu wanted to control the design of buildings abutting the Zhongshan Avenue. He worried that landowners would construct buildings in random styles, thus disturbing the appearance of the avenue. After nationalization, the government could develop the land and construct buildings with uniform design.

Mayor Liu's nationalization proposal soon received many attacks from the Nanjing people. Due to the severe opposition, Liu abandoned the proposal, but he managed to formulate a regulation to govern the design of buildings abutting the Zhongshan Avenue.¹⁴⁹ Later, the government extended the design control to cover all new roads.¹⁵⁰ Real estate developers who had invested on land along the Zhongshan Avenue petitioned against the policy, but Mayor Liu commented that the capital's development was more important than these developers' profits.¹⁵¹

Opponents of forced eviction often employed the rhetoric of the late Sun Yat-sen to lodge their complaints. One opponent, for example, pointed out that the government did not have adequate financial capacity to develop the capital, so the requisitioned land would end up in the hands of the capitalists. This contradicted Sun Yat-sen's teaching to protect people's livelihood.¹⁵² Chiang Kai-shek's military rival, Feng Yuxiang, also criticized that taking people's land at will was "an act of a warlord."¹⁵³ He argued that the excessive spending in the construction of the Zhongshan Avenue did not follow the humble spirit of Sun Yat-sen. "The key to reconstruction was people's livelihood," Feng highlighted Sun Yat-sen's teachings and urged the government to abandon the ambitious capital reconstruction and focus on works that could "ease the pain and bitterness of the people."¹⁵⁴ In a meeting with affected inhabitants, Feng instigated them to oppose forced land requisition, "this is

¹⁴⁸ See Liu, "Report from Mayor Liu at the 12th Commemoration Week."

¹⁴⁹ "Construction Method for Building along Both Sides of the Zhongshan Avenue."

¹⁵⁰ "Propaganda Outline of Nanjing Special Municipal City's Newly Constructed Road."

¹⁵¹ Liu, "About the Purchasing on Land along Both Sides of the Zhongshan Avenue."

¹⁵² See "Nanjing Municipality Requisitioned Land to Improve City Appearance and to Construct State Buildings."

¹⁵³ "Nanjing Holds Welcoming Meeting."

¹⁵⁴ "The Key to Reconstruction is People's Livelihood."

the Republic of China... a democratic country. Without our consents, who dare to tear down our homes?"¹⁵⁵

The *North China Herald* also commented: "If Dr. Sun could know of the thousands who have had their houses torn down by Liu Chi-wen (Liu Jiwen), Mayor of Nanking, with nothing but the most derisory compensation, so that many, we are told, are actually beggared, he would, as one Chinese put it to us, turn in his grave."¹⁵⁶ The growing resentment also made foreign countries worried about the political stability of China. U.S. vice-consul in Nanjing reported:

"The feeling against the government in Nanking, due to its methods of improving the capital is rapidly reaching a point where it may cause a spontaneous overturn leaving the way open to the communists... on the reasoning that whatever change may come can be an improvement."¹⁵⁷

During the height of the struggles, Mayor Liu Jiwen defended that the construction of the Zhongshan Avenue did not violate Sun Yat-sen's teaching and refused to reroute it.¹⁵⁸ He claimed that the land requisition "was not for the interest of the government;" rather, it was for the interest of the public.¹⁵⁹ He commented that those petitioners "lacked a broad vision." "Sacrificing the pain of the minority for the happiness of the majority, this is revolutionary," Liu Jiwen claimed, "and suffering a temporary pain for permanent reconstruction, this is worthy."¹⁶⁰ Therefore, he concluded that the government should not stop the capital reconstruction simply because of the pain of a small number of people. He admitted, however, that the government had yet to compensate affected landowners due to the difficulty in land valuation.¹⁶¹

2.3.2 The Beginning of Property-Government in Modern China

Hoping to provide a legal basis for land requisition, the government formulated the *Land Requisition Law* and the *Nanjing Special Municipal Government Regulations on*

¹⁵⁵ Feng, *Chiang Kai-shek as I Know Him*, 17.

¹⁵⁶ "Dr. Sun Yat-sen." Cited in Musgrove, "The Nation's Concrete Heart: Architecture, Planning, and Ritual in Nanjing, 1927--1937," 145.

¹⁵⁷ J. Hall Paxton, U.S. Vice Consul at Nanjing, report to U.S. Minister J.V.A. MacMurray on events and conditions in the consular district during August 1928. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 144.

¹⁵⁸ Liu, "Announcement to City Masses on the Construction of the Zhongshan Avenue."

¹⁵⁹ Liu, *Excerpts of Mayor Liu's Administration Report*, 86-87.

¹⁶⁰ Liu, "The Construction Process of the Zhongshan Avenue." Similar comments by Mayor Liu Jiwen can also be found in Liu, "Reply to City Masses' Request to Open up the Nanjing Road Plan."

¹⁶¹ Liu, "The Construction Process of the Zhongshan Avenue."

Land Requisition in the summer of 1928.¹⁶² These laws formally recognized the State’s eminent domain power:

Land lawfully requisitioned for public works. The State was empowered to requisition land (1) for the development of public works (*gonggong shiye*), or (2) for redistribution to facilitate agricultural development or to improve peasants’ livelihood.¹⁶³ (In this dissertation, I discuss only the first condition, which was referred to urban context.) By “public works,” it meant works related to the construction of public buildings, traffic and communications, ports, public health facilities, improvement to villages and towns, hydro-engineering, education and charity, state-owned enterprises, defense and military, and “any other facilities for public uses.”¹⁶⁴ From 1928 to June 1932, there were a total of 141 cases of land requisition along the Zhongshan Avenue. The record shows that the construction of public buildings and the development of traffic and communications were the major reasons for land requisition; they equaled to 39 and 30.5 per cent of the total cases respectively. (Table 2.04)

Table 2.04 Purposes of land requisition along the Zhongshan Avenue, January 1928 to June 1932.

Type of Public Works	No. of Cases	%
Public Building	55	39.0
Traffic and Communications	43	30.5
Ports	0	0.0
Public Health Facilities	4	2.8
Improvement to Villages and Towns	9	6.4
Hydro-engineering	1	0.7
Education and Charity	9	6.4
State-owned Enterprises	0	0.0
Defense and National Security	14	9.9
Other facilities for Public Uses	6	4.3
Total	141	100.0

(Source: Liu, *Study on the Land Requisition of Nanjing*, 94:49615.)

Setting up of the Land Requisition Auditing Committee. The government set up the Land Requisition Auditing Committee (*tudi zhengshou shencha weiyuanhui*) to define the land requisition area and to estimate the amount of compensation. Chairman of the committee was the mayor of Nanjing, whereas the four members were the Director of the Financial Bureau, the Director of the Land Bureau, a Peasants’ Association representative, and a Merchants Association representative.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² “[Nanjing Special Municipal Government Land Expropriation Regulation].”

¹⁶³ Article 1, *Land Requisition Law*.

¹⁶⁴ Article 2, *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁵ On the organization and function of the committee, see Liu, *Study on the Land Requisition of Nanjing*, 49656–49667.

No compensation to squatters. No matter how long they had been living in the area, squatters would be evicted by the municipal government without any compensation, based on the simple argument that squatting on public land was by nature illegal. Only inhabitants with proof of land title could receive compensation from the government.

The compensation package. The government would compensate eligible inhabitants with the land cost, a demolition fee if there was structure on the requisitioned land, and a relocation allowance. (Fig. 2.22 & Fig. 2.23) Nevertheless, due to the tight budget, the Municipal Government reserved the right to substitute up to 50 per cent of the monetary compensation with government bonds.

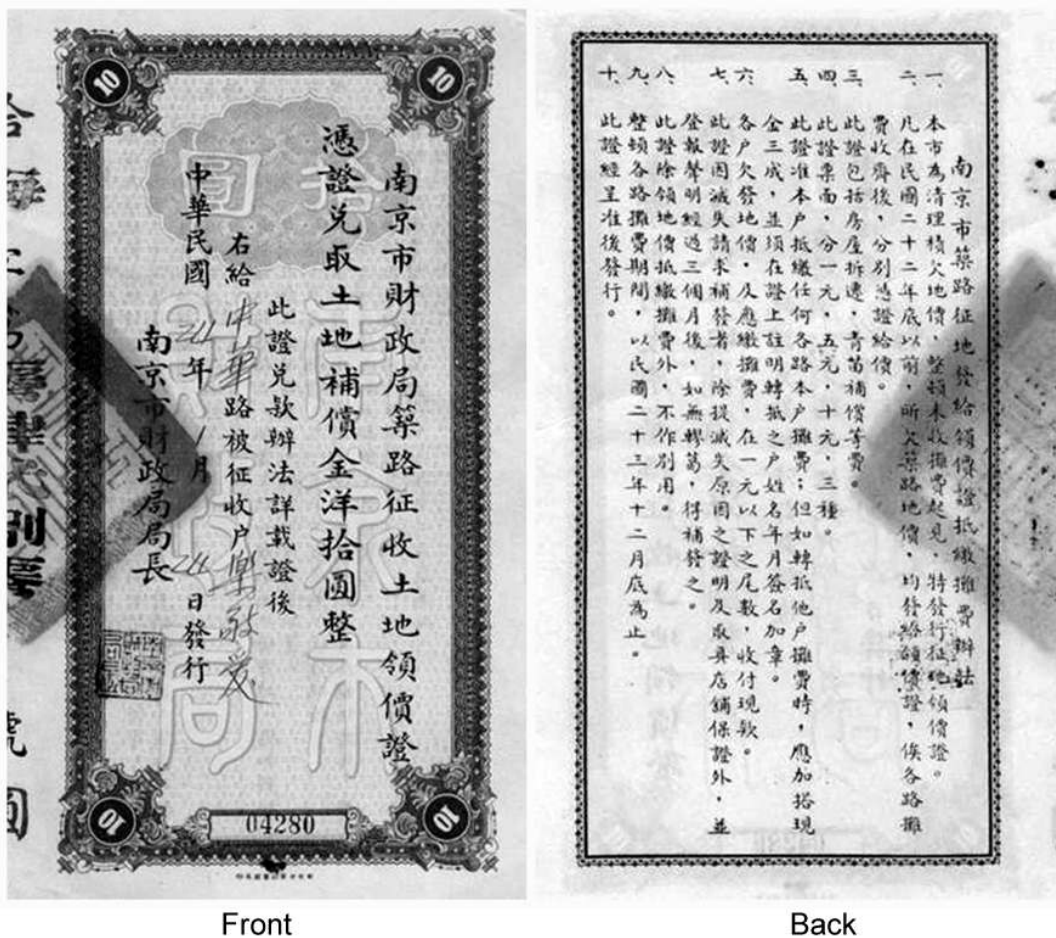


Fig. 2.22 A land compensation certificate issued by the Financial Bureau, 1935.

收用 土地分戶面積折讓費地價計算表 第 4 張

姓 名	陶長榮	王漢英	葛麟麟	胡長高	陳 姓	張 姓	譚 姓	王 姓	吳漢卿	周志成	程海浮	艾樹忠	武克勤	總計	備 註
附屬折讓及收用土地面積															
收用土地	3,1438	3,0171	5,7113	14,8708	14,4371	3,3444	8,5101	4,0524	13,3607	7,0059	7,0665	5,1161	2,4165	82,5472	土地每份折讓費一元五角
收用池塘															
瓦房	1,2014	3,0171	4,6911	14,7652	12,9339	3,3444	7,6160	3,3166	12,5408	6,7867	7,0665	5,1161	2,4165	82,5472	瓦房每份折讓費一元五角
草房															
磚牆	2,2143	2,3704	7,1446	13,4171	12,8530	5,3334	9,1040	5,3330	5,3064	9,9269	6,0241	4,1362	2,7918	82,5472	磚牆每份折讓費一元五角
青苗															
墳墓															
樓房														55,7476	樓房每份折讓費一元五角
應發折讓費及地價金額															
土地補償	125.75	120.68	228.45	593.23	577.51	133.78	340.40	162.02	534.43	280.24	282.66	207.04	46.66	1101.87	
池塘補償															
瓦房折遷	8.55	21.12	32.84	103.38	97.68	23.41	53.31	23.22	87.79	47.51	49.47	36.23	16.92	1374.96	
草房折遷														21.33	
磚牆折遷	22.1	25.7	7.14	13.42	12.53	5.33	9.10	5.33	5.31	9.94	6.03	4.14	2.79	374.35	
青苗補償															
墳墓遷讓															
樓房折遷														55.7476	
合 計	136.51	144.37	268.43	710.03	687.72	162.52	402.81	190.57	627.53	337.69	338.16	247.41	116.37	1101.85	
附 記															

(Source: "Cost Sharing for the Western Section of Jiankang Road," Nanjing City Archives file 1001-10-19.)

Fig. 2.23 Government record on the compensation to each landowner affected by the construction of the Jiankang Road.

A scholar from the Graduate School of Land Economics (*Dizheng xueyuan*) under the Central Political School (*Zhongyang zhengzhi xuexiao*),¹⁶⁶ Liu Xiuqing, commented that there was inequality in the negotiation for compensation. According to law, landowners could not object to state requisition. Having this advantage, the government always pulled down the compensation amount. For instance, the Municipal Government compensated landowners affected by the construction of the

¹⁶⁶ The Graduate School of Land Economics (*Dizheng xueyuan*), under the Central Political Institute (*Zhongyang zhengzhi xuexiao*) was founded in 1932 and dismissed in 1940. During the period, the College of Land Economics had sent out 168 researchers to investigate the land politics and administration in various parts of China. A total of 166 investigative papers were written, which were later edited by Hsiao Tseng into a series called *Materials on the Land Problem of 1920 China [Minguo ershi niandai Zhongguo dalu tudi wenti ziliao]*. However, because of the Sino-Japanese war, the college was temporarily closed in 1940, and was changed to the "Special Program of Land Economics." In 1943, the special program was changed to the "Department of Land Economics." Unfortunately, the department ceased operation in 1947 due to the civil war in China. The department resumed operation in 1963 under the National Chengchi University in Taiwan. See Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47882-47892.

Zhongshan Avenue based on the low land price before Nanjing became the capital.¹⁶⁷ More often than not, the government delayed the release of compensation. For example, the requisition of land for the construction of a park in the Xuanwu Lake area began in April 1928, but the compensation was only released in September 1932. Likewise, the release of compensation for the construction of the Zhongshan Avenue was delayed from the winter of 1928 to the summer of 1933, showing that the execution of the *Land Law* was far from perfect.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the Land Requisition Auditing Committee was dominated by state officials, who might care less about landowners' interests. Liu Xiuqing criticized that the committee "only consider the one-sided benefit of the government, but not the pain of the people."¹⁶⁹ Due to the lack of knowledge and the fear of the government, landowners often accepted an unreasonable compensation reluctantly.¹⁷⁰ Most landowners were also unhappy with receiving government bonds as compensation when they needed cash to rebuild their homes. As a result, conflicts between landowners and the municipal government never ceased.

Although a legal basis for eminent domain has been formulated, there was a blind spot in the policy: who represented the State to requisition private property? There were many state agencies and organizations in China. Were they all empowered to practice the eminent domain? This blind spot had put the Nationalist State in a dilemma. As the planning of the Central Administrative Zone remained undecided, many ministries and government agencies began building their offices randomly all over Nanjing, despite the repeated complaints from the National Capital Reconstruction Commission. The Zhongshan Avenue became a popular location for government buildings.¹⁷¹ To obtain land, these ministries and government agencies made use of the *Land Requisition Law* to take common people's homes. Unfortunately, some of them failed to compensate affected landowners.¹⁷² Not only this, they had begun taking advantage of the vague definition of the term "public interest" and requisitioned private land for the construction of employees' dormitories.¹⁷³ This caused the Reconstruction Commission to issue a clarification, stating that the construction of the employees' dormitories should not be considered as for the public interest. Random land requisition like these troubled the Reconstruction Commission. Sun Ke and other commission members repeatedly urged the Nationalist Government to look into the cases.

¹⁶⁷ Based on a land price survey conducted in November 1928 by the Peasants' Association (*Nongmin xiehui*). Cited in Liu, *Study on the Land Requisition of Nanjing*, 49634–49641.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 49649–49650.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 49661.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 49634.

¹⁷¹ For example, the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Railways all constructed their offices along the North Zhongshan Road

¹⁷² "Official Letter from the Office of Technical Experts for Capital Design."

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* See also "Nanjing Municipality Requisitioned Land to Improve City Appearance and to Construct State Buildings."

2.4 FROM PUBLIC INTEREST TO PUBLIC OBLIGATION

2.4.1 The Discursive Production of Public Obligation

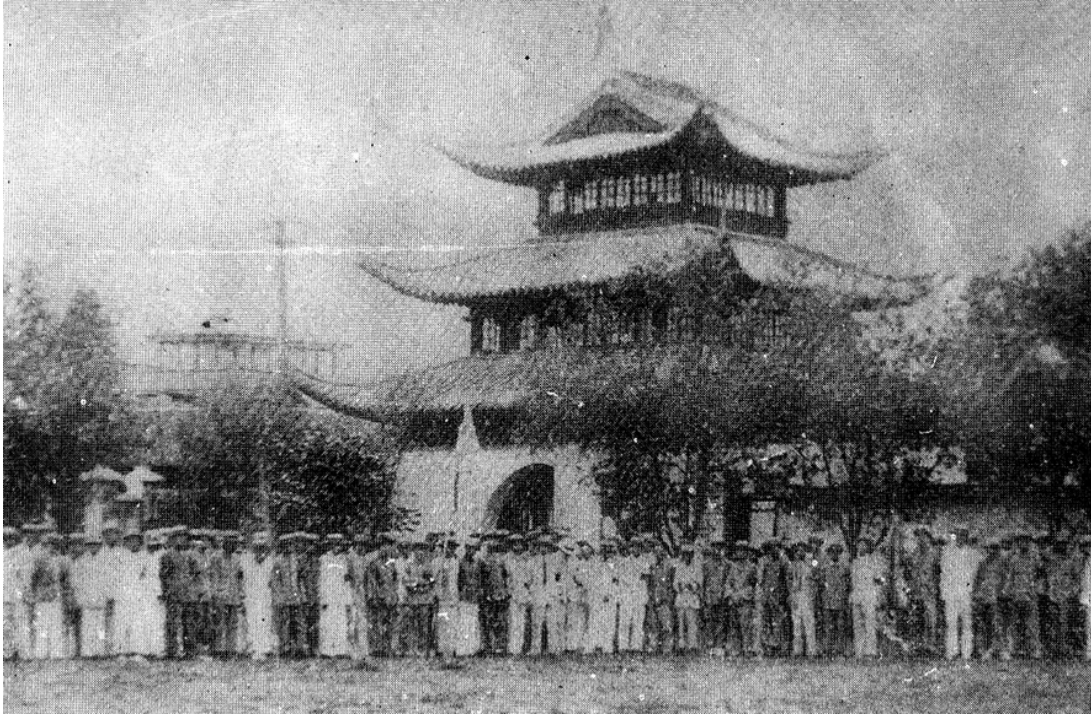
To ease the enormous social pressure against compulsory requisition, Mayor He Minhun¹⁷⁴ decided to launch a propaganda campaign, hoping to convince urban residents that public works were carried out for the benefit of the republic and, most importantly, for the public. A major event under the campaign was the “municipal administration propaganda week (*shizheng xuanchuan zhou*).” During the week, the government mobilized ten propaganda teams to spread to Nanjing residents the objectives, scopes and significances of public works.¹⁷⁵ (Fig. 2.24) Mayor He told the propaganda teams, “Representing the mayor to speak [to the public, your] attitude and speech should be artistic. The essence of public speech is to describe and express [your] passion. Make audiences believe, keep them interested, arouse their empathy.”¹⁷⁶ At the same time, a number of state officials had given public talks and radio broadcasts in support of the new road works.¹⁷⁷ (Table 2.05) The government also produced a series of newsletters to propagandize new public works. The most notable example was the *Capital Administration Weekly* [*Shoudu shizheng zhoukan*] published in one of the most popular newspaper, *Shen bao* [*The Shun Pao*], from January 1928 to August 1929.

¹⁷⁴ He Minhun became mayor of Nanjing from August 1927 to July 1928 when Liu Jiwen was temporarily stepped down from the post.

¹⁷⁵ “Municipal Government Propaganda Week Commencement Scene.”

¹⁷⁶ Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing's Roads*, 119.

¹⁷⁷ “Municipal Government Public Lecture on Municipal Administration.”



(Source: Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing's Road*, facing front page.)

Fig. 2.24 Propaganda teams of the municipal administration propaganda week.

Table 2.05 List of public talks organized during the propaganda week.

Talk	Speaker	Position	Title of the Talk
1	He Minhun	Mayor	Our working plan for these three months
2	Xia Guangyu	KMT Counselor	How to establish capital administration
3	Ye Chucang	Committee member of the Provincial Government	Obligation of urban residents
4	Chen Yangjie	Director of the Public Works Bureau	My opinions on capital reconstruction
5	Yang Xingfo	Deputy Fellows in the University	Revolution and evolution of the city
6	Yao Yuanchu	Secretary General	Capital administration for the coming month

(Source: Summarized from “Municipal Government Public Lecture on Municipal Administration.”)

In all these public talks, radio broadcasts and publications, there appeared one consistent message: the obligation of urban residents to the capital's development. Two reasons were highlighted by government officials. First, urban residents were at fault for the poor urban condition of Nanjing. The director of the Municipal Public Works Bureau, Chen Yangjie, blamed the selfish behaviours of urban residents, such as squatting on public land, erecting illegal structures on public roads, stealing electricity, riding on buses without tickets, etc. He also criticised that urban residents had no sense of hygiene, throwing garbage on streets and into the rivers, “causing the

outbreak of all sorts of diseases.”¹⁷⁸ Second, urban residents would be benefited from the completion of urban projects. In a meeting with local residents about a road widening projects, Mayor He Minhun urged them to cooperate with the authority, because their land would increase in value in the future. He reminded them to care about the public interest:

I hope that all comrades who are here today will try your best to propagandize to your friends and relatives living here, to ask them to care about the public interest, for this time, [they] sacrifice 70 feet [of land, they] still have 30 feet remained. The value of this 30 feet [of land in the future], due to the convenient traffic [and] the booming market, would be more than that of the 100-feet [land today].¹⁷⁹

Later, the Municipal Government made a public announcement about the same road widening project, arguing that public works should not be terminated due to the misunderstanding of “a small group of people.” Interestingly, according to the announcement, it was not the State but the urban residents who had inevitably sacrificed the interest of this small group of opponents in order to pursue a long term public interest. In other words, it was the majority of the public who sacrificed the minority of the public, who were short-sighted and failed to understand the long term benefits these urban projects would bring to them and to the city.¹⁸⁰

Other official newsletters also criticized that a small number of landowners had instigated other people to oppose public works. It blamed them as someone who “only cared about their private interests, but not concerned about the public [interest]:”

They rely on the power of their capitals and properties, indulging themselves to do whatever they want and exploiting the common people. Their acts were an epitome of corruption, bullying, and ugliness. Now they still don’t want to repent, to be educated by the *Three Principles of the People*, and to become the revolutionaries under the party’s governance. They still practice these evil measures to obstruct the great plan of construction, they are really the public enemy of the whole city’s masses, people should not forgive them, and municipal government should punish them following the people’s will.¹⁸¹

The article used negative phrases like “corruption,” “bullying,” “evil measures” etc. to stigmatize opposing landowners, labelling them as the “public enemy of whole city’s masses” and urged the municipal government to punish them. This reflected the big conflict between the state’s plan for a grandiose capital and the

¹⁷⁸ Chen Yangjie’s speech delivered during the propaganda week, cited in Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing’s Roads*, 120–121.

¹⁷⁹ Mayor He Minhun’s speech delivered during the propaganda week. Transcript of the speech was published in He, “Our Working Plan for these Three Months.”

¹⁸⁰ “Public Announcement from the Nanjing Special Municipal Government to All City Masses on the Construction and Widening of the Roads in the Area of Yiren Lane and Wuma Road.”

¹⁸¹ “Nanjing Special Municipal City Notice Residents of Yiren Alley and Wuma Street Again.”

common people's concerns for their livelihoods -- a deep split between the dream from above and the reality from the ground.

Likewise, state official Ye Chucang labelled the petitioners as “leftovers” of the feudal regime, implying that they were backward and unmatched with the pace of the new republic. He commented, “It is so easy to transform the urban artifacts inherited [from the imperial time], yet it is so difficult to transform the mentality of the leftovers.” In his public talk titled “Obligation of the Urban Residents,” Ye complained, “I am deeply suspicious of Nanjing’s urban residents... for they form groups to oppose the demolition of houses. They said, ‘the houses are still good, why tear them down?’... These simple-minded people hold onto feudal thoughts and hinder city administration.” Hence he urged the government to ignore the opposing residents and “finish the job with courage.”¹⁸²

2.4.2 Turning Public Obligation into Practice: Public Works Levy

Chinese leaders established an intertwined relationship between the public interest and the public obligation: because the urban projects were developed for the public interest, the public were obliged to support their constructions. When the government came across a huge problem in securing funds for public works, Chinese leaders wanted to transfer the financial burden to its people. As Mayor Liu Jiwen proclaimed, “To construct a great and majestic capital, all people in the nation must share the obligation.”¹⁸³ Chinese leaders believed that capital reconstruction was a national matter that required support from every province, every city and every Chinese. Therefore, in the summer of 1929, the municipal government issued a bond in a total value of 50 million *yuan* to raise fund for public works. 30 millions *yuan* of the bonds were reserved for the general public, overseas Chinese, local trade associations, and government officials.¹⁸⁴ The remaining 20 million *yuan* bonds were allocated among 25 provinces in China, which were classified into six grades based on their annual incomes.¹⁸⁵ (Table 2.06) In return, new roads in Nanjing were named after the

¹⁸² Ye Chucang’s speech delivered during the propaganda week. The transcript of the speech was published in Ye, “Obligations of Urban Residents.”

¹⁸³ “Benfu yizhoulai zhi gongzuo [Works of the Municipal Government in the Last Week].”

¹⁸⁴ Early in August 1928, Liu Jiwen proposed in the Fifth Plenum to share the expenses of capital road construction with other provincial governments. See “Suggestion of Mayor Liu at the Fifth Plenum to Reconstruct the Capital.”

At first, the Municipal Nanjing Government planned to issue the “municipal administration bond” on 1st January 1929, but it was only approved by the central government in March 1929. The issuance of the bond was then delayed to the summer. On the details of the “municipal administration bond”, see “Nanjing Special Municipal City Municipal Administration Bond Regulation”; “Municipal Administration Bond Regulation Will be Amended.”

¹⁸⁵ Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing’s Roads*, 123–124.

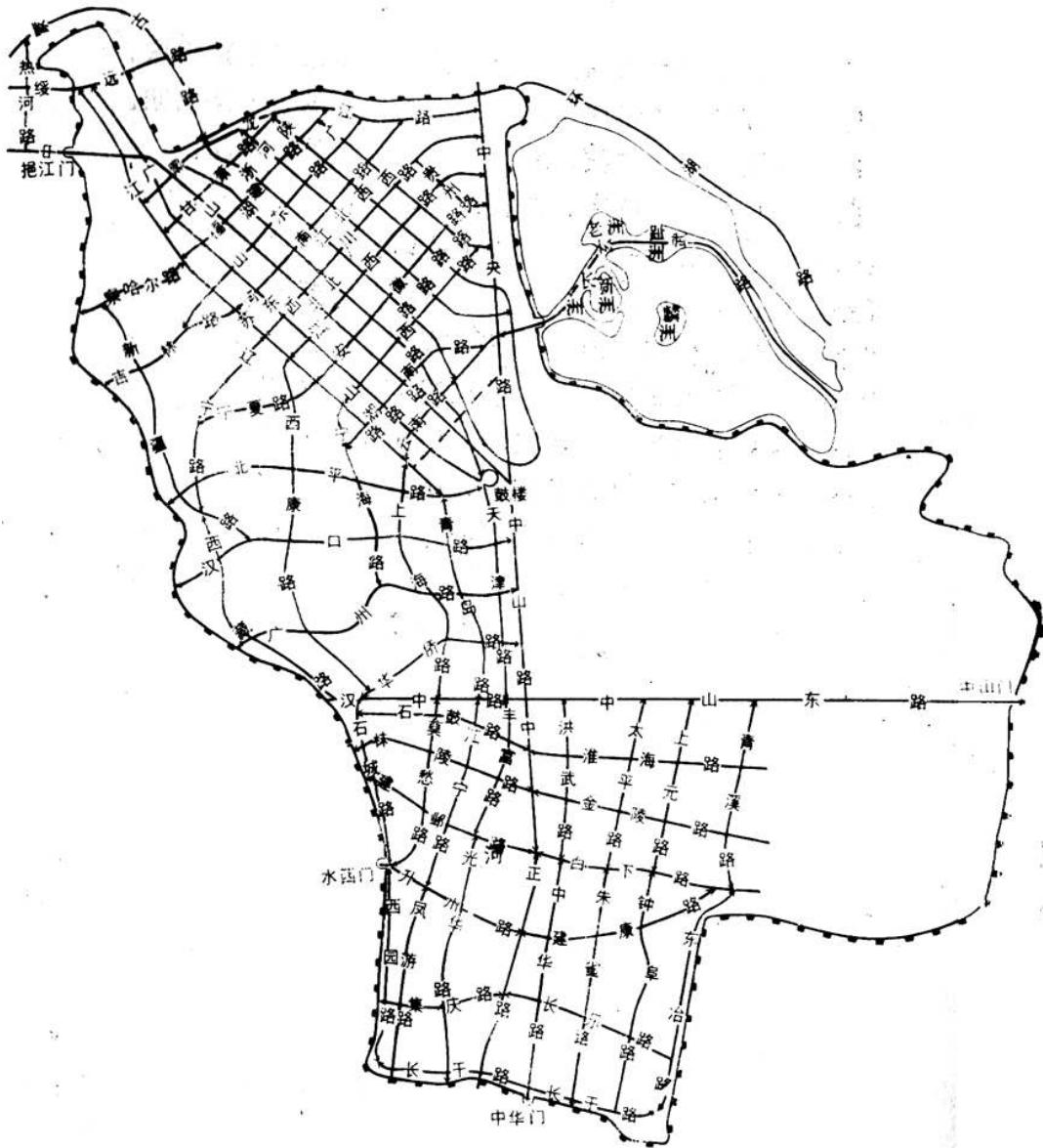
provinces. (Fig. 2.25) As such, the discourses of the public interest and public obligation were turned into government practice.

Table 2.06 Sharing of the Municipal Administration Bond by the provinces in China.

Provinces	Share of bonds (M)		No. of Provinces	Fund Raised (M)
Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hubei, Sichuan	1.58	x	5	= 7.90
Hunan, Hebei, Jiangxi, Shanxi, Fujian, Liaoning	1.30	x	6	= 7.80
Shandong, Henan, Anhui, Guangxi	0.70	x	4	= 2.80
Shaanxi, Jilin, Heilongjiang	0.29	x	3	= 0.87
Yunnan, Guizhou, Xinjiang, Gansu	0.12	x	4	= 0.48
Rehe, Chahaer, Suiyuan*	0.05	x	3	= 0.15
			Total	= 20.00

* The provinces of Rehe, Chahaer, and Suiyuan were eliminated in 1954-1955, with most of their territories transferred to the Mongol Autonomous Region of the People Republic of China.

(Source: The figures are based on Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing's Road*, 124.)



(Source: Luo ed., *Historical Materials on National Construction before the War: Capital Construction*, 1:306.)

Fig. 2.25 The Road Naming Map, 1930.

Chinese leaders also believed that Nanjing inhabitants should share the financial obligation to public works. Speaking at the first meeting of the National Capital Reconstruction Commission, Kong Xiangxi claimed that because landowners would be benefited from the completion of road works, they “should also share some obligations.”¹⁸⁶ Quoting New York and Chicago as examples, Kong Xiangxi

¹⁸⁶ Liu, *Study on the Land Requisition of Nanjing*, 49683.

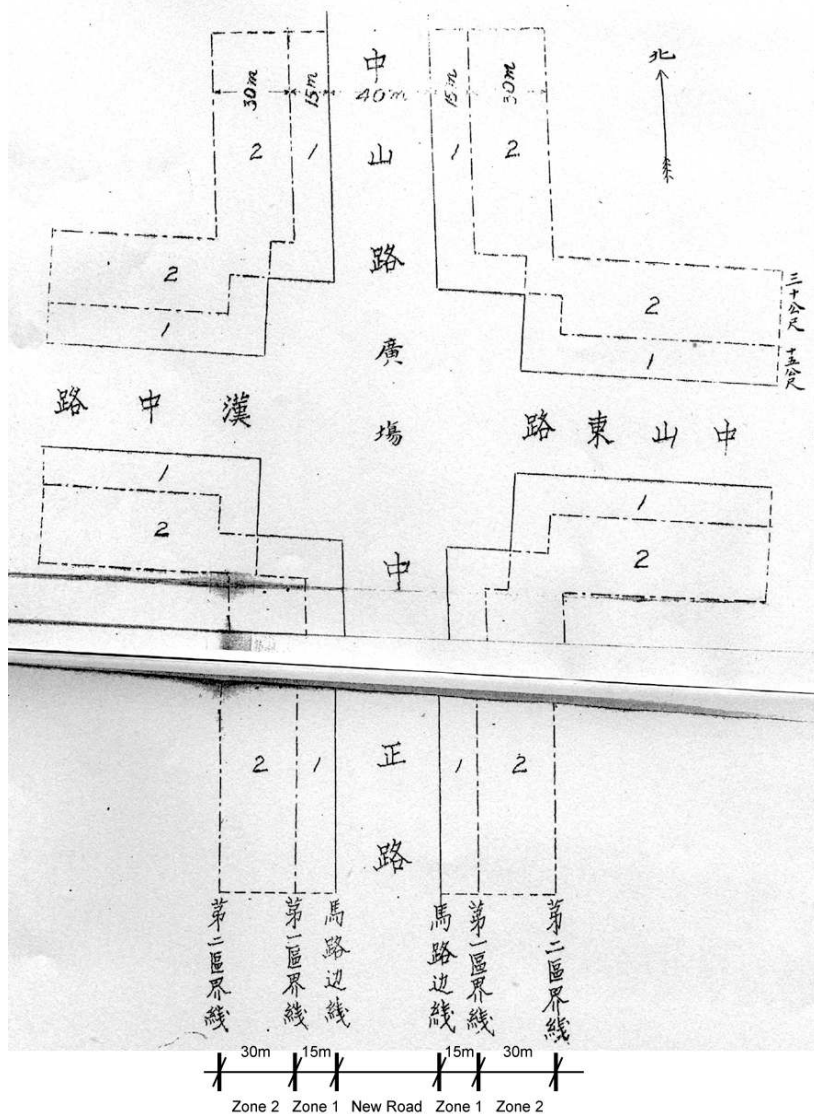
suggested imposing a construction levy (*tanfei*) to them. His argument aligned with Sun Yat-sen's theory that any future increment of land value was a result of public efforts and should therefore be returned to the society. As such, landowners were obliged to share the expenses of road works.

Since August 1930, the municipal government adopted the *Nanjing Road Construction Cost Sharing Temporary Regulation (Nanjing Shi zhulu tanfei zanhang guize)*, which applied to both new road construction and existing road widening.¹⁸⁷ According to the regulation, land on both sides of a new road would be divided into two zones. (Fig. 2.26) Zone one was the area within 15 meters from the edges of the new road, whereas zone two was the area within 30 meters from the edges of Zone one. Landowners in zone one had to share 50 per cent of the road works expenses, which included the road construction cost, land cost, demolition and relocation allowance, etc.¹⁸⁸ (Fig. 2.27) Likewise, landowners in zone two altogether had to share another 50 per cent of the expenses. This policy greatly reduced government expense in construction.

¹⁸⁷ *Nanjing Road Construction Cost Sharing Temporary Regulation*. A copy of the regulation can be found in Liu, *Study on the Land Requisition of Nanjing*, 49687–49690.

¹⁸⁸ The levy imposed on each individual landowner was then calculated on a pro rata basis; the levy per square meter, nevertheless, should not exceed 50 per cent of the average land value in that area.

圖線界區費推路馬潤放四場廣口街新



Cost Sharing Zone	Area Covered	Total cost shared by landowners
Zone 1	15 meters from the new road edges	50 % of total expenses*, but should not exceed 50% of the land value in zone 1.
Zone 2	30 meters from the edge of Zone 1	50 % of total expenses*, but should not exceed 50% of the land value in zone 2.

* According to article 2 of the regulation, total expenses included construction cost, land cost, demolition and relocation allowance, etc.

(Source: "Nanjing Road Construction Cost Sharing Committee on the Details of the Construction Cost Sharing Regulation and Land Ownership Registry," Nanjing City Archives file 1001-10-31.)

Fig. 2.26 Diagram of road construction for the Xinjiekou area in Nanjing.

南京市築路攤費表

號數	業戶		受		益				土				攤			費	備	考			
	姓名	住址	地	名	門牌	地	名	門牌	使用	長		深		面					第一區	第二區	總計
										第一區	第二區	第一區	第二區	第一區	第二區						
1	龍子騰		中山路			房屋				10.00				3.5355		4.21		3.47			
2	吳義興	新街口	41	新街口	41	房屋				23.70				3.00		17.8045		41.55			
3	徐紹端	新街口	42	新街口	42	房屋				1.035				1.035		151.5250		50.729			
4	顧順興	新街口	37-39	新街口	37-39	房屋				26.45				15.00		625.9160	230.5900	1490.914			
5	馬桂林	新街口	33	新街口	33	空地				14.50				15.00		216.7500	116.1720	50.817			
6	蔣仁山	糖坊橋	50	糖坊橋	50	房屋				10.00				15.00		90.4400	231.5700	230.79			
7	楊永年	九光巷	14	糖坊橋	19	房屋										73.7900		26.73			
8	方致和	糖坊橋	48	糖坊橋	48	天井										2.2100		2.59			
9	官街	新街口		新街口		馬路				52.20				15.00		365.1800	150.6200	856.19			
10	戚周氏	糖坊橋	1	糖坊橋	1	房屋										2.6260		3.51			
11	夏秀鑫	新街口	34	新街口	34	房屋										6.5250		7.41			
12	張潤生	新街口	34-33	新街口	34-33	房屋										8.6160		6.29			
13	專錦源	新街口	30	新街口	30	房屋										111.1500		150.30			
14	汪鑑	新街口	28-29	新街口	28-29	房屋										336.7800		374.79			
15	王金海	新街口	26-27	新街口	26-27	房屋										278.7800		321.83			
16	農興記			新街口	24-25	房屋				10.43				17.25		125.2720	167.8020	293.70			
17	利惠堂			新街口		房屋				10.00				25.10		141.9050	1215.2	1449.92			
18	誠信堂			新街口	19-20	房屋				5.00				19.70		32.1191		122.19			
19	通記			中山路		房屋				24.60				15.00		2125.5090	270.6020	2655.69			

(Source: "Meeting Minutes for the Cost Sharing of Xinjiekou and Tangfangqiao Road," Nanjing City Archives file 1001-10-3.)

Fig. 2.27 Government record of the road construction levy imposed on each landowner in the Xinjiekou area.

The regulation also empowered the State to compulsorily purchase private properties if landowners failed to pay the levy. But to many landowners, the levy was just unaffordable. Taking the construction of the Jiangkang Road as an example, the compensation for land was only 40 *yuan* per square *zhang* (one *zhang* equals approximately 3.33 meters), but the construction levy was as high as 30.34 *yuan* per square *zhang*.¹⁸⁹ (Table 2.07) In some cases, the levy one had to pay was more than the compensation one received. Many landowners, therefore, petitioned to the Nationalist Government against the high levy. One petitioner blamed that many areas in Nanjing remained undeveloped because no one bothered to buy land and pay the high levy. The policy had defeated the State's original intention to improve Nanjing's city appearance and promote urban development.¹⁹⁰

189 "Cost Sharing for the Western section of Jiankang Road."

190 "Cost Sharing for Hanzhong Road, Dongpailou, Di Lane, Jiankang Road."

Table 2.07 Comparison between the compensation and the levy for the construction of Jiangkang Road.

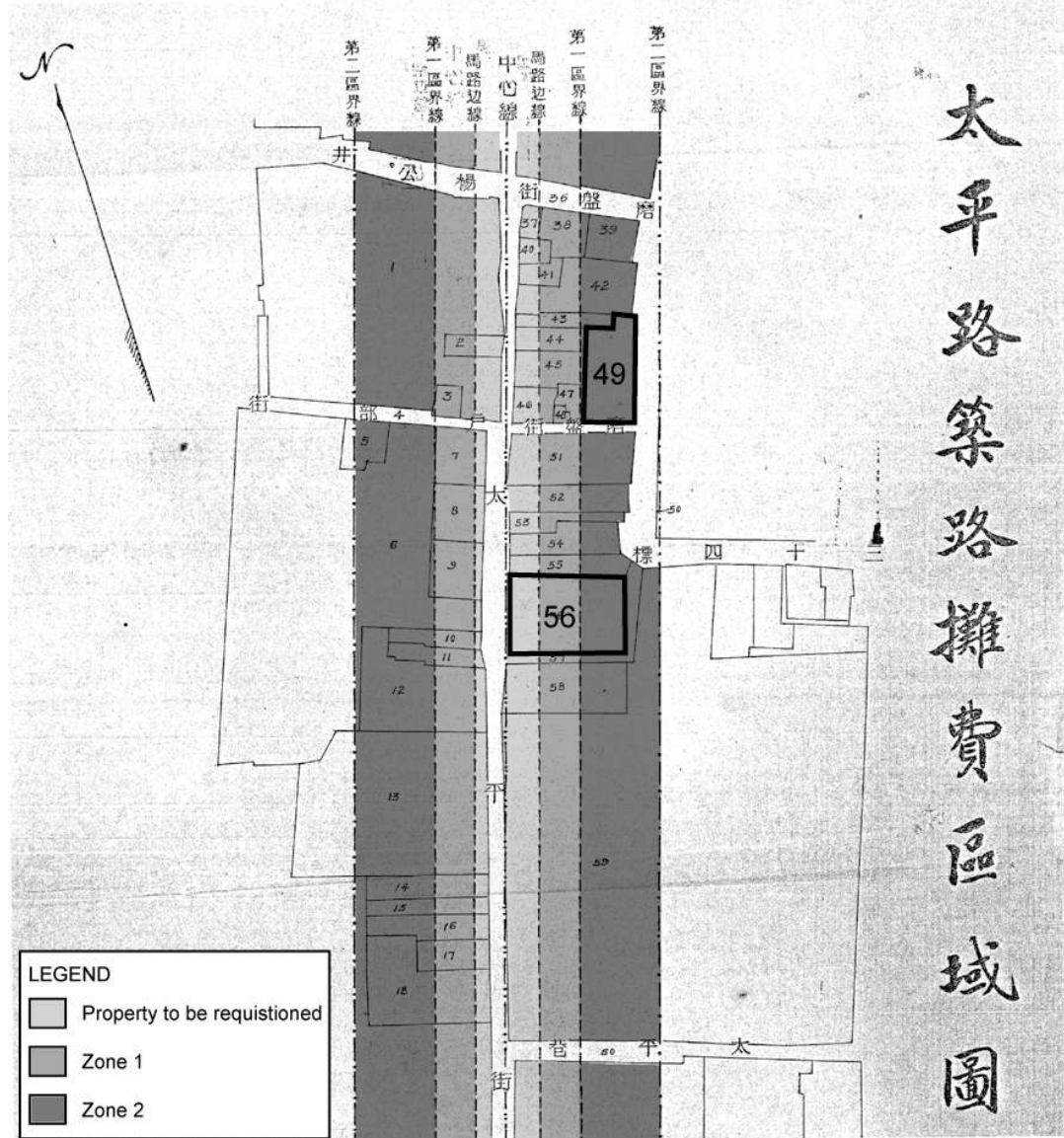
Compensation to Landowners On Property Requisition		<i>yuan</i> per square <i>zhang</i> *
Land Cost		40.00
Demolition and Relocation Allowance	Brick wall	1.00
	Metal shelter	3.00
	Tile-roofed house	7.00
	Building	10.50
Road Construction Cost Sharing Levy paid by Landowners		<i>yuan</i> per square <i>zhang</i> *
Zone One		30.34
Zone Two		5.17

Note: * One *zhang* equals approximately 3.33 meters.

(Source: The figures are based on “Cost Sharing for the Western section of Jiangkang Road,” Nanjing City Archives file no. 1001-10-19.)

Figure 2.27 was a diagram made in 1931 by the Municipal Land Bureau for the widening of the Taiping Road.¹⁹¹ (Fig. 2.28) It showed the land lot numbers, the area to be requisitioned for the project, and the boundary of zone one and two under the cost sharing regulation. Taking land lot no. 56 as an example, the landowner would be compensated for the part of his land requisitioned by the government for road widening. At the same time, he had to use his compensation to pay for the construction levy for the part of his land that rested on zone one and two. In another example, land lot no.49 rested entirely on zone two and was not directly abutting Taiping Road. The landowner had to pay the construction levy, even though no compensation was received from the government. In fact, many landowners could not afford the levy and had no choice but to sell their properties to the State.

¹⁹¹ “Meeting Minutes for the Cost Sharing of Xinjiekou and Tangfangqiao Road.”



Expense	(yuan)	Levy	(yuan)
Land cost plus demolition & relocation allowance	43911.38	Zone one	3.35216/ sq. m.
Construction cost	63679.86	Zone two	1.67608/ sq. m.
Total	107591.23	Total	107591.23

(Source: "Meeting Minutes for the Cost Sharing of Xinjiekou and Tangfangqiao Road," Nanjing City Archives file 1001-10-3.)

Fig. 2.28 Diagram of road construction cost sharing for Taiping Road.

The road construction cost sharing policy had been widely adopted in Nanjing since its formulation in 1930. (Table 2.08) In 1937, the State formulated the *Draft Nanjing Improved Area Special Levy Regulation* to expand the construct levy to all public works, such as the construction of pier, bridge, dam, the provision of water

supplies, the improvement in traffic, etc.¹⁹² The regulation stipulated that 60 per cent of the total expense for any public works should be shared among landowners in the area. Again, the regulation empowered the government to compulsorily purchase private property, if landowners failed to pay the levy.

Table 2.08 Examples of road construction cost sharing, 1935.

Road Name	Total Length (m)	Ave. Width (m)	Construction Cost (yuan)	Land Cost (yuan)	Total Expenses (yuan)	No. of Household
Guofu Road	937.00	28	62,476.35	45,641.74	108,118.09	189
Baixia Road	638.50	40	56,343.90	38,815.76	105,159.66	175
Mochou Road	1,518.50	22	80,884.93	63,364.92	144,249.85	No. of Household unknown at time of survey
Guangzhou Road	2,567.50	28	173,371.35	40,977.66	214,249.01	No. of Household unknown at time of survey
Zhujiang Road	2,027.00	28	134,665.20	130,900.69	265,565.89	No. of Household unknown at time of survey
Zhanyuan Road	528.50	8	10,481.43	10,032.94	20,514.37	171
Zhongyang Road	3,428.00	40	121,024.22	89,414.41	210,483.63	No. of Household unknown at time of survey
Jiankang Road	896.80	28	55,838.60	74,020.20	129,858.80	No. of Household unknown at time of survey

(Source: The figures are based on Nanjing shizhengfu mishuchu tongjishi, Nanjing Municipal Government Executive Statistics Report and Nanjingshi gonglu guanlichu, *A Contemporary History of Nanjing's Road*, 127.)

¹⁹² "Revised City Improved Area Special Levy Regulation, Road Construction Sharing Cost Temporary Regulation, and Draft Committee Organization Rules."

EPILOGUE: EMINENT DOMAIN IN CHINA TODAY

The practice of the eminent domain in China has survived until today. The legal basis for property requisition can be found in the Chinese Constitution amended in 2004. Article Ten stipulates that “the State may in the public interest take over land for its use in accordance with the law.”¹⁹³ Nevertheless, China has never explained clearly what it means by the public interest. It becomes more and more common that local governments compulsory requisition urban homes not only for public works but for commercial developments as well. Many people blame it as the result of the State’s reluctance in defining the public interest. The topic attracts growing attentions from scholars, civil rights activists and the general public.

Along with the raising concern about the definition of the public interest, or rather the lack of it, five Chinese legal experts published a public letter to the National Congress in December 2009, stressing the need to review the current demolition and relocation policy.¹⁹⁴ Accepting the experts’ opinion, the State is in the process of preparing a new requisition regulation “to better safeguard citizens’ right” at the same time when this dissertation is being finalized. A draft requisition regulation was released in January 29, 2010 for public consultation.¹⁹⁵ It has stipulated seven broad categories of acceptable public interest claims. In short, the draft regulation differentiates between requisition carried out in the public interest and that which is carried out for commercial real estate development, but it leaves a discretionary power to the State Council to interpret what the public interest is.

¹⁹³ English translation can be found at “Constitution of the People’s Republic of China.”

¹⁹⁴ Chen et al., “Guanyu dui ‘chengshi fangwu chaiqian guanli tiaoli’ jinxing shencha de jianyi [Recommendations for the ‘Regulation Governing House Demolition and Resettlement in Urban Areas’].” English translation available at <http://chinaelectionsblog.net/?p=231>.

¹⁹⁵ “[Regulation Governing Requisition and Compensation of State-Owned Land (Public Consultation Draft)].”

Table 2.09 Seven broad categories of acceptable public interest claims for property requisition proposed by the State Council in January 2010.

1.	National defense infrastructural needs
2.	State-supported and planned energy, transportation, and irrigation needs or needs of other public utilities
3.	State-supported and planned construction for technological, educational, cultural, and physical fitness needs, for the protection of the environment, natural resources, and cultural relics, for the benefit of society, or for municipal public use
4.	Government-organized construction projects to build low-income housing
5.	Government-organized construction projects to improve living standards in old and dilapidated buildings;
6.	The need to build office space for the central government
7.	Other needs determined to be in the public interest in accordance with law, administrative law, and State Council regulations

(Source: “Regulation Governing Requisition and Compensation of State-Owned Land (Public Consultation Draft)”)

Reaction to the draft regulation varied. Some people welcomed the State’s efforts and urged passage of the draft regulation as soon as possible;¹⁹⁶ more people complained about the State Council’s discretionary power. The draft regulation also meets resistance from local governments as land sale was the major source of municipal income.¹⁹⁷

Written at a time when the debate is still undergoing, this chapter provides a historical background to the practice of eminent domain in China, showing that the public interest is an empty vessel waiting to be filled with whatever values the State wishes. The fluidity and commending nature renders the concept vulnerable to capture by those in power, quite contrary to the collective values that the term seems to imply. Mostly importantly, this chapter illustrates the Chinese trend to shift the emphasis from the public interest to the public obligation. Until today, inhabitants who oppose to State’s compulsory requisition are stigmatized as “anti-development” and “anti-progress.” A neologism, “nail household (*dingzihu*),” is invented to describe those inhabitants who refuse to make way for development, whose houses are like nails stuck in the wood and cannot be pounded down with a hammer.

¹⁹⁶ Wang, “Experts Urge Passage of New Demolition Rule.”

¹⁹⁷ Wang, “Requisition Law Facing Resistance.”

3

CHAPTER 3 SLUM CLEARANCE: THE GOVERNMENT OF SUBSTANDARD HOUSING

After two visits, we selected the shanty settlement, Erdaogenzi, as our site of investigation. To make shanty dwellers understand the significance of our survey, we decided to do some promotions ... we shared the works: some distributed the circulars; some put up the posters. A huge number of dwellers surrounded us. When they saw these colourful circulars and posters, they were puzzled. Some dwellers thought we were promoting the use of local Chinese products; some were completely clueless about what we were doing. We tried to explain our works to them. Among them, some could read. They had compassion on us after reading our circulars and posters. We grasped the chance and asked them to tell their families and neighbors about our works. Many naughty children asked us for the colourful publications. They came in groups and asked us again and again, and we almost could not handle the situation... we put up a poster on every five to six straw-shacks; in the end we had put up over five hundreds posters. From the north to the south of Erdaogenzi, our circulars and posters could be seen everywhere.

Under the rain, the roads were muddy and had been filled with water; it was almost impossible to walk, and all our shirts and shoes were dirty. After one and a half hour, the promotion ended. It rained heavily when we were returning to our car. On our way back home, I could not help but thinking about the big difference between heaven and hell.

(A journal written by a student in the slum survey team of the Central University (*Zhongyang daxue*) in 1933.)¹⁹⁸

INTRODUCTION

Slum clearance -- a procedure to designate, acquire, and demolish substandard properties -- is a dispossession strategy that allows the state to override property rights and interfere into the private bio-sphere of the people, through which it can produce governable spaces and governable subjects. I use Foucault's concepts of biopower and governmentality to understand the massive slum clearance in capital

¹⁹⁸ Wu, "A Survey on Nanjing's Shack Dwelling Households," 742–743.

Nanjing as part of the Nationalist State's larger effort to make housing into a domain of government.

This chapter addresses three sets of questions. The first set of questions concerns the biopower of the modern Chinese State. Traditionally, housing was a private matter in China. Why and how had housing become a domain of government during the Nationalist period? How did the provision of housing, the improvement of housing condition, and the removal of substandard housing, become state responsibilities?

The second set of questions concerns the making of modern architectural standard in China. "Standard" is a fluid concept subject to state interpretation. How did the idea of "housing standard" form in early modern China? What was a desirable living environment -- and by extension, a desirable capital environment -- to the Nationalist State? My interest is not about the prescription of architectural standard by law, but how, when architectural law was still absent in China at that time, the government described shanty structures as substandard housing to be governed.

The last set of questions concern the nature of property-government in Nationalist China. What were the grounds for the state to override property rights, take over substandard housing, and subjugate the slum population under its control? What were the strategies and approaches employed by the State to govern housing development? Also, how did Nanjing people see themselves and others to be governed?

Since the middle of the 19th century, the loosely defined term "slum"¹⁹⁹ has been commonly used in Western societies to describe densely populated and squalid environs with a low standard of living. The formation of slums has long been associated with the cityward movement of rural migrants, who have tended to cluster in miserable quarters. The common usage of the term "slum" coincided with a period of extraordinarily radical changes both in attitudes and in public policies toward poverty. Charity workers, sanitarians, housing reformers, and urban planners, "all railed against slums as haunts of the criminal and dangerous classes, and as poverty traps whose entrenched inequality questioned the real extent of social progress."²⁰⁰ Although there was no such term as "slum" in China, makeshift dwellings such as straw shacks (*caopeng*) and reed shacks (*lupeng*) carried the same negative connotation during the Nationalist period.

The most thorough study of slum clearances in Nationalist Nanjing thus far was carried out by Zwai Lipkin, who argues that shanties, which existed in Nanjing as well as in other parts of China for a long time, had only emerged as a housing problem in the modern era, "when new, 'modern' ideas of hygiene, urban planning, and housing standards began to emerge." She pointed out that the "redefinition of what desirable living standards consisted of was a direct result of the adoption of

¹⁹⁹ Until in recent years, UN-HABITAT defined slum as an area that combines to various extents the following characteristics: (1) inadequate access to safe water; (2) inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure; (3) poor structural quality of housing; (4) overcrowding; and (5) insecure residential status.

²⁰⁰ Mayne, *The Imagined Slum*, 1.

housing norms and expectation set by first world ('western') countries, and passed by national elites that had been exposed to the West."²⁰¹ While I agree with these statements by Lipkin, I am concerned about her use of "nationalism" and "social Darwinism" (a term coined in late 19th century to describe a belief that the strongest or fittest should survive and flourish in society, while the weak and unfit should be allowed to die)²⁰² as general explanatory factors behind slum clearance and other social engineering efforts of the Nationalist Government. As Antonia Finnane rightly comments, Lipkin does not elaborate on how slum clearance fit into the nationalism and social Darwinism discourses.²⁰³ In this chapter, I illustrate how slum clearance was a result of the change in governmentality and bio-politics in China, rather than the triumph of the nationalism and social Darwinism.

Another weakness of Lipkin's study is that it ignored the political fragmentation that constantly troubled the Nationalist State. As a result, in her description, the entire machinery of the Nationalist Government seemed to have attained an unambiguously, common understanding of modernity and were all uncritically committed to improve the city appearance of Nanjing. In fact, the efforts to govern housing development in Nanjing had involved various agencies in different levels of the state hierarchy, such as the Office of Technical Experts for Capital Design, the Ministry of Labor and Commerce, the Nanjing Municipal Government, etc. These state agencies had different goals and employed different housing strategies which, as this chapter seeks to examine, were not necessarily aligned with each other.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section explores the ways housing had become a domain of government in Nationalist China. I discuss the changing bio-politics of early modern China, which made national elites prioritize rational life, sanitary city, and the moral community. I further explore how slums, which emerged in Chinese cities around the 19th century as a result of China's industrialization and urbanization, were problematized as detrimental to hygiene, sanitation, safety and social morality, prompting the government to develop two approaches of housing government: active construction and passive regulation. The second section focuses on the active construction approach and traces the early history of public housing, first as community services of philanthropic organizations and later as state-sponsored program. The last section discusses the government's passive control over Nanjing's slums. It shows that the government wanted not only to displace slums from the city but also to subjugate the slum population to state control.

²⁰¹ Lipkin, *Useless to the State*, 102–105.

²⁰² The term made its first entry in Chinese society in 1895–6, when Yan Fu translated Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, in the course of an extensive series of translations of influential Western thought. By the 1920s, it found expression in the tireless promotion of eugenics by the Chinese sociologist Pan Guangdan.

²⁰³ Finnane, "Review."

3.1 BIO-POLITICS: MAKING HOUSING A DOMAIN OF GOVERNMENT

3.1.1 The Bio-politics of Modern China: the Desire for a Sanitary City and Moral Community

Bio-politics is a politics concerning the administration of life, particularly as it appears at the level of populations. As Foucault suggests, bio-politics “is the attempts, starting from the 18th century, to rationalize problems posed to governmental practice by phenomena characteristic of a set of living beings forming a population: health, hygiene, birthrate, life expectancy, race.”²⁰⁴ In other words, bio-politics represents the expanding push from the State into formerly private spheres, which turns private problems into state responsibilities. Mitchell Dean further points out that all modern forms of the government of the state – liberal, social democratic, and authoritarian alike – need to be understood as attempting to articulate a bio-politics aimed at enhancing the lives of a population through the application of the norm, with the elements of a transformed sovereignty that targets subjects within a territory and whose instrument is the law.²⁰⁵ For modern states, biopower was the legitimating authority to subdue individual bodies and exercise its power at the level of the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population. This distinguishes the biopower of modern states from the sovereignty power of feudal states: while the latter is the power to kill, the former is the power to foster life.

Many scholars find the study of biopower, social norms, and the welfare of the population relevant to the experience of colonial pacification.²⁰⁶ Applying Foucault’s intellectual methods to study the emergence of certain practices of reason in French colonies, Paul Rainbow describes the “diverse construction of norms and forms adequate to understand and to regulate what came to be known as modern society.”²⁰⁷ He illustrates the spatial dimension of colonial governmentality by drawing parallels between the construction of milieux for the French working classes from 1830 to 1930 and the making of the environments of the North African French colonies of the same period where several hundreds of towns, villages and cities were constructed. The French colonies became the social laboratory and the planned city was one of the most complete examples of modernity. His study demonstrates that city planning is a practice of reason done in the name of the public good.

In China, the extension of state interference into the private bio-sphere began around the end of the 19th century, when a group of modernizing elites, comprised

²⁰⁴ Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1978-79*, 317.

²⁰⁵ Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 121.

²⁰⁶ For examples: Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*; Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism Delhi’s Urban Governmentalities*.

²⁰⁷ Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*, 9.

mainly of Qing officials and intellectuals, vowed to awaken China from a condition of national subjugation. Seeing that the Chinese population suffered greatly from cholera, plague, small pox, black fever, diphtheria, scarlet fever, malaria, bilharzia and tuberculosis, they accepted a medicalized view of China's problems and embraced a medicalized solution for the deficiency of both the Chinese state and the Chinese body. Maintaining health thus became one of the significant issues in the modernization of China. The western concept of hygiene, translated into *weiseng* (*eisei* in Japanese pronunciation and literally meaning "guarding life"), emerged as a discursive center of Chinese deficiency under conditions of imperialism.

Scholars who studied China's modern health history notice that there were at least two conceptual transformations to the meaning of *weisheng*. The first conceptual transformation happened in the opening decades of the 20th century when Western biomedical conceptions of health and disease dominated the world.²⁰⁸ National elites viewed the task of preserving health less and less as an exclusive mode of individual responsibility. Instead, they increasingly extended its cultural definition to include the involvement of the state, the administration of the government, and the maintenance of the nation as a holistic social organism. Ruth Rogaski argues that *weisheng* no longer meant merely "guarding life" but incorporated a distinctly new notion of what she called "hygienic modernity" that encompassed government control of sanitation, disease prevention, and the detection and elimination of germs.

The second conceptual transformation to the meaning of *weisheng* occurred during the Nationalist period. The critiques of modern hygiene during this period did not focus on the actual techniques for preserving health but on personal hygiene and their moral implications, i.e., their effects in the context of the dual construction of self-identity and moral community. This argument was supported by the fact that Chinese leaders devoted far more energy to the seemingly trivial practices of personal hygiene rather than developing a national system of public health.²⁰⁹ Similar findings were obtained by Chieko Nakajima, who shows that the hygiene campaigns in Shanghai from 1920 to 1945 were not an institutional or administrative reform but a mass mobilization program to improve the city's sanitation by disciplining and reforming people's behavioural norms.²¹⁰ The reason behind such conceptual transformation of *weisheng* from state intervention in public health to state construction of a moral community, Nakajima argues, was the incapability of the Nationalist Government to raise and secure sufficient funds to build new infrastructures to improve living and working conditions in the city.

The desire for both a sanitary city and a moral community conjoined to form the modernization discourse in 20th century China. National elites believed that a modern Chinese city must be a sanitized city dwelled in by citizens with high moral standards. This provided the guideline for the reconstruction of Nanjing, which according to the Nationalist Government, entailed two levels of works: material

²⁰⁸ See Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*.

²⁰⁹ See Lei, "Moral Community of Weisheng."

²¹⁰ See Chieko Nakajima, "Health and Hygiene in Mass Mobilization."

construction (*wuzhi jianshe*), referring to the improvement of the physical living environment; and spiritual construction (*jingshen jianshe*), referring to the reform of people's minds and behaviors.²¹¹ While the material construction of Nanjing was underway, Chinese leaders began to work on spiritual reconstruction. For instance, the Ministry of Education mobilized a movement from 1928 to 1929 in Nanjing to teach illiterate adults Chinese characters by opening 40 "mass schools" (*minzhong xuexiao*) and organizing public lectures.²¹² Around the same time, the Nanjing Municipal Government launched the "Three Prohibitions Campaign" to eliminate gambling, prostitution and fortune telling. It launched again in 1934 a similar campaign to enforce the banning of gambling, prostitution and opium smoking.

These spiritual reconstruction efforts in capital Nanjing paved the way for a nation-wide campaign, the "New Life Movement," inaugurated in 1934 by Chiang Kai-Shek and his wife "to substitute a rational life for the irrational."²¹³ Stressing public and private hygiene, temperance, physical fitness, and anti-superstition, the movement aimed to change the habits and behaviour of the Chinese people by observance of the Confucian virtues of politeness, righteousness, integrity and honor. Clearly influenced by Chiang's own military background, the ultimate goal of the movement was "militarization:" military rules of discipline formed the new way of life Chiang envisioned, and soldiers were the most suitable models for the population. Chiang Kai-shek even asserted that another name for the New Life Movement was "Militarization Movement."²¹⁴ The programs of the movement thus included the so-called fascist style collective military training, competitive sport and mass athletics.²¹⁵

There were several reasons behind the mobilization of the New Life Movement. Firstly, because the Nationalist Government was constantly threatened by the Japanese and the Communists, Chinese leaders found it necessary to prepare the people for war and for a hardship and disciplined life. In Chiang's own words, the movement aimed to "militarize thoroughly the lives of the citizens of the entire nation so that they could cultivate courage and swiftness, the endurance of suffering and a tolerance for hard work, and especially the habit and ability of unified action, so that they would at any time sacrifice for the nation."²¹⁶ Secondly, China wished to leave a good impression to international authorities in the wake of war. For instance, the two initiators of the New Life Movement, Chiang Kai-shek and his wife, were selected by

²¹¹ Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration*, 1–2.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 49.

²¹³ Chiang, "Essentials of the New Life Movement."

²¹⁴ Dirlik, "The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement," 972.

²¹⁵ For physical training under the New Life Movement, see Wakeman, "A Revisionist View of the Nanjing Decade: Confucian Fascism"; Morris, *Marrow of the Nation*; Culp, "Rethinking Governmentality."

²¹⁶ Chiang, *Collected Essays of President Chiang Kai-shek's Thoughts and Speeches*, 12:III. Cited in Eastman, *The Nationalist Era in China, 1927-1949*, 31.

the *Time* as the Man and Wife of the Year in 1937.²¹⁷ This greatly helped them to rally money and support from the American public for wars. (Fig. 3.01)



(Source: *Time Magazine*, October 26, 1931 and January 3, 1938.)

Fig. 3.01 Chiang Kai-shek and his wife appeared on the front cover of Time Magazine in 1931 (left) and 1938 (right).

3.1.2 Power/Knowledge: Understanding the Population through Social Survey

Discontented with the standard of hygiene, public health, and social morality in late 19th century China, national elites attempted to transform the dynastic empire into a nation-state on a foundation of facts and statistics. Their ambitions were made real in a prodigious social survey movement which aimed as much to enlighten peasants as to inform administrators. The movement was also helped by returned scholars who introduced modern social science to China, bringing in a range of research practices such as census, sociological investigation, ethnography, and new ways of presenting

²¹⁷ Madame Chiang Kai-shek, a graduate from Wellesley College, met Roosevelt in February 1943 to plead for more assistance and was the first woman invited to address both Houses of the U.S. Congress.

knowledge using charts and tabulations.²¹⁸ Social survey produced new knowledge to understand the Chinese population based on empirical facts. “The fact” collected from social survey became a basic conceptual medium and source of truth. This “passion for fact,” Tony Lam argues, produced a particular style of reasoning, which functioned by breaking down the existing community into individuals and then reassembled them using the new social category.²¹⁹ This began an epistemological break away from traditional modes of understanding the observable world.

Social survey was often used by the government to substantiate the state plan. The state described and problematized the “fact,” at the same time, the “fact” gave a reason for the government to fix the problem of the population. The trend of conducting social survey developed in large scale during the Nationalist era. The government established social survey and statistical institutions of every grade and formulated plans to train its officials with investigation and statistical methods learnt from the West. The content of social surveys carried included population, agriculture, education, price, transportation, industry, sanitation, minority nationality and so on.²²⁰ Outside the government structure, many national elites also set up research institutes to promote social scientific knowledge.

In the field of housing, two major studies were carried out in Nanjing during the 1930s. The first one was a survey on two slum settlements conducted in December 1933 by Professor Wu Wenhui and his students from the Sociology Department of the Central University (*Zhongyang daxue*) as described in the opening excerpt of this chapter.²²¹ The second one was an investigative paper on the housing condition of Nanjing written in 1936 by Chen Yuelin, a researcher from the College of Land Economics (*Dizheng xueyuan*). These two studies have provided basic sources for this dissertation. Besides them, I also referenced official publications and newspapers.

3.1.3 Housing Shortage and the Problematization of Slums

The capital status and the vigorous urban development in Nanjing had attracted a huge number of people who sought new opportunities and developments. The year after Nanjing became the capital, the population had increased from 360,500 to 497,526. (Table 3.01) Famine and natural disaster in the nearby Henan province in 1929 also pushed many refugees to Nanjing.²²² By 1935 the population finally

²¹⁸ One of the earliest social scientist in China was Chen Changheng, who introduced the use of charts and tabulations in China. Chen was an economics student educated in the United States. He published a book in 1918 called *Zhongguo renkou lun [A Treatise on Chinese Population]*. See Lam, *A Passion for Facts*.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ See Ren, “Study of Social Survey Conducted by the Nationalist Government.”

²²¹ See Wu, “A Survey on Nanjing’s Shack Dwelling Households,” 742–743.

²²² In January 1929, Mayor Liu Jiwen reported that the placement of the refugees was the biggest problem to the Municipal Social Bureau. To cover the huge expense on the placement of refugees,

reached one million, making it the fifth most populous city in China. (Table 3.02)
Over 86 per cent of the population lived inside the walled city.²²³

Table 3.01 Population of Nanjing, 1912 to 1936.

Year	Population	Year	Population
1912	269,000	1925	395,900
1913	269,000	1926	395,500
1914	377,120	1927	360,500
1915	368,800	1928	497,526
1916	378,200	1929	540,120
1917	377,549	1930	577,093
1918	376,291	1931	653,948
1919	392,100	1932	659,617
1920	392,100	1933	726,131
1921	380,200	1934	795,955
1922	380,900	1935	1,013,220
1923	401,500	1936	1,006,968
1924	395,500		

(Source: Chen, *Nanjing Society*, 29.)

Table 3.02 The most populated Chinese cities, 1930 to 1935.

City	1930 (Population)	1935 (Population)	Population Increase	Percentage Increase (%)
Shanghai	1,730,930	2,035,313	304,383	17.58
Beijing	1,378,916	1,564,896	185,980	13.49
Guangzhou	874,859	1,156,786	281,927	32.23
Tianjin	1,336,633	1,067,920	-268,713	-20.10
Nanjing	577,093	1,013,320	436,227	75.59
Hankou	731,570	781,508	49,938	5.83
Hangzhou	506,930	576,048	69,118	13.63
Qingdao	379,082	527,150	148,068	39.06

(Source: Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 91:47794.)

The sudden increase in population had created a huge housing demand in Nanjing. The massive demolition of old dwellings for public works worsened the situation. The construction of new accommodations could hardly catch up with the

the Municipal Social Bureau organized a number of fund-raising events. Meanwhile, the Municipal Works Bureau recruited younger refugees to work on the construction of the Zhongshan Avenue and other public works. Three refugee shelters were also constructed to accommodate refugees, but the authority admitted that “the facilities in the shelters were far from perfect.” 50 refugees died from sickness in the shelters.

See Liu, “Report from Mayor Liu at the first Commemoration Week of 1929.” “The Municipal Social Bureau Raise Fund to Help Account.” “Recent news of Refugees Placement.”

²²³ Based on the survey of the Municipal Police Department in March 1935. See Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47823–47824; Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's Construction*, 236.

fast pace of the population growth. From 1931 to 1936, the total number of household increases in Nanjing was 70,434 but there were only 19,424 residential units completed during the same period. (Table 3.03) As a result, it became more and more difficult to find a place to dwell in the capital. In order to rent an accommodation, tenants were usually demanded by landlords to provide huge deposits and guarantees.²²⁴

Table 3.03 Comparison between the number of household increase in Nanjing and the number of residential units completed between 1931 and 1936.

Year	Number of Household	Household Increase from Previous Year	Number of New Residential Units Completed
1931	126,797	---	6,041
1932	129,871	3,074	3,808
1933	141,313	11,442	3,768
1934	153,905	12,592	4,346
1935	195,545	41,640	846
1936	197,221	1,676	615
		Total Increase: 70,424	Total Completion: 19,424

(Source: The figures are based on Chen, *The Housing Problems of Nanjing*, 91:47841-47842, 47844.)

A direct result of the housing shortage was the high property price and rent. The Municipal Government blamed that “most landlords had taken the advantage of housing shortage and raised high the housing price, hoarding supplies and maximizing their profits.”²²⁵ This prompted the Nanjing Municipal Government to impose a rental control in 1929 to protect the rights of both landlords and tenants.²²⁶ By 1936, rent usually occupied 17 to 25 per cent of incomes for families living in Nanjing. (Table 3.04) The housing shortage and high rent had also made subletting a common practice in Nanjing. Among the 300 families Chen Yuelin had surveyed in 1936, 39 families lived in half a room, whereas 50 and 60 families lived in one and two rooms respectively.²²⁷ In one extreme case, one nine-bedroom house accommodated 18 families with more than 90 people.²²⁸ Conflicts between landlords and tenants were common at that time. Landlords raised the rent and demanded all

²²⁴ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47882–47892.

²²⁵ Yu, “Urban Residents Should have Proper Understanding to the City’s Property Rental Charter.”

²²⁶ The regulation required both landlord and tenant to sign an official lease provided by the Social Bureau. Within the leasing period, landlord was not allowed to increase rent while tenant, if defaulted rent, would be fined with a predetermined amount.

See *Temporary Property Rental Regulation for Urban Residents in the Nanjing Special Municipal City*.

²²⁷ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47854–47856.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 47856.

kinds of deposits and extra fees randomly, while tenants often defaulted rent and refused to move out of the houses.

Table 3.04 Percentage of housing expenses in family income, 1936.

Family Monthly Income (yuan)	No. of Families	Average No. of Rooms Occupied by each Family	Total Incomes (yuan)	Total Rent (yuan)	Average Rent per Family	Rent to Income Percentage (%)
Below 20	35	1.8	540	137.5	3.9	25.46
20-40	30	1.3	963	231.6	7.7	24.05
40-60	11	1.6	577	117.0	10.6	20.28
60-80	13	1.8	963	166.5	12.8	17.29
80-100	19	2.3	1850	399.5	21.0	21.59
100-120	19	2.8	2260	425.0	22.4	18.81
120-150	26	3.0	3846	766.0	29.5	19.92
150-200	49	3.6	9260	1,619.0	33.0	17.48
200-250	14	5.2	3380	661.0	47.2	19.56
250-300	25	5.5	7400	1,487.0	59.5	20.09
300-400	19	5.6	7035	1,150.0	60.5	16.35
Over 400	11	7.2	6775	795.0	72.3	11.73
Total	271		44849	7955.1	Average: 29.4	Average: 17.74

Chen Yuelin surveyed 271 families in Nanjing. The result shows that lower income families usually occupied less rooms and spent higher percentage in rent from their monthly incomes.

If we exclude the two highest income groups, most Nanjing families spent around 20 per cent of their monthly incomes in rent.

(Source: The figures are based on Chen, *The Housing Problems of Nanjing*, 91:47869-47870, 47872-47873.)

For those who had limited income, shanties were the best type of dwelling they could acquire. Shanties made of reed mats and straws had a long history as the dwellings for impoverished people, usually in rural China. (Fig. 3.02) It spread to cities round the 19th century. In Hankou, for example, shanty settlements (*penghuqu*) were commonly seen in the city during the 19th century and the State was unable to control their spread.²²⁹ Likewise in Shanghai, scattered shanty clusters could be found in the 19th century but large shantytowns only appeared late in the 1920s.²³⁰ Unlike in Shanghai where shantytowns located mainly at the periphery of the city, Nanjing had a significant number of shanty settlements right at the city center. Most shantytowns in Nanjing were built along railway lines and major roads, in the southwest which was historically the busiest part of the city, and in the northwest where docks and factories were located. (Fig. 3.03) The number of shanty families grew at fast pace since Nanjing acquired the capital status. In 1928, shanty families

²²⁹ Rowe, *Hankow*, 230–231.

²³⁰ Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 118.

occupied almost 20 per cent of the city's total household number.²³¹ By September 1936, 61,273 families (259,282 people), which equaled a quarter of the city's population, were living in shanties. (Table 3.05) Among them, over 181,000 lived inside the city wall.²³²



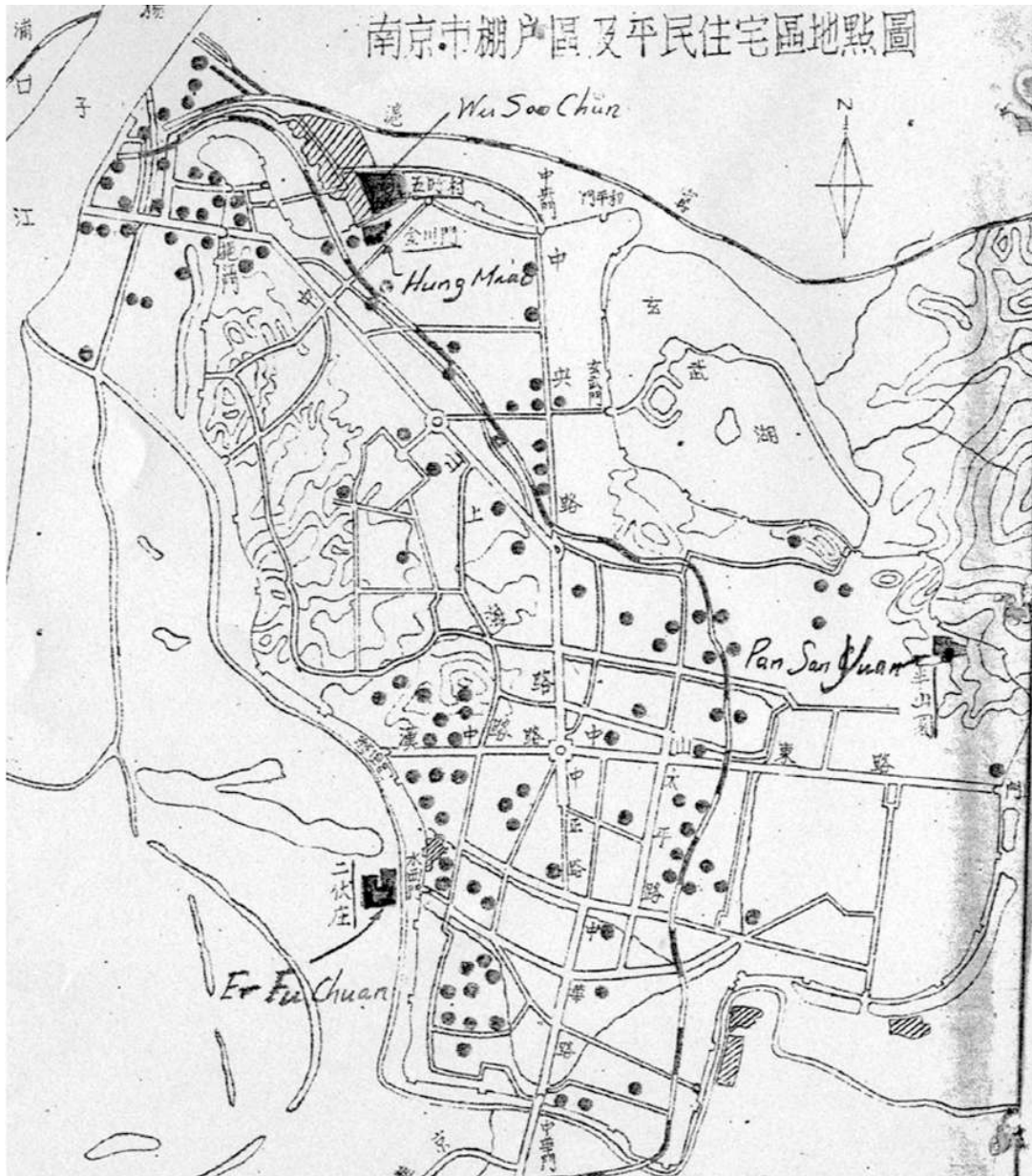
This photograph, taken in 1906, shows that shanties could be found in Nanjing before the city was inaugurated as the national capital. Note that shanty dwellers were preparing the warps used to make cotton cloth.

(Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2006677877/>)

Fig. 3.02 A shanty settlement in Nanjing, 1906.

²³¹ Chen, *Nanjing Society*, 28.

²³² From a police report cited in Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47898.



LEGEND

- Location of Shack-Dwellers' Settlement

(Source: "Brief Plan for the Development of Shanty Residential Area," Nanjing Municipal Archives file 1001-3-470.)

Fig. 3.03 Location of shanty settlements in Nanjing.

Table 3.05 The size of Nanjing's shanty population in relation to the entire population, 1927-1937.

Date	Families			People		
	In Shanties	Total in City	% of Total	In Shanties	Total in City	% of Total
Pre-1927	4,000				400,000	
01/1928	16,239	84,061	19.32		425,693	
09/1929	4,631	89,123	5.20	19,064	497,526	3.82
10/1930	25,275	110,658	22.84	98,292	570,072	17.24
12/1932	26,061	123,325	21.13	140,561	630,443	22.30
05/1933	34,862			143,133		
10/1934	38,900	147,200	26.41	154,210	757,108	20.36
11/1936	61,273	194,960	31.43	259,282	993,813	26.09

(Source: Lipkin, *Useless to the State*, 262.)

People who lived in shanties were commonly called *penghu* (literally means shanty dwellers or shanty households) as opposed to people who lived in tile houses. Shanty dwellers in Nanjing were usually rural migrants. Among the 180 shanty families surveyed by Wu Wenhui in 1933, 92.22 per cent were migrants. Over half of them came from the nearby Jiangsu province. They moved to Nanjing to escape from famine (51.67 per cent) and poverty (27.78 per cent) in their hometowns.²³³ Shanty dwellers worked in all kinds of menial jobs, such as reed-mat making, farming, rickshaw and cart pulling, luggage carrying, coolie laborers, etc. Many of them were also involved in small business and trading. The Public Works Bureau described shanty dwellers as people who “earned their living by menial works, covered their bodies with ragged outfits, fed their stomachs with bran, and lived in cramped shacks.”²³⁴

Contradicting popular belief, shanties were not necessarily illegal structures. According to Wu Wenhui's survey of 180 shanty families in 1933, 73.33 per cent owned their homes.²³⁵ Chen Yuelin, on the other hand, remarks that most dwellers rented the land from the landlords and built their own shacks (however, he did not provide any concrete figures to support his claims).²³⁶ Shanty dwellers usually constructed their shacks directly on muddy ground, which also served as the floor. Most shacks had only one to two rooms, partitioned by reed mats and other makeshift materials; in some rare cases, shacks could have as many as six rooms. The shack was usually ten to 20 feet long and wide and had low headroom. The main structure of the shack was built with bamboo and timber, the walls with bamboo and reed wattle plastered with mud, and the roof with bundles of straws and grass. Most of them had no window. (Fig. 3.04)

²³³ Wu, “A Survey on Nanjing's Shack Dwelling Households,” 750–751.

²³⁴ SSG, 1931, vol. 77, jishi 6.

²³⁵ Wu, “A Survey on Nanjing's Shack Dwelling Households.”

²³⁶ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47898.



(Source: Chen, *The Housing Problems of Nanjing*, 91:47899.)

Fig. 3.04 Straw shacks in capital Nanjing during the Nationalist period.

Shanty was a common type of dwelling in rural China. However when they spread to the cities, they began to carry a negative connotation. Well-off urban residents often considered tile houses as “proper dwellings” whereas other makeshift structures were considered as “improper.” A good example was the census carried out in 1928, in which the Municipal Social Bureau differentiated shanty households (*penghu*) from “common households (*putonghu*), implying that shanty dwellers were different from “commoners.”²³⁷ Shanty settlements were described, sometimes without justification, by national elites, social surveyors, the media, and urban residents as detrimental to the capital’s appearance, public health and fire safety, security, and decency.²³⁸ State publications blamed that shanty settlements were “disgustingly dirty, uninhabitable, and were the sources of disease and moral depravity.”²³⁹ The *Capital Plan* also declared, without any proof, that shanty dwellers and their children had become “hidden risks” of the society.²⁴⁰ Chen Yuelin shared the same view that “housing problem had gradually expanded from a hygienic and economic problem to a social problem that affected the harmony of family lives and the sexual morality between men and women” - even though his housing survey did not offer any concrete evidence to suggest so.²⁴¹

The stigmatization of poor people’s living quarters was not unique to China. Ever since the 19th century, western societies often condemned slums as causes of disease, distress, disorder and disaffections. For example, Jacob A Riis surveyed the living condition in New York slums during the early 1890s and titled his report *How the Other Half Lives*, suggesting that this one half (who lived in slums) had

²³⁷ SSG, 1928, vol. 26: tongji 1-7.

²³⁸ Wu, “A Survey on Nanjing’s Shack Dwelling Households.”

²³⁹ Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of the Laborers’ Residential Area in Nanjing*, 2.

²⁴⁰ Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *SDJH*, 197.

²⁴¹ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47910.

threatened the “other” (who lived in proper dwellings).²⁴² The slum stereotype, Alan Mayne argues, was created by both social surveyors like Riis who claimed their depiction of slums were based upon strict empiricism and the media that added sensationalism and a fictional gloss to this emerging factual basis. He pointed out that slums were employed by both reformers and entertainers as potent trigger devices which mobilized bourgeois interest because it dovetailed with basic axioms of the prevailing common-sense opinion about the good and the bad in contemporary society.²⁴³ Graeme Davison also labels the slum stereotype as “the most serious stumbling block” in the way of historians seeking to understand the life of the 19th century underclass.²⁴⁴

3.1.4 Two Theories of Housing Government: Active Construction and Passive Control

The housing problem of Nanjing obstructed the state goals of building a sanitary city and moral community. This prompted the state to make housing into a domain of government. Most importantly, it was a deeply rooted party philosophy of Kuomintang (KMT) to take care of the livelihood of the people. Sun Yat-sen, the late party founder of KMT, claimed that political revolution alone could not address the social problems of China. He founded a new philosophy, the *Three Principles of the People*, which became the party dogma of KMT until today. Among the three principles, Sun highlighted the principle of people’s livelihood as the most important one. He divided livelihood into four areas: food, clothing, housing, and transportation and claimed that an ideal government should take care of these for its people. In the domain of housing, Sun specially called for the government to provide public housing on a large scale. During the Nationalist period, livelihood became a commonly-used phrase for both Chinese leaders to substantiate their plans and for common people to launch their requests.

There were diversified opinions from the general public, planners and architects, social surveyors, and state officials on how to deal with Nanjing’s housing problem. In general, two theories of housing government emerged from the debate: the active construction approach (*jiji de jianzao*) and the passive control approach (*xiaoji de qudi*).

Proponents of the active construction approach (*jiji de jianzao*) urged the government to follow European and American nations, especially Germany and Britain, to actively provide affordable public housing for its people.²⁴⁵ Their

²⁴² Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*.

²⁴³ Mayne, *The Imagined Slum*, 3.

²⁴⁴ Davison, “Introduction,” 3.

²⁴⁵ For example, Chen Yuelin claimed that public housing was the best solution to Nanjing’s housing problem. See Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 48001.

arguments centered around two main reasons. First, public housing could stabilize the property market. They argued that the housing shortage was the main cause for the rapidly increasing property price and rent in Nanjing, as housing supply by private developers could not match the unprecedented population growth.²⁴⁶ By constructing public housing, the government could increase housing supply while maintaining an affordable rent, allowing the people “to live without worries.” Second, public housing eased government management. The government could better control the planning and design of public housing projects to improve the city’s appearance and to maintain hygiene and fire safety.

Compared to the active construction approach (*xiaoji de qudi*), the passive control approach requires more elaboration. Although the original Chinese word, *qudi*, literally means “eradication” or “elimination,” I believe control is a better translation. It was because when the government used the word *qudi* to describe its action on building structure, it actually means three different control methods. The first method was “eradication,” the direct translation of *qudi*. It describes the forceful eradication of illegal structures and slums by the government. The second method was “relocation.” The government ordered slums to relocate to designated areas, usually remote locations that would not hinder city appearance and traffic. The last method was “legislation,” meaning the use of law to prescribe a minimum building standard. Heinrich Schubart, the German consultant of the Reconstruction Commission, suggested formulating a building regulation and urged the government to appoint part of the police force as “building police (*jianzhu jingcha*)” to investigate illegal constructions in Nanjing.²⁴⁷ However, it was not until 1933 that the Municipal Public Works Bureau finally legislated the first building regulation.²⁴⁸

The government adopted both the active construction and passive control approach to address the housing problem of Nanjing. Curiously, the two approaches were applied on two different types of households. The government actively constructed public housing for common households in Nanjing. However, in the government’s definition, common households excluded those who lived in slums. On the contrary, the government adopted a passive control approach against slums, trying to eradicate and relocate them. The following sections of this chapter explain why and how the government applied these two approaches differently in Nanjing.

²⁴⁶ *SSG*, 1930, vol. 53, yanlun 1.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1929, vol. 39, zhuanzai 1-2.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1933, vol. 125, fagui, 27-62.

3.2 ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION: PUBLIC HOUSING FOR THE EMERGING WORKING CLASS

3.2.1 Model Laborers' New Village: From Community Service to State-Sponsored Program

The provision of affordable housing first appeared in China as a form of community services from philanthropic organizations. After the Nationalists came to power in 1927, the government shared the job immediately. There were several agencies in the state hierarchy that were interested in providing public housing. Some of their housing plans remained hypothetical, while some were materialized in Nanjing.

The YMCA Laborers' Model New Village in Shanghai

The turn of the 20th century saw an increasing cityward migration whereby rural peasants left their villages and became wage laborers in the cities. Seeing such a trend, many modernizing elites of China wanted to prevent the potential housing and social problems due to the emergence of this new working class. Some of them, like Zhou Zuoren, were impressed by the quasi-socialistic “new village” (*xincun* in Chinese; *Atarashiki Mura* in Japanese) founded by the Japanese novelist Saneatsu Mushanokoji in 1918 at Hyuga, Japan. The new village was a cooperative community in which members devoted not only their labors but also their incomes to the community, and in return their needs and welfare would be well taken care of.²⁴⁹ After personally visiting Hyuga in 1919, Zhou Zuoren praised the utopian new village in the influential magazine the *New Youth* [*xin qingnian*].²⁵⁰

Because of Zhou's efforts, the new village model aroused many attentions in China.²⁵¹ It was, however, the China branch of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) at Shanghai that was first to put the new village model into practice. The YMCA had appeared in China as early as the 1870s when it organized an association for foreigners in Shanghai and many student associations in mission schools in China. Since the 1920s, the YMCA had been involved in various social reform programs. One of its major concerns was China's growing industrial and workers' problems.²⁵² M. Thomas Tchou (Zhu Maocheng), Head of the YMCA's National Industrial Committee and an engineering graduate of the University of Glasgow, had conducted an extensive investigation on the living conditions of the working class in Shanghai. Seeing how unpleasant the living environment was,

²⁴⁹ See Mushanokōji, *Life in the New Village*.

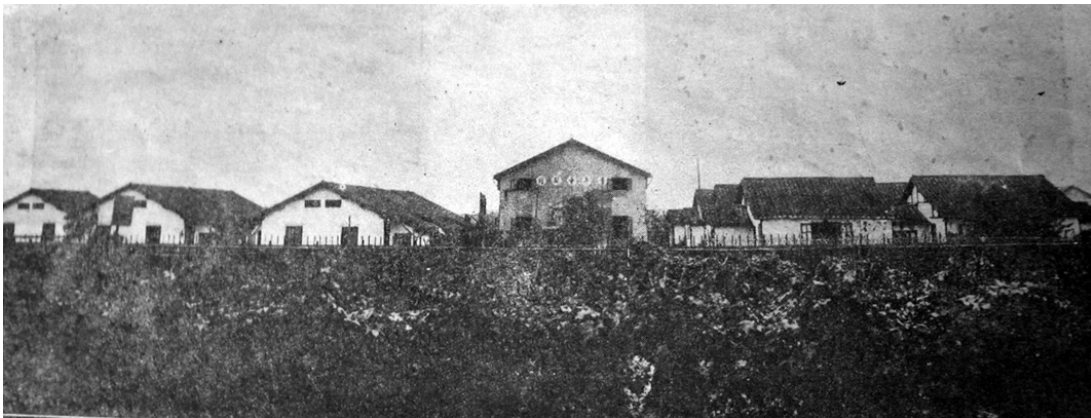
²⁵⁰ See Zhou, “Spirit of the New Village”; Zhou, “Vision and Practice of the New Village.”

²⁵¹ New village model inspired Communists leaders like Mao Zedong to develop the people's commune during the late 1950s.

²⁵² For YMCA's work on China's industrial and labor problem, see Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution*.

Thomas Tchou actively persuaded the YMCA leadership to provide affordable housing for Chinese workers.

Under the supervision of Thomas Tchou, in 1926 the YMCA developed an experimental housing project, the Laborers' Model New Village (*laogong mofan xincun*), in Pudong of Shanghai. Occupying 6 *mu* (4,000 sq. meters) of land, the village accommodated 25 houses for a population of 80. (Fig. 3.05) Each house had a sitting room, a bedroom, a kitchen, and a bathroom.²⁵³



(Source: Gongshangbu laogongsi, *Outline of Facilities for the Laborers' New Village*, 14.)

Fig. 3.05 View of the YMCA Laborers' New Village in Pudong, Shanghai.

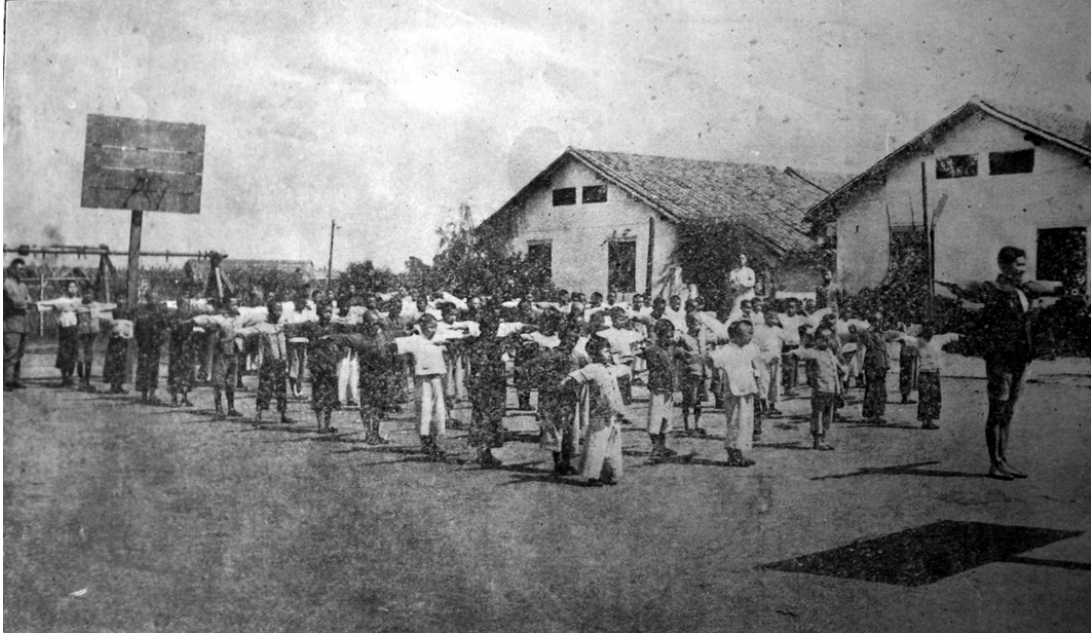
It was a major goal of the YMCA to provide social, educational, and recreational programs for the villagers, such as drama and music clubs, athletic games, religious meetings, lectures, popular education classes, health campaigns, vaccinations, and medical examinations.²⁵⁴ (Fig. 3.06) Thomas Tchou remarked that the moral and education level of villagers had greatly improved over the years: the illiteracy rate was reduced, rent default rarely happened, and superstition and gambling had been banned.²⁵⁵ All these social reform programs impressed KMT leaders. In 1928, Chiang Kai-shek, Cai Yuanpei (president of Peking University), and some other scholars and government officials visited and wrote inscriptions for the Model New Village, a Chinese way to honor ones' accomplishment.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Tchou, "The Laborers' New Village Movement," she 10–11.

²⁵⁴ Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution*, 116.

²⁵⁵ Tchou, "The Laborers' New Village Movement," she 10–11.

²⁵⁶ Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution*, 117.



(Source: Gongshangbu laogongsi, *Outline of Facilities for the Laborers' New Village*, 15.)

Fig. 3.06 Students were exercising in an elementary school in the YMCA Laborers' New Village.

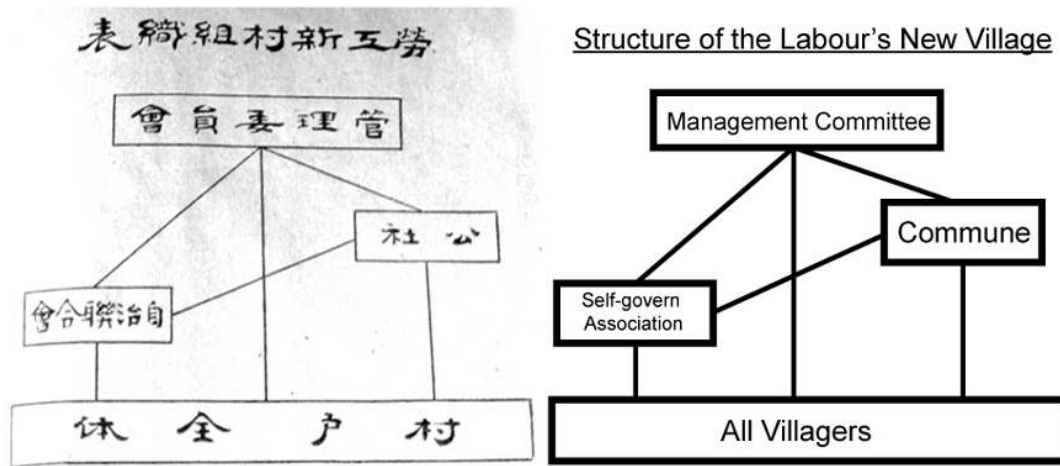
The Laborers' New Village Proposed by the Ministry of Labor and Commerce

Impressed by the works of the YMCA, after the Nationalist Government was established in Nanjing in August 1927, KMT leaders recruited Kong Xiangxi, a YMCA activist, as the minister of Labor and Commerce, and Thomas Tchou as the Director of the Labor Department. Under Kong and Tchou's direction, the Ministry of Labor and Commerce began promoting the construction of laborers' new villages in China.

In the ministry's plan, not only could the laborers' new village provide affordable accommodations to the emerging working class, it could also improve social atmosphere by promoting friendship, mutual aid, cleanliness, frugality, and self-control.²⁵⁷ Tchou believed that it was important to cultivate self governance in the new village. Ideally, the new village would be governed by a Self-governing Association (SGA) formed by representatives of villagers. The running of the SGA would be overseen by a Management Committee comprising representatives from both the SGA and donors of the new village. (Fig. 3.07) A community center (the original Chinese term is *gongshe*, literally means commune), which Thomas Tchou labelled as "the pivot of the new village movement," would provide social services and trainings to villagers. The new village also included communal facilities such as schools, reading rooms, lecture rooms, clinics, bathing facilities, playgrounds, fire

²⁵⁷ Tchou, "The Laborers' New Village Movement," she 11.

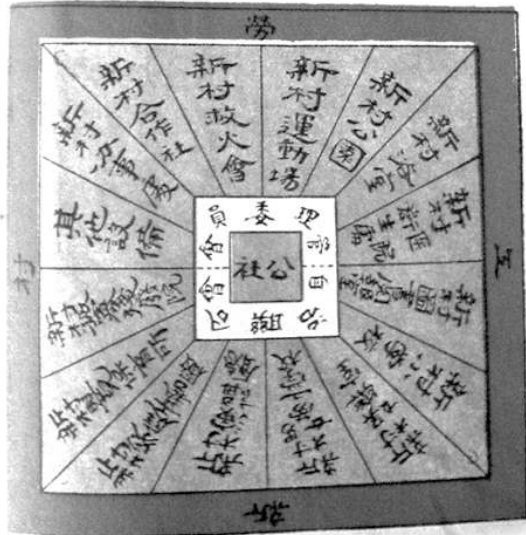
stations, handicraft workshops, cooperatives, nurseries, and care centers for widows, orphans, and the disabled, etc. (Fig. 3.08)



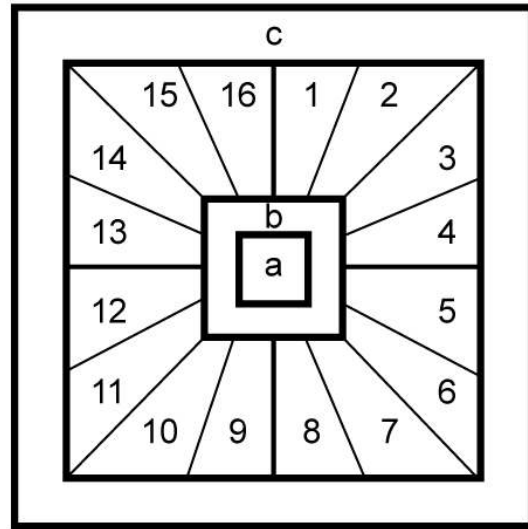
(Source: Gongshangbu laogongsi, *Outline of Facilities for the Laborers' New Village*, 10.)

Fig. 3.07 The management structure of the Laborers' New Village proposed by the Ministry of Labor and Commerce.

表 組織組業事社公



Structure of the Commune



LEGEND			
a	Community Center (commune)	7	Entertainment Room
b	Self-governing Association	8	Male and Female Laborers' School
c	Laborers' New Village	9	Lecture Room
1	Playground	10	Family Handicraft Workshop
2	Park	11	Nursery
3	Bathing Facilities	12	Center for the Disabled
4	Clinic	13	Other facilities
5	Library	14	Office
6	Elementary School	15	Cooperative
		16	Fire Station

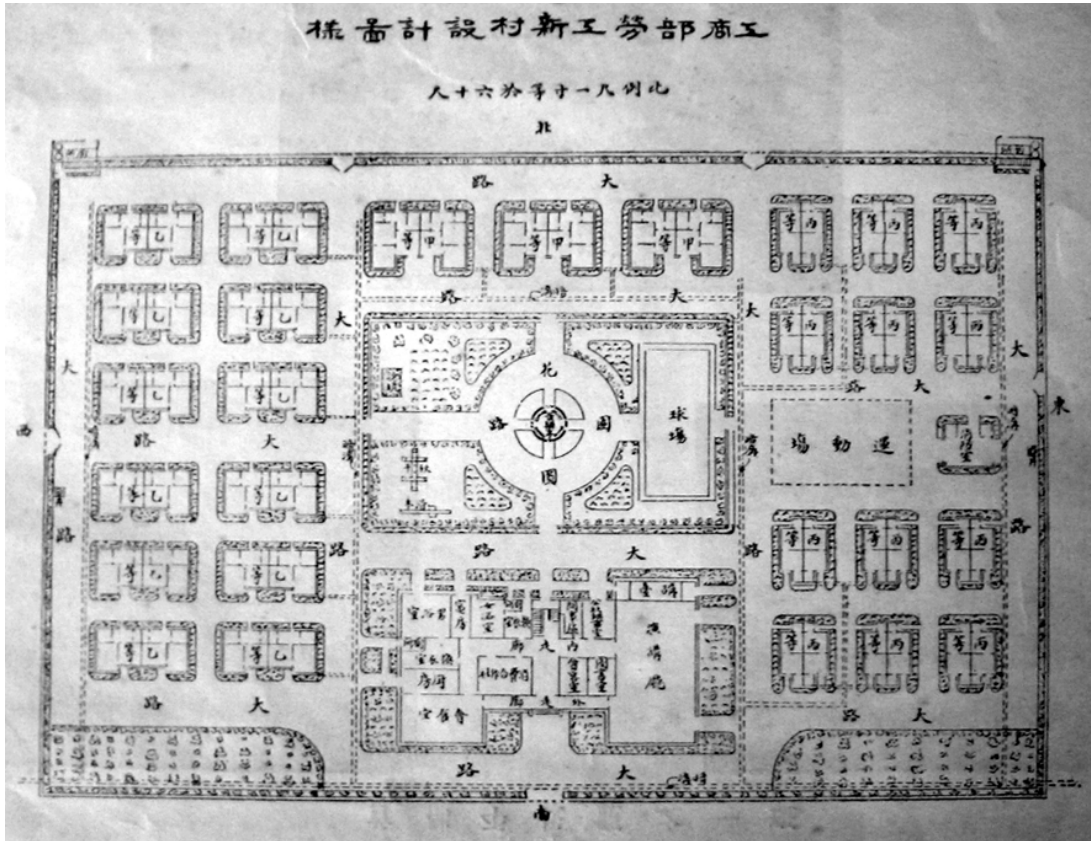
(Source: Gongshangbu laogongsi, *Outline of Facilities for the Laborers' New Village*, 10.)

Fig. 3.08 Communal facilities in the Laborer's New Village.

The Laborers' New Village proposed by the Ministry of Labor and Commerce was much larger in scale than the one built by the YMCA. The planning had no trace of a traditional Chinese village; rather, it clearly reflected the absorption of western small neighborhood design, emphasizing on regular planning and a sense of community. (Fig. 3.09) The village was rectangular in plan and enclosed by a fence wall and bushes. Major roads surrounded the periphery of the village while inner roads divided the neighborhoods into a regular pattern. Public facilities, occupying almost one-third of the total area, were located at the center of the neighborhood. They were surrounded by semi-detached houses, a foreign building type first adopted in the open decades of the 20th century in the workers' housing of the Russian and Japanese railway companies in North-eastern China.²⁵⁸ In the new village, three types

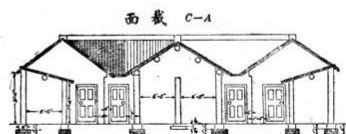
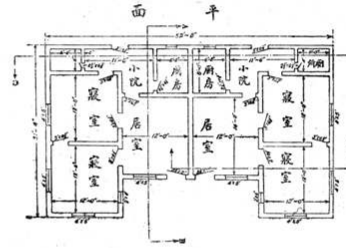
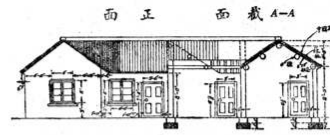
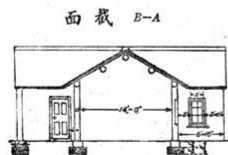
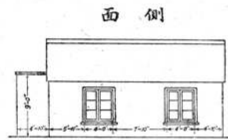
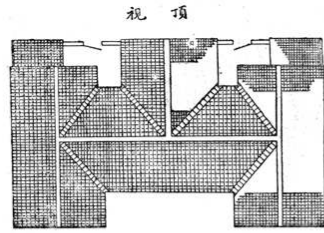
²⁵⁸ Zhang and Tan, "Chapter Two," 82–83.

of semi-detached houses were planned for villagers with different financial capacities. They were built with tiled roof, brick wall or bamboo mat wall plastered with mud for better fire resistance, and punctuated with big windows for lighting and ventilation. Each house was equipped with a kitchen and a lavatory. (Fig. 3.10)



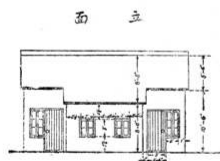
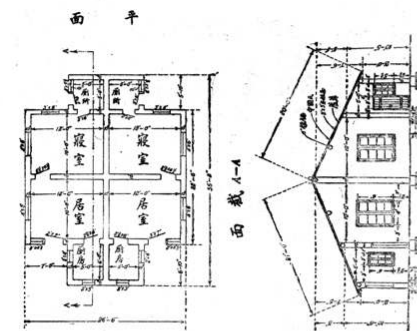
(Source: Gongshangbu laogongsi, *Outline of Facilities for the Laborers' New Village*, 11.)

Fig. 3.09 Neighborhood planning of the proposed Laborers' New Village.

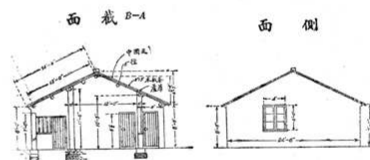
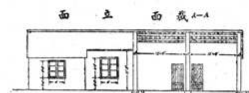
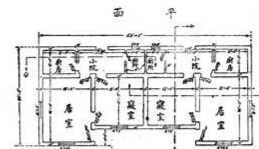


勞工模範新村住屋圖(甲等)

TYPE A

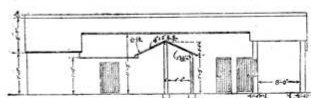


勞工模範新村住屋圖(丙等)



勞工模範新村住屋圖(乙等)

面背 面截 C-A



TYPE C

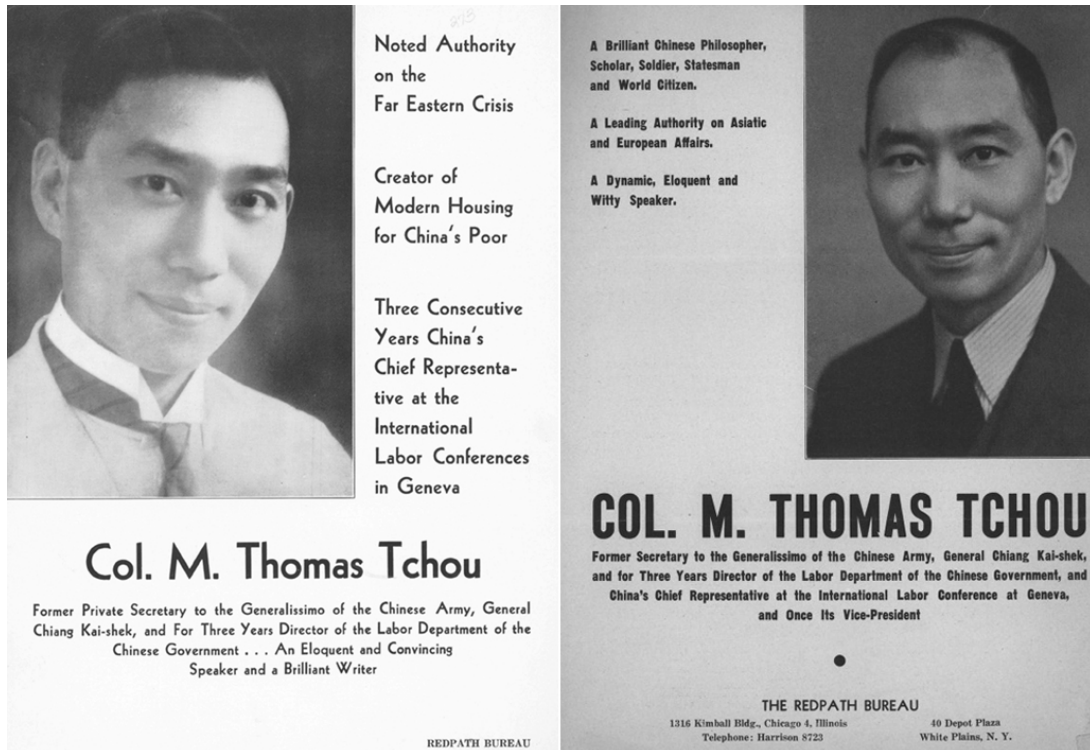
TYPE B

Type A unit had a living room, two bedrooms, a kitchen, a toilet, and a small backyard. Type B and C was very similar to Type A except that they had only one bedroom. Type B had a backyard but Type C had not.

(Source: Tchou, "The Laborers' New Village Movement," 17-20.)

Fig. 3.10 Proposed building plan for the Laborers' New Village.

Thomas Tchou claimed that the Laborers' New Village was "the pioneer in social improvement," and urged the Nationalist Government to promote its development, so that the working class in China could enjoy a stable life and increase their productivity.²⁵⁹ Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the Ministry of Labor and Commerce had constructed any Laborers' New Village by itself. Thomas Tchou remained as the Director of the Labor Department for three years. He was China's chief representative at the International Labor Conferences in Geneva and a speaker at the Chautauqua lectures of the United State. (Fig. 3.11)



(Source: University of Iowa Libraries, <http://sdrdata.lib.uiowa.edu/libsdrc/details.jsp?id=/tchou/3>.)

Fig. 3.11 Flyers of Thomas Tchou's talks in the Chautauqua lecture series in 1938 (left) and 1940 (right).

3.2.2 Proposal in the Capital Plan: Two Types of Public Housings

Besides the Ministry of Labor and Commerce, the Office of Technical Experts for Capital Design, the state agency in charge of the making of the *Capital Plan*, was equally interested in providing affordable housing to the Chinese urban population. The Expert Office claimed that public housing could "unite the dispersed masses for

²⁵⁹ Tchou, "The Laborers' New Village Movement," 15.

easy control and management.”²⁶⁰ In the *Capital Plan*, the Expert Office pointed out seven benefits of public housing. As a strong advocate of urban planning, it highlighted how a unified planning of public housing could help improving hygiene standards, economic development and the aesthetic quality of Nanjing. It also emphasized the economic scale in public housing development so as to reduce infrastructure and construction costs. (Table 3.06)

Table 3.06 The advantages of public housing according to the *Capital Plan*.

Concerns	Advantages
Hygienic	Public housing allows a better hygienic standard.
Economic	Facilities like lavatories and bathing facilities could be centralized for communal use to save construction cost.
Economic	Large-scale housing development saves material, construction and management costs; as a result, the rent of public housing could be lowered.
Economic	Large-scale housing development could be constructed on rural un-developed areas with lower land costs.
Aesthetic	Uniform planning upgrades the city’s appearance.
Economic	Comprehensive planning enables better utilization of land and avoids piecemeal development.
Economic/ Aesthetic	Building numerous public housing developments at once helps the physical reconstruction of Nanjing.

(Source: Summarized from Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, 198.)

Nevertheless, who were eligible for public housing in Nanjing? The *Capital Plan* suggested developing two types of public housing for different type of urban residents. (Table 3.07) The first type was built for low income workers and residents who lost their homes due to the construction of new roads. Affordability was the main concern for these types of public housing residents. To keep the construction cost low, the Expert Office proposed using cheap construction materials like mud, zinc and straws, and grouping several facilities, such as kitchens, toilets and bathrooms, laundries, for communal use. Multi-family houses, rather than single-family ones, were chosen for the same reason of cost effectiveness. The *Capital Plan* stressed that this type of public housing should be scattered around the city at locations easily accessible to jobs.²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of the Laborers’ Residential Area in Nanjing*, 2.

²⁶¹ Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *SDJH*, 199.

Table 3.07 Different types of public housing proposed in the *Capital Plan*.

Type of Residents	Eligibility	Housing Designs
(A1) Low-income workers	Low-income workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be constructed at convenient locations for easy access to work places; • Must be scattered at different spots in the city; • Better to be located at the dense area such as the southern, western and central parts of Nanjing; • Rent should be kept under 20% of family income; • Keep construction cost low. Use low cost-materials like mud and asphalt external wall and floor, concrete block partition, zinc or straws roof; • Adopt multi-family houses instead of single-family houses; • Provide communal facilities like laundry room, kitchens, toilets & bathroom, playground, etc; • Must ensure adequate lighting and ventilation. Window size should be 10% of flat area; • Density: at least 1 square <i>zhang</i> per person.
(A2) Residents affected by the construction of new roads	<p>Provided only for those “extremely poor” who were not able to find a new accommodation.</p> <p>For other affected residents, they should be compensated with relocation allowance instead.</p>	
(B) Government employees	Grade 1 & 2: middle to higher ranking staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better equipped, in proportional to the amount of rent received.
	Grade 3: lower ranking staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as that for low-income workers; • May consider selling the flat to the renter through installments.

(Source: Summarized from Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, 199-202.)

The second type of public housing was built for state employees. Because there were a huge number of state employees in Nanjing, the *Capital Plan* remarked, “the consequences were high rent and unpleasant environment, which had harmful effects on both hygiene and economy.”²⁶² It was therefore the State’s responsibility to accommodate its employees to reduce potential socio-economic hazards. State employees with different ranks were eligible for different grades of housing. Grade one and two units were provided for higher ranking officials. They were two-storey villas with Chinese stylistic features and were linked up by covered corridors. Jeffrey Cody suggests that the proposed villas were organized spatially in ways similar to contemporary American subdivisions and perhaps more specifically to Clarence

²⁶² Ibid., 201.

Perry's neighborhood planning concepts (which was unsurprised in view of the strong American influence in the Expert Office).²⁶³ (Fig. 3.12) Grade Three units were built for ordinary state employees; the provisions and designs were similar to the public housing for impoverished workers. The *Capital Plan* claimed that all these state employees' housing should be located in close proximity to the Central Administrative Zone. State employees were also given an option to purchase their accommodations by instalments.



(Source: Guodu sheji jishu juanyuan banshichu, *Capital Plan*, Fig. 52.)

Fig. 3.12 State employees' housing proposed in the Capital Plan.

Although the Ministry of Labor and Commerce and the Expert Office had never fully materialized their respective proposals, they provided three important concepts for public housing in modern China. First, the target occupants of public housing were the emerging working class and state employees in Chinese cities. Second, the government should impose social reform programs into public housing. Last, public housing should employ regular neighbourhood planning, which emphasized on order, uniformity, and sense of community.

²⁶³ Jeffrey Cody suggests that the American consultant of the Expert Office, Henry Murphy, would have known of Clarence Perry's idea of neighborhood planning made in 1929.

Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "Adaptive Architecture," 1914-1935*, 188–189.

3.2.3 Commoners' Residential Areas: Desire for a Rational Planning

Different from the public and private agencies discussed in the last section, the Nanjing Municipal Government considered public housing first and foremost as relocation housing. Facing enormous resistance against forced eviction, in September 1928, the government decided to build three “Commoners’ Residential Area (*pingmin zhuzhaiqu*)” to re-house residents affected by the construction of the Zhongshan Avenue.²⁶⁴ (Table 3.08) The Municipal Public Works Bureau, the agency in charge of the projects, proposed three types of housing units. Type A was designed for residents with better financial capability. It was a 2-storey semi-detached house containing two residential units, each having three bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. The design resembled a western bungalow with features like pitched roof, raised patio, and big windows. (Fig. 3.13) Type B and C were long single-storey houses. Because of its linear form, the Chinese named this new housing type *paiwu*, literally “row house.” Different from the western terraced houses, the Chinese row house was not an annexation of individual houses; rather, it was a single linear building, covered by a single roof, but partitioned into multiple units, each with its own entrance. Unit of the Type B row house was bigger than that of Type C and had an additional backyard.²⁶⁵ (Fig. 3.14 to Fig. 3.16) Overall, the Public Works Bureau built 470 units in these three settlements for 250 households.²⁶⁶ Residents had to pay a low rent to the government.

²⁶⁴ At the north of Drum Tower, at Dayingou, and near Hongwu Gate. Liu, “Report from Mayor Liu at the 12th Commemoration Week.”

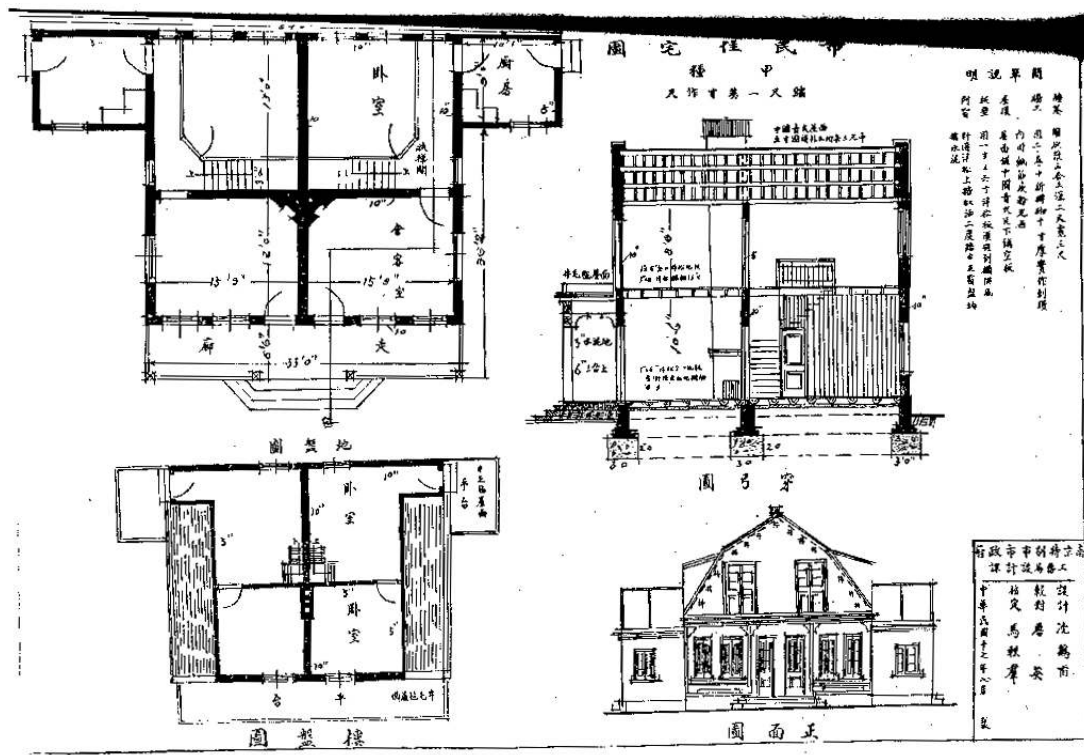
²⁶⁵ “Commoners’ Housing Completed One after Another.”

²⁶⁶ Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, 79–80.

Table 3.08 First batch of Commoners' Residential Areas developed for evicted residents of the Zhongshan Avenue.

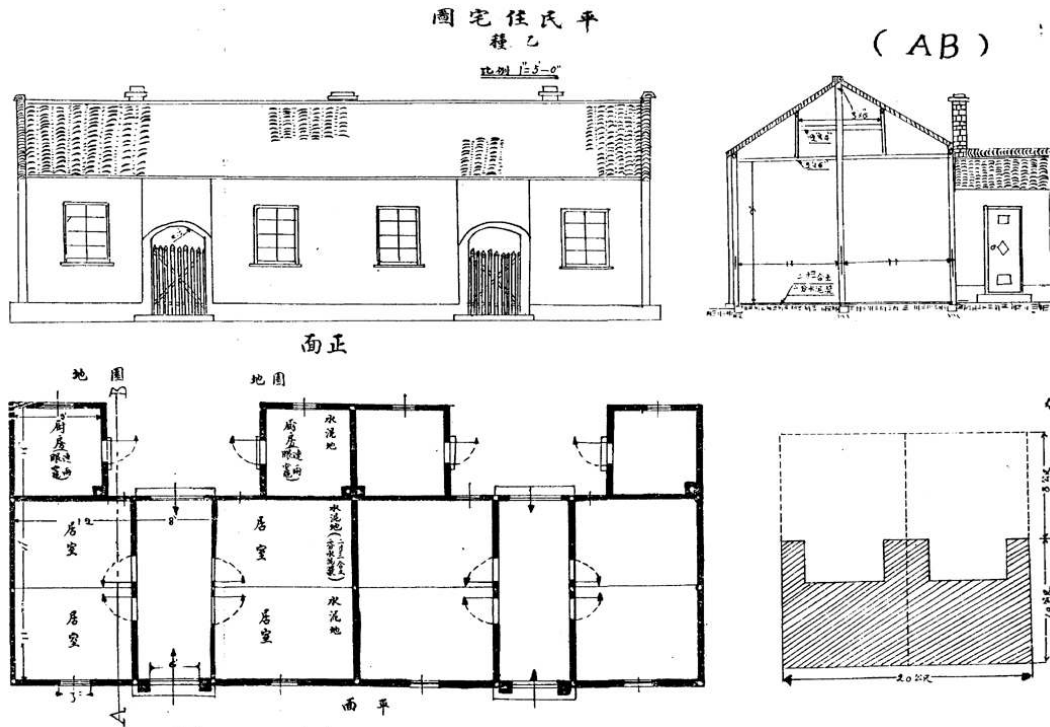
Type	Location	No. of Units	Design	Construction Period
A	North of Drum Tower	Unknown	2-storey western-styled house, each house had 2 3-bedrooms units.	Commenced on 09/1928.
B	Dayingou	33 buildings, total 100 units.	Single-storey row house with backyard, each row had 4 or 6 units.	Completed on 11/1928.
C	Hongwu Gate	25 buildings, total 200 units.	Single-storey row house, each row had 8 units.	First phrase completed on 11/1928, second phrase completed on 12/1928.

(Source: Summarized from "Commoners' Housing Completed One after Another.")

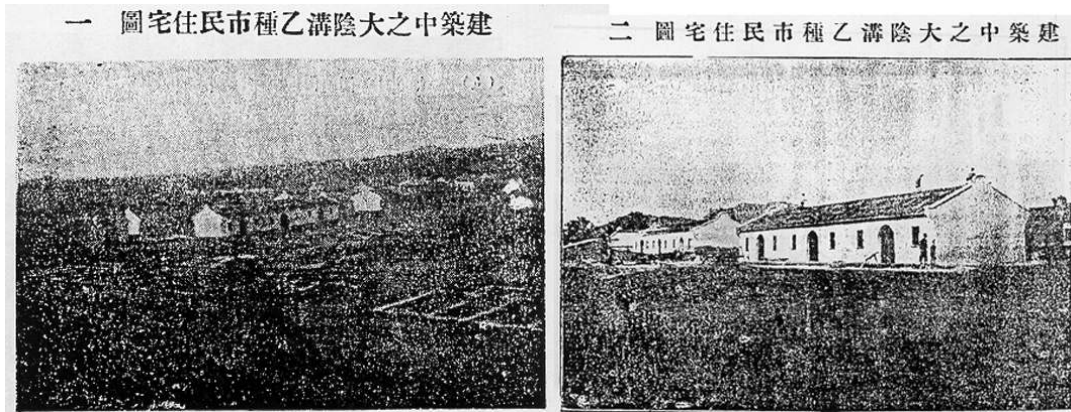


(Source: Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, facing 80.)

Fig. 3.13 Architectural drawings of Type A unit at north of Drum Tower.

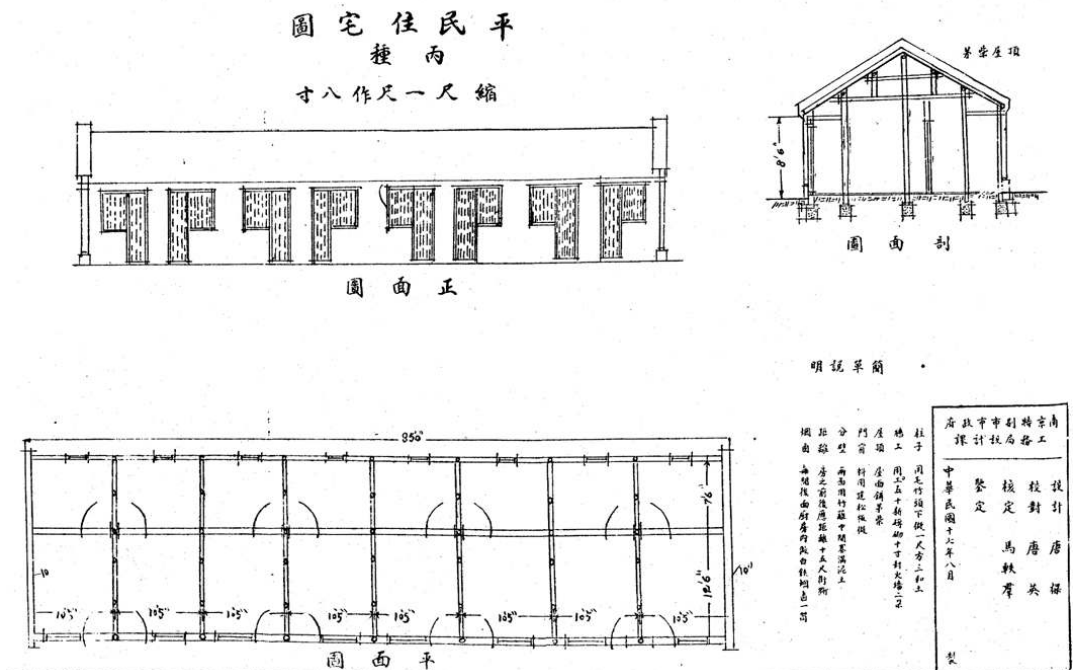


(Source: Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, facing 80.)
 Fig. 3.14 Architectural drawings of Type B unit at Dayingou.



(Source: Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, no page number.)

Fig. 3.15 Photographs of Type B unit at Dayingou.



(Source: Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, facing 80.)

Fig. 3.16 Architectural Drawings of Type C unit at Hongwu Gate.

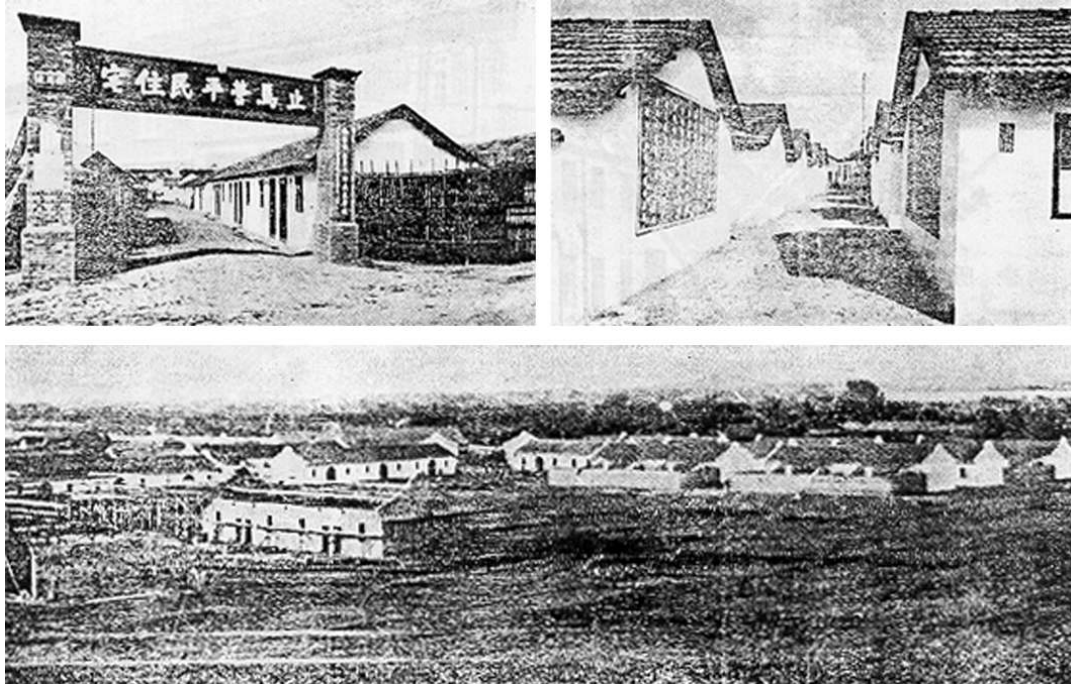
Although priority was given to evicted residents, the government also encouraged other Nanjing residents to rent public housing. As it turned out, not many people were willing to move into these remote settlements, which were far away from where jobs were available. By May 1930, only 39 Type B units and 66 Type C units were leased.²⁶⁷ Many of the units remained vacant, which disappointed Mayor Liu Jiwen. Without deeply investigating the cause for the high vacancy rate, Mayor Liu simplistically concluded that most Nanjing residents had a house to live in; he proclaimed “it is only a small number of people who come to the capital for jobs that had no place to dwell.”²⁶⁸

Apparently, the Nationalist Government did not agree with Mayor Liu’s simplistic conclusion. Despite the high vacancy rate of these three pioneer projects, the Nationalist Government instructed the Nanjing Municipal Government to construct another 3,000 to 4,000 units “for the impoverished people.”²⁶⁹ Later, when Shi Ying became the mayor since 1933, he vigorously encouraged the construction of Commoners’ Residential Areas. By mid 1936, seven areas had been built. (Fig. 3.17) All together, they provided 891 residential units. (Table 3.09)

²⁶⁷ SSG, 1929, vol. 30, zhuanzai 4.

²⁶⁸ Liu, “Report from Mayor Liu at the 6th Commemoration Week.”

²⁶⁹ SSG, 1928, vol. 27, gongdu 42-43.



(Source: Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Nanjing Administration in the Last Year*, no page number.)

Fig. 3.17 Commoners' Residential Areas at Zhimaying (top) and outside Guanghua Gate (bottom).

Table 3.09 Completed Commoners' Residential Area, June 1936.

Name	No. of Units	Rent per Unit (yuan)	Total Construction Cost (yuan)	Average Constructi on Cost per Unit
Commoners' Housing Outside Zhonghua Gate	8	Unknown	830.00	103.75
Commoners' Housing Outside Heping Gate	60	1.8	11,202.35	186.71
Lakers' Housing Outside Heping Gate*	100	1.0	11,614.90	116.15
Commoners' Housing inside Wuding Gate	200	1.5	Unknown	Unknown
Urban residents' Housing inside Guanghua Gate	100	4.2	Unknown	Unknown
Commoners' Housing at Zhimaying	223	2.6	43,892.95	196.83
Commoners' Housing at Qilijie	200	2.5	39,755.80	198.78
Total	891			

* For the relocation of the lakers who lived around the Xuanmu Lake.

(Source: The figures are based on Chen, *The Housing Problems of Nanjing*, 47961.)

The Municipal Government insisted in building the Commoners' Residential Areas at desolate locations, probably to avoid the huge cost and tedious procedure in acquiring land. Among the seven areas built, only three were located inside the walled city, including the Guanghua Gate project, which was developed for wealthier

residents. The rent of a unit at the Guanghua Gate project (4.2 *yuan*) was much higher than that in other projects (ranged from 1.0 to 2.6 *yuan*). The difference was not only in rent but also in the names of the projects. The Guanghua Gate project was given the name of “urban residents’ housing (*shimin zhuzhai*)” to differentiate it from other projects which were all named “commoners’ housing (*pingmin zhuzhai*).” This showed that the government used housing condition as a determinant of social hierarchy.

Although the government claimed that the purpose for the construction of workers’ housing was to “relieve the economic distress of the working class,” it also stressed the importance of them in keeping up appearance of the capital.²⁷⁰ Therefore, the Public Works Bureau imposed a regular planning to the new Commoners’ Residential Areas. Uniform row houses, which were selected by the bureau for cost reason, were aligned orderly in grid pattern. Usually, one *mu* land (666.67 sq. meters) housed 10 residential units. Each unit measured 17.5 sq. meters and was built in timber structure, pitched roof, and brick wall enclosure. Communal facilities, such as public lavatories, school, drainage, etc., were also planned in the areas.²⁷¹ (Fig. 3.18)

²⁷⁰ Nanjingshi zhengfu, *Nanjingshi laogong zhuzhaiqu zhi guoqu yu jianglai* [The Past and Future of the Labors' Residential District in Nanjing] (Nanjing: Nanjingshi zhengfu, 1935), 1.

²⁷¹ Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of the Laborers' Residential Area in Nanjing*, 6–8.

The active construction approach to build public housing allowed the government to produce governable urban spaces, transforming chaotic urban centers of Nanjing into uniformly planned and segregated residential quarters. By employing a regular planning to the Commoners' Residential Areas, the government could better comprehend, regulate, and police the living environment as well as its inhabitants, knowing who lived where easily. The uniform design of row houses created an orderly urban image and rational life that the government long desired.

Nevertheless, the government's concerns in planning and management did not match the interests of tenants. Many tenants could not afford the high cost to live in the Commoners' Residential Areas (each tenant family needed to pay a monthly rent, plus 20 *yuan* construction cost and another 90 *yuan* for land and public facilities costs).²⁷² To reduce the financial burden, they often sublet their units to other families. It was common for multiple families to cram in a tiny unit.²⁷³ People who visited the areas also complained that the lack of control and management from the government had resulted in poor hygiene and security. They commented that the environment there was "extremely bad" and "disgustingly dirty."²⁷⁴

3.3 PASSIVE CONTROL: SLUM CLEARANCE AND THE REGULATION OF THE POOR

3.3.1 Early Efforts to Control Shanty Settlement

Nationalist leaders envisioned Nanjing as a national capital with orderly planning, wide boulevards, grand architecture, a city that conformed to modern hygiene and sanitation standards, and were dwelled in by polite and educated citizens. However, the reality was that 80 per cent of Nanjing people were living under the poverty line.²⁷⁵ New banks, movie theaters, sport arena were constructed amid a large sea of slums; shanty dwellers, dressed in ragged peasant clothing, walked on the capitals' Parisian-like boulevards. This was not the image of the capital that Nationalist leaders wanted to see. While the government was actively building public housing for commoners in Nanjing, it adopted a totally different approach to slums -- passive regulation. This decision led us to two curious questions. First, why did the government differentiate shanty dwellers from commoners in the provision of housing? Second, why did the government adopt the passive control approach, instead of the active construction approach, to address slums in Nanjing?

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47962.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Wu, "A Survey on Nanjing's Shack Dwelling Households," 764.

The government had never answered these questions. In fact, a single reason might not be able to explain the government's decision. Probably, the major reason was the well-documented financial difficulty of the Nationalist Government, which had already affected the ambitious *Capital Plan* for Nanjing. The capital reconstruction fund -- relied on government bonds, contributions from other provinces, and public work levy (as discussed in Chapter One) -- were never enough. A state official admitted that the government did not have the financial capacity to built public housing for this large amount of shanty dwellers.²⁷⁶ Furthermore, the Commoners' Residential Areas did not yield the result that the government had expected. Nanjing people complained that the rent was too expensive and the location of the areas was too far from work places. This might make the government believed that public housing were beyond the affordability of slum dwellers.

It was also plausible that, at least in the early years, the government had never considered shanty dwellers as "commoners." Shanty dwellers were mainly impoverished rural peasants who came to the capital for jobs. They did not match the image of worthy capital citizens that the government envisioned. Coincidentally, the government's biased attitude towards poverty was similar to the British approach against slums during the Victorian era. The British believed that poverty and other disability could be reformed not by charitable relief or welfare but by removal of the poor to institutions which were designed to instruct them in the ways of sobriety and self-discipline and to serve as an example of the orderly management of human affairs to the rest of society.²⁷⁷ This was the same approach that the Nanjing Government employed: eradicate the slums, educate shanty dwellers.

Over the years, Nanjing had tested various methods to deal with the slum problem. The change in methods may be due to the fact that mayors of Nanjing changed frequently and every new leadership had its own slums policy. Initially, under the first mayor Liu Jiwen, Nanjing employed a forced eradication policy against slums. In November 1927, a few months after Nanjing became the capital, the government planned to abolish all existing reed shacks and adobe huts. New shanties could only be constructed with approved materials and at designated areas that did not hinder traffic or the city's appearance.²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the policy remained ineffective as it was seemingly unfeasible to clear the huge amount of slums at once. Slums continued to mushroom in Nanjing.

The presence of large number of unsightly slums in the national capital annoyed Chiang Kai-shek, chairman of the Nationalist Government. On more than one occasions, Chiang went past a shanty cluster, disgusted by what he saw, and asked the Municipal Government to eradicate it immediately.²⁷⁹ Usually, the

²⁷⁶ According to Zhang Jianming, chairman of the Committee to Improve Shantytowns. Cited in Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47944.

²⁷⁷ Ward, "The Victorian Slum," 324.

²⁷⁸ See NTSG. 1927, vol. 6, ligui:2-3 and Nanjing tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu, *Capital Administration in the Last Year*, 82.

²⁷⁹ "Second Phrase of the Qili Street Shanty Residential Area."

government would act accordingly without delay. In October 1930, Chiang personally instructed the Municipal Government and the Capital Police Force to abolish all metal and straw shacks along the roads to improve city appearance. Since this involved a large part of Nanjing's population, the two authorities feared that this would seriously "affect the livelihood of the people."²⁸⁰ As a remedy, they suggested clearing shanties along important roads in Nanjing first. As such in February 1931, the Municipal Government ordered 280 shanty families to dismantle their shacks by themselves within five days, and move into five designated areas outside the walled city, where they could freely rebuild their shacks without the complicated procedures required by the regulation.²⁸¹ If the families did not obey the instruction by the deadline, the government threatened to forcefully tear down their shacks. The government also requested all shanty households in Nanjing to register to prevent them from multiplying.²⁸²

Since January 1932, due to the outbreak of the civil war and a series of military conflicts with Japan, the Nationalist Government had abandoned Nanjing and retreated to the second capital Loyang. As a result, the government almost stopped eradicating slums. The effort slowly resumed after the Nationalist Government returned to Nanjing by December 1932. By then, the government was unable to control the spread of slums.

In 1934, under the new leadership of Mayor Shi Ying, the Municipal Government discussed again the slum problems in Nanjing and established the Committee to Improve Shantytowns [*Penghu zhuzhai geilian weiyuanhui*]. This committee decided to abandon the forced eradication policy and adopted a softer approach against slums. This change of attitude reflected that the government began to accept that shanty dwellers were an indispensable part of Nanjing's social structure. The committee chairman, Zhang Jianming, claimed that slums were harmful to the city's appearance, hygiene, fire safety, security, and social morality. Nevertheless, he admitted that it was impossible to expel all shanty dwellers from Nanjing, for these people, who worked as small peddlers, rickshaw-pullers, laundry washers, weavers and other occupations, had a strong influence on Nanjing's daily lives. This was the first time a state official acknowledged the labor of shanty dwellers. Zhang further declared that it was the government's responsibility to take care of the welfare of urban residents. "Shanty dwellers were urban residents too," Zhang explained, "[they] fulfilled their obligation to pay taxes, and [we] cannot ignore their rights."²⁸³

The committee suggested four methods to solve the slum problem: regulation, improvement, relocation, and construction of commoners' housing. First, as the

²⁸⁰ SSG, 1931, vol. 80, jishi 12.

²⁸¹ The five locations were the Military Factory outside Zhonghua Gate, the area surrounding Mochou Lake outside Shuixi Gate, the area outside Jinchuan Gate, vacant land near Wuding Gate, and vacant land near Tongji Gate.

²⁸² See SSG, 1931, vol. 85, gongdu 15-16; SSG, 1931, vol. 90, jishi, 5; and NSG, 1931, vol. 94, baogao, 101.

²⁸³ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47944.

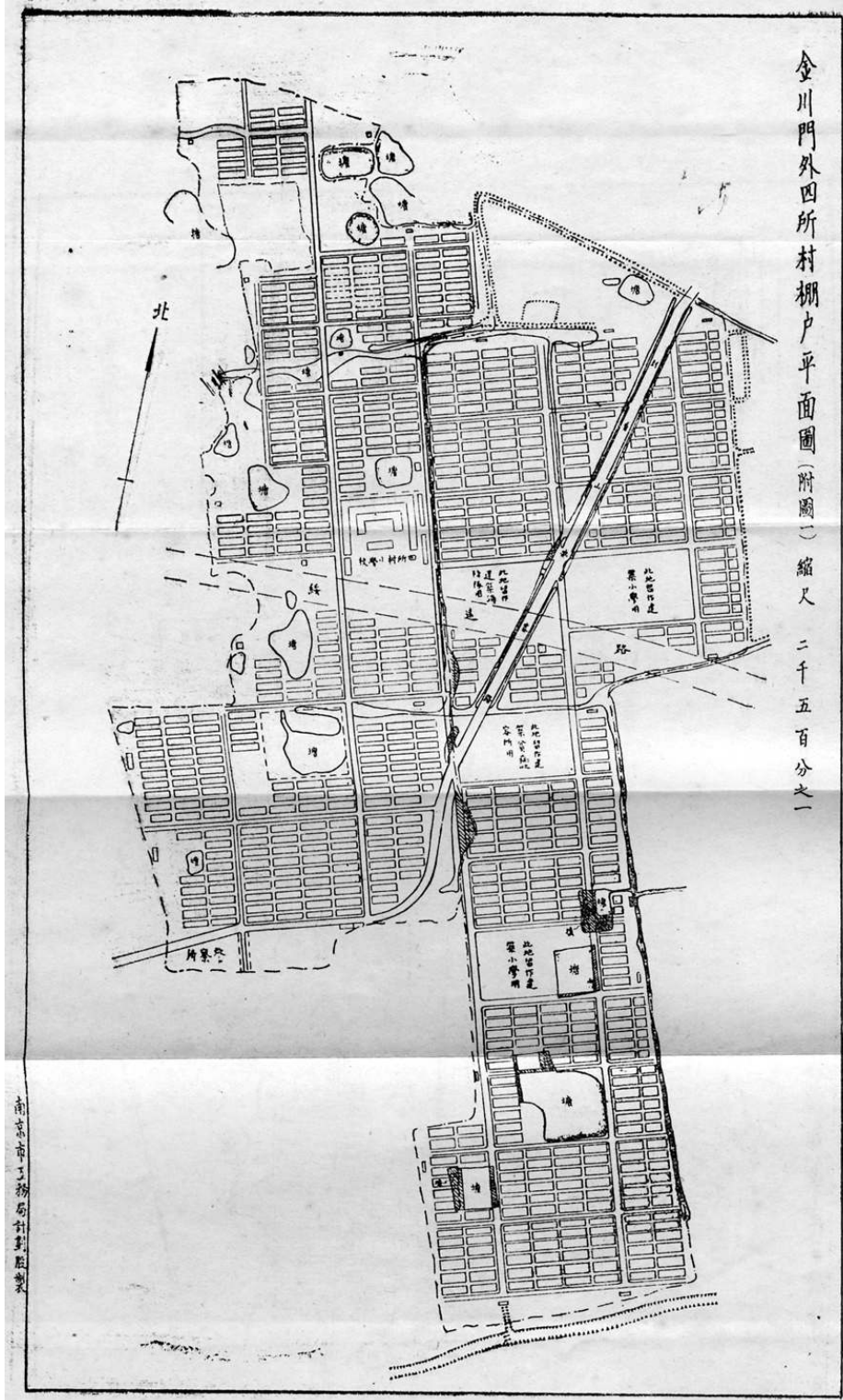
committee could not forcefully drive shanty dwellers out of Nanjing, it employed a “peaceful and passive” regulatory policy to prohibit the construction of new shacks. The committee would issue licences and nail door-plates on registered shacks to keep track on the number. Second, the committee suggested improving the conditions of existing shanty settlements, such as repairing roads, dredging waterways, and installing trash bins. Third, if the condition of a shanty settlement was unimprovable, the committee would order shanty dwellers to relocate to a designated area and provide them with a relocation allowance. Last, the committee agreed that the best solution to the slum problem in Nanjing was to provide public housing for shanty dwellers, but it regretted that this was never feasible to the financially unstable government.

In fact, back in 1931, the government attempted to accommodate shanty dwellers in a comprehensive public housing project at Sisuocum, an area outside Jinchuan Gate. There, commoners and shanty dwellers lived in different portions of the same site: the portion dwelled by commoners was named Commoners’ Residential Area, as opposed to the portion dwelled by shanty dwellers, which was named Shanty Residential Area. (Fig. 3.19) The Public Works Bureau constructed 100 Type C and 190 Type D units for commoners and 1,000 Type E units for shack dwellers. Type E was a single-story row houses subdivided into multiple units, each measured around 16 sq. meters and had two simple rooms.²⁸⁴ (Fig. 3.20) To encourage people to move into this public housing project, the government even opened up a new city gate near the project so that tenants could go to work in the city easily.²⁸⁵ Zhang Jianming, however, admitted that only well-off shanty families could afford the rent.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ SSG, 1931, vol. 75, jishi 15-16.

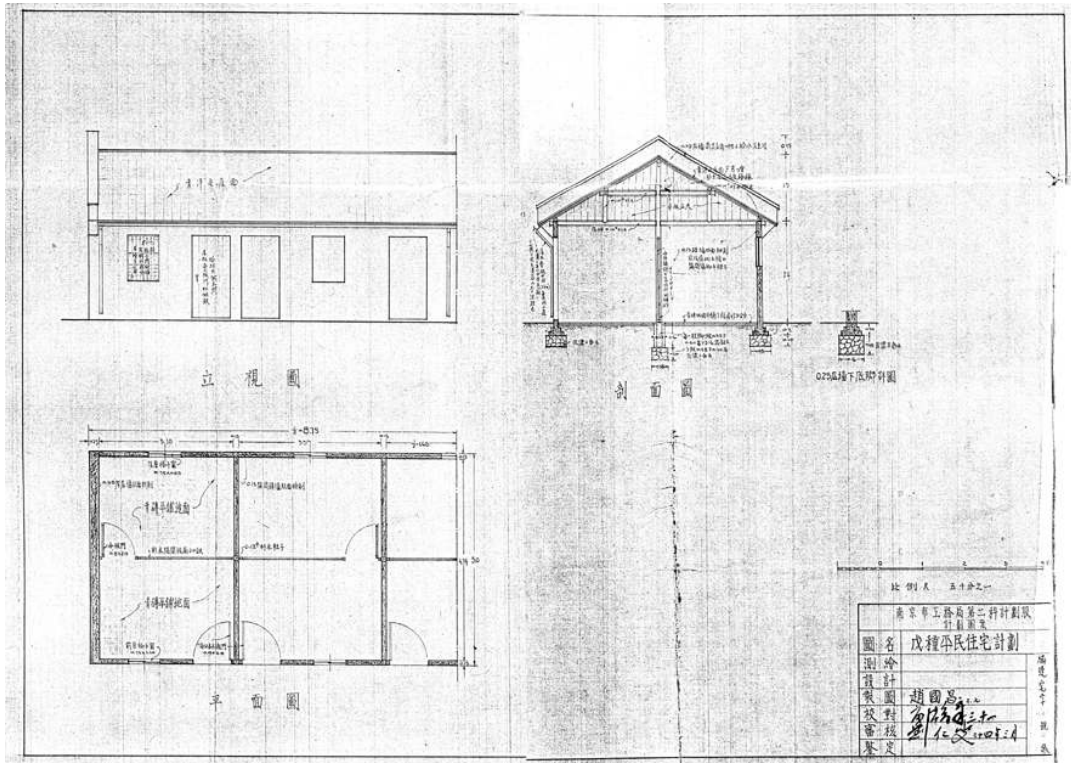
²⁸⁵ Ibid., 1931, vol. 75, jishi 15-16.

²⁸⁶ Cited in Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47944.



(Source: Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of Laborers' Residential Area in Nanjing*, no page no.)

Fig. 3.19 The Shanty Residential Area at Sisuocun.



(Source: “The Transformation of the Qili Street Area into Commoners' Housing,” Nanjing Municipal Archives file no. 1001-3-431.)

Fig. 3.20 Type E unit for the Shanty Residential Area at Sisuocun.

3.3.2 Shanty Residential Areas: From Informal to Formal Property

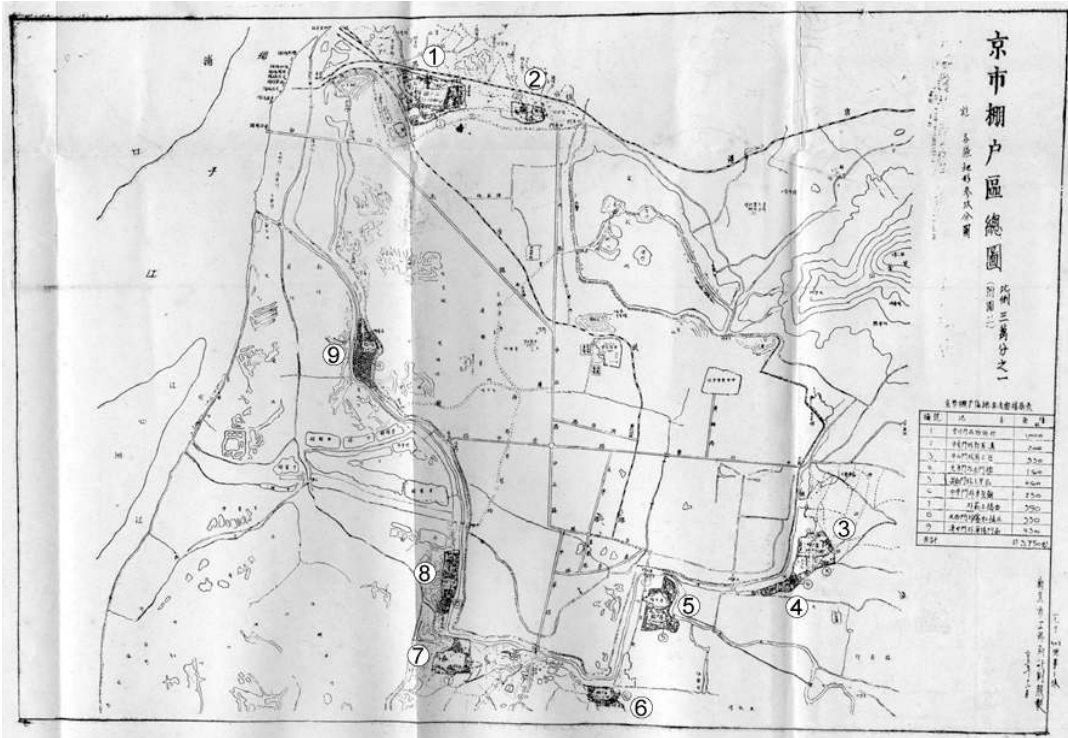
The Shanty Residential Areas

A few months after the Municipal Government formed the Committee to Improve Shantytowns, the policy against slum changed again as intervened by the Nationalist Government. Several state officials who were sympathetic to shanty dwellers raised 10,000 *yuan* and proposed to construct a shanty residential area in Xiaguang.²⁸⁷ Their action impressed Wang Zhaoming, a committee member of the Central Executive Council, who subsequently persuaded the Executive Yuan to relocate impoverished people into planned shanty residential areas.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ This includes Chen Bijun, a committee member of the Central Executive Council. *Ibid.*, 47952–47957.

²⁸⁸ “Suggestion from the Central Political Meeting to Build Poor People’s Housing at the Capital”; Nanjing *tebieshi zhengfu mishuchu*, *Nanjing Administration in the Last Year*, 31.

Following the Executive Yuan's instruction, the Public Works Bureau planned nine Shanty Residential Areas (*penghu zhuzhai qu*) since 1934.²⁸⁹ (Fig. 3.21) As Nanjing was administratively divided into eight police districts, the bureau ordered shanty dwellers in each police district to relocate into one assigned Shanty Residential Area. The whole process involved seven phrases over seven years; in each phrase, the bureau would relocate 5,000 households.



Name	Location	Area (mu)	Relocated From
1. Sisuocun	Outside Jinchuan-xinshi Gate	1,070	Police District No. 6 & 7
2. Guojiagou	Outside Zhongyang Gate	200	Police District No 6 & 7
3. Qiansanzhuang	Outside Zhongshan Gate	530	Police District No. 1
4. Shimexian	Outside Guanghua Gate	160	Police District No. 1
5. Qilijie	Outside Gonghe Gate	460	Police District No. 2
6. Dongyuemiao	Outside Zhonghua Gate	250	Police District No. 3 & 4
7. West of Bawangqiao	Outside Zhonghua Gate	290	Police District No. 3 & 4
8. North of Saichongqiao	Outside Shuixi Gate	330	Police District No. 5
9. South of Caochang Gate	Outside Hanzhong Gate	430	Police District No. 5
Total		3,520	

(Source: Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of Laborers' Residential Area in Nanjing*, no page no; and *One Year of Administration in Nanjing*, 33)

Fig. 3.21 Shanty Residential Areas in Nanjing.

²⁸⁹ The first three districts completed were Sisuocun, Shimexian, and Qiliejie. Later, six more districts were planned.

All the nine Shanty Residential Areas were located outside the city wall boundary of Nanjing (usually not far from the city gates). Plausibly, the government selected the locations for two reasons. First, requisition cost would be much cheaper for land outside the wall. Second, the government repeatedly blamed slums as the cause of poor city appearance, but it did not have the financial capacity to re-house them all in public housing. By relocating them outside the wall, the government could reclaim land in the capital while hiding poverty with little expense. The consequence, however, was social and spatial segregation in Nanjing. Impoverish people were separated from the upper-middle class and were displaced from the city. As it turned out, the land requisition was not carried out as smoothly as the government had expected. Many local residents resisted the requisition, unwilling to surrender their land to the government.²⁹⁰ Some merchants also protested against the decision to locate Shanty Residential Areas near their businesses. They complained, “In future, midget huts packed like fish scales [will occupy this area], damaging the city’s appearance and hurting business.” They requested the government to reduce the size of the Shanty Residential Areas and leave the land along the roads exclusively for business.²⁹¹ These protests had delayed the construction of the residential areas.

The Public Works Bureau adopted a self-help approach to Shanty Residential Areas, probably for cost-saving reasons. The bureau only provided the residential areas with basic sanitation and communal facilities, such as like school, clinic, police station, fire station, lavatory, etc. (Fig. 3.22 to Fig. 3.24) Each shanty family received a 22-square meter empty land plot from the bureau to rebuild their own shacks in accordance to the bureau’s design. The government would give each shanty family a 10-*yuan* special relocation allowance, which was not enough to cover the construction cost of the shack (around 30 *yuan*).²⁹² Shanty tenants had to pay for the rest of the construction cost, plus another 50 *yuan* for land and public facilities costs. In return, tenants had no need to pay any rent. However, when they moved out of the area, they had to return the land to the government and sell the shack to the next tenant with the price estimated by the government.²⁹³

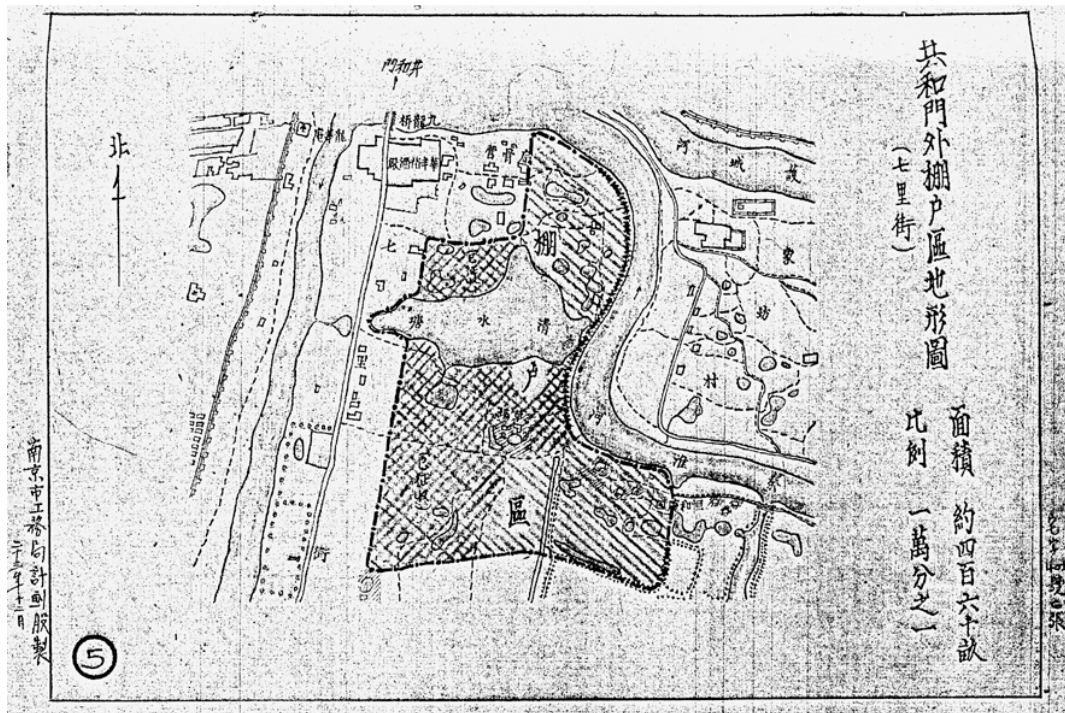
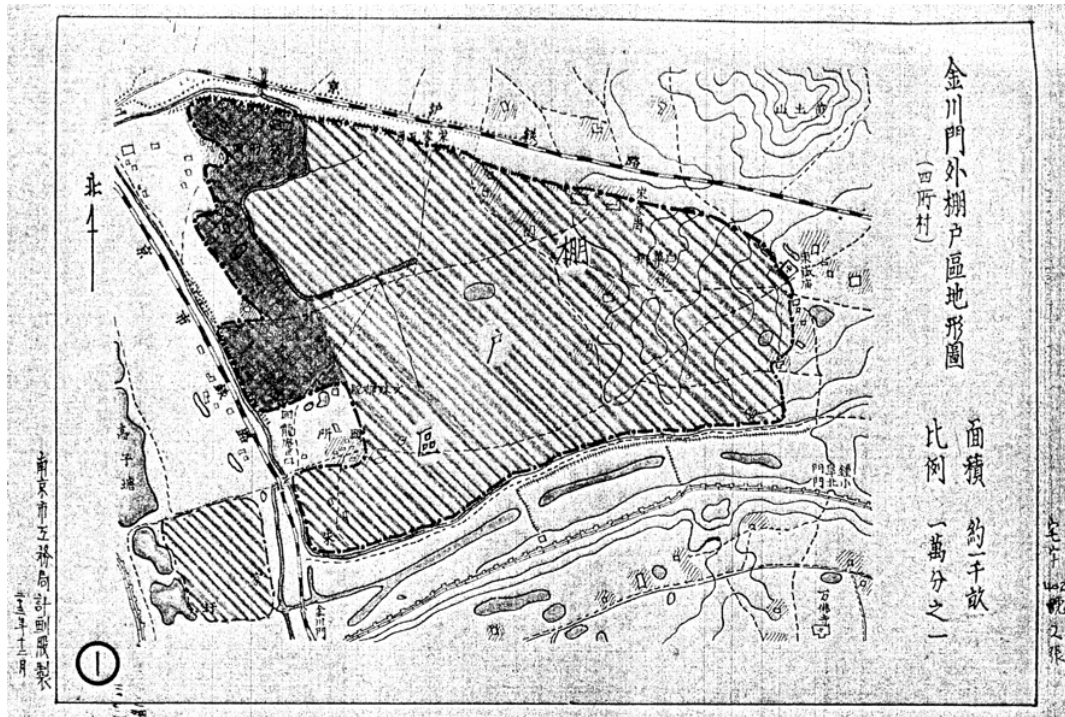
²⁹⁰ Many examples can be found in the Public Works’ Bureau files (no. 1001-3) in Nanjing Municipal Archives.

²⁹¹ “The Transformation of the Qili Street Area into Commoners’ Housing.”

²⁹² The relocation allowance was issued in three phrases: when the tenant family demolished his original straw shack, he would be given one *yuan*. Then, they would be assigned with a piece of land (4 m x 5.5 m) in the Shanty Residential District; and when the tenant family started building a new shack on the assigned land, they would be given another four *yuan*. Finally, when the government officer confirmed that the completed shack had complied with the official standard design, the tenant family would be given another five *yuan*.

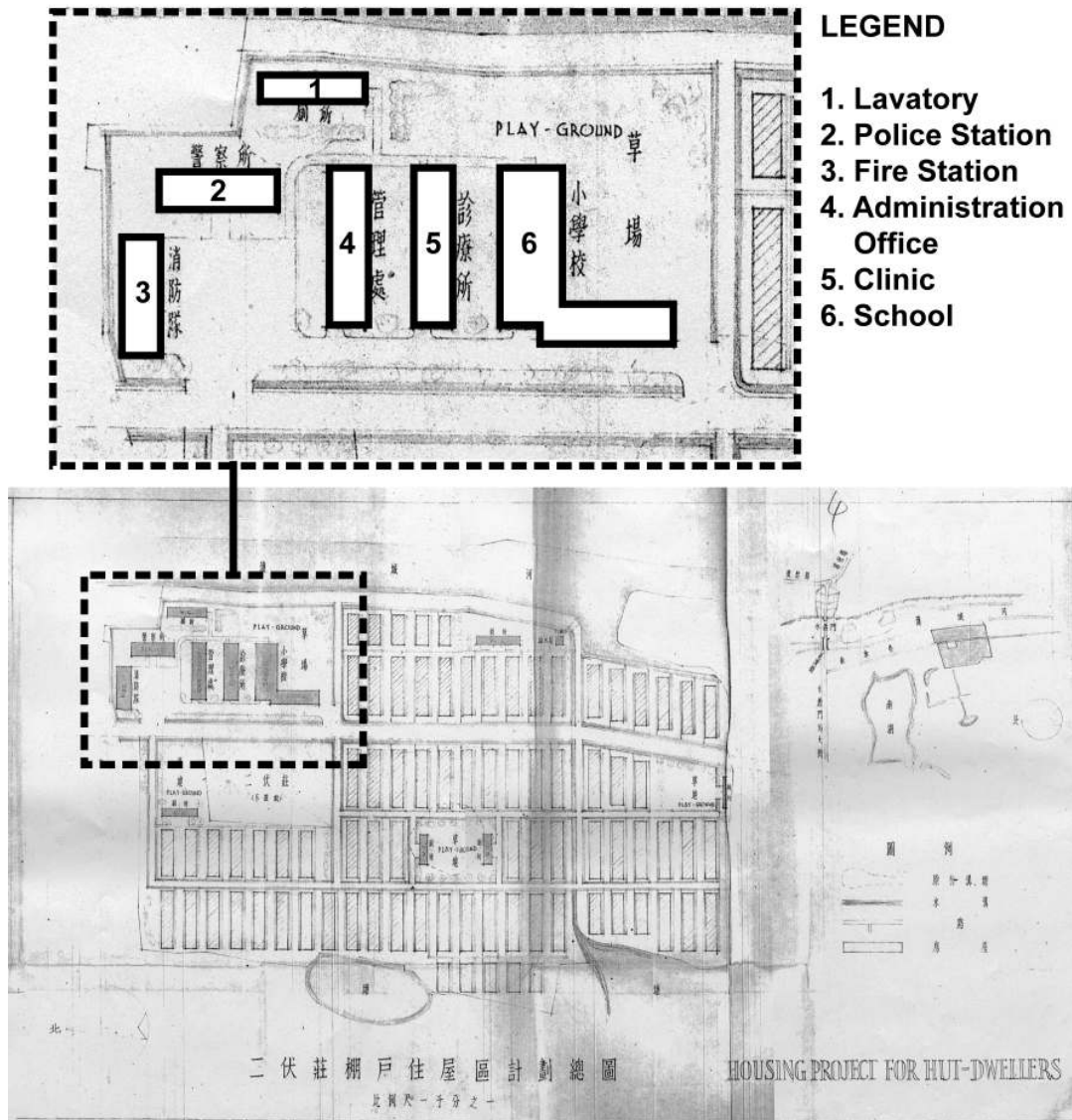
See “Special Relocation Allowance for Shack-dwellers.”

²⁹³ Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of the Laborers’ Residential Area in Nanjing*, 3–4.



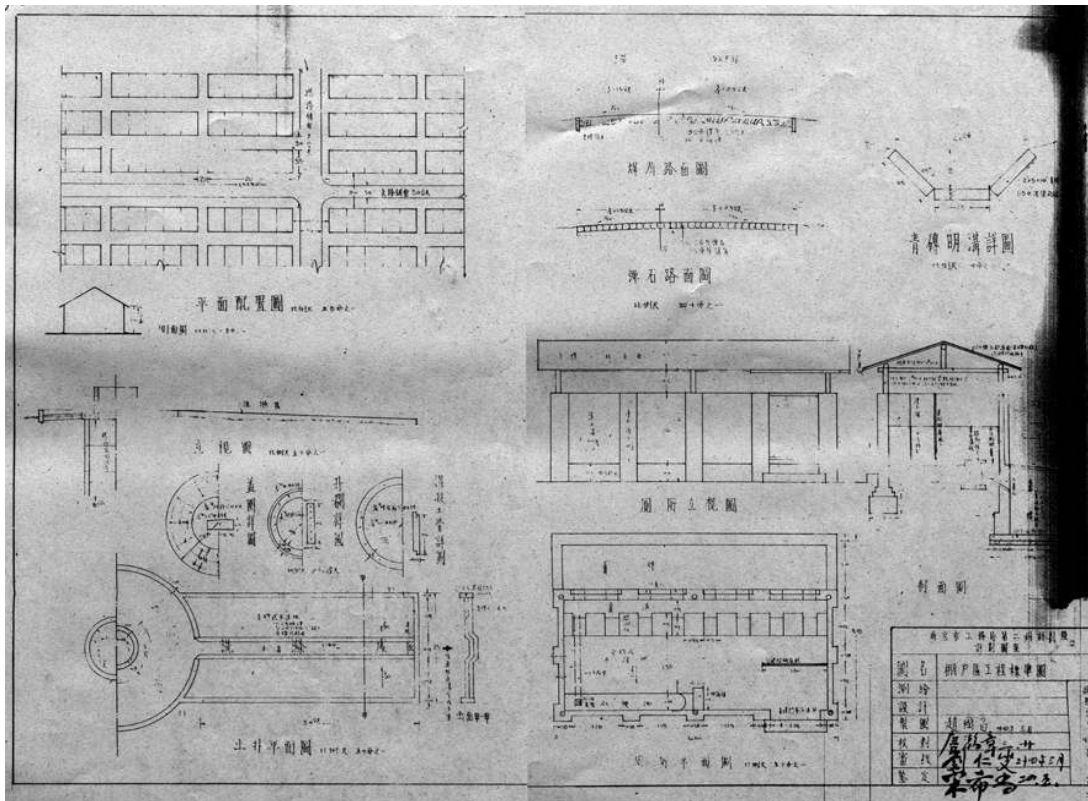
(Source: "Suggestion from the Central Political Meeting to Build Poor People's Housing at the Capital," Nanjing Municipal Archives file 1001-3-274.)

Fig. 3.22 Plans of the Shanty Residential Areas at Sisuocun (top) and Qielijie (bottom).



(Source: "Special Relocation Allowance for Shack-dwellers," Nanjing Municipal Archives file 1001-3-429.)

Fig. 3.23 Proposed public facilities at the Shanty Residential Area.

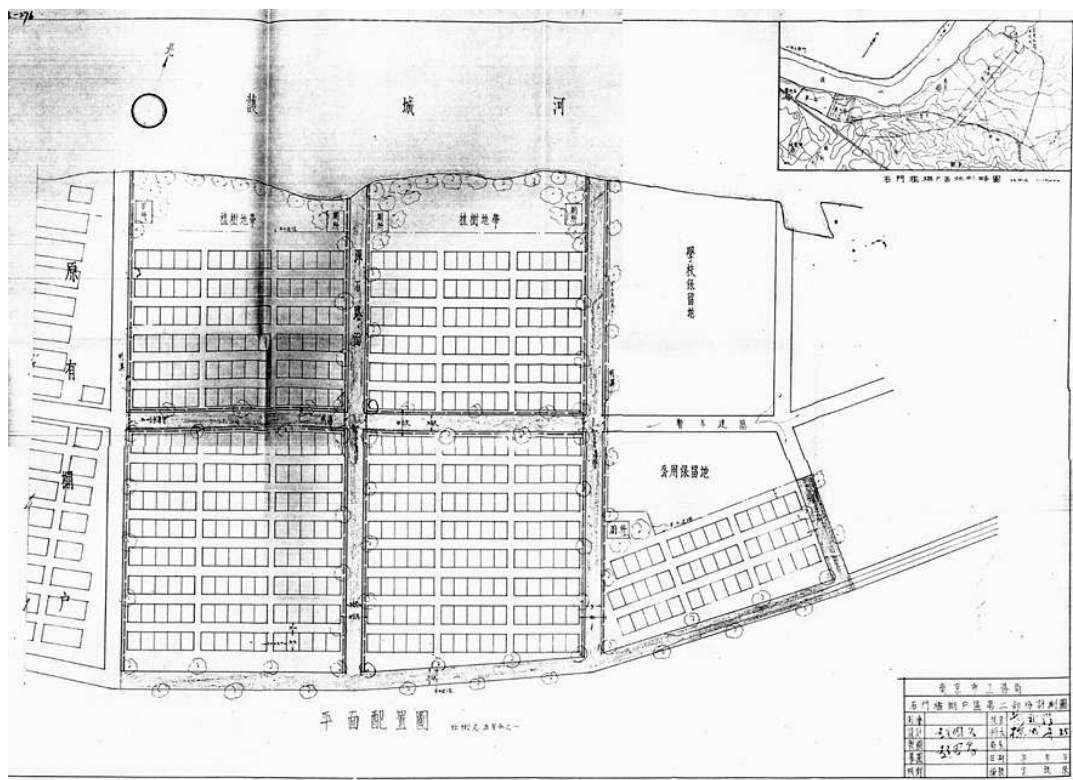


(Source: “Work Allocation for the Third Section of the Shanty Residential Area at Shimexian,” Nanjing Municipal Archives file 1001-3-276.)

Fig. 3.24 Construction details for public lavatory and road in the Shanty Residential Area.

According to the bureau’s plan, individual shacks would align to form rows. (Fig. 3.25) Shacks would be made of low-cost materials like mud wall or bamboo and banner leaves wattle wall, mud floor, and straw-mat roof.²⁹⁴ Basically, they were still shanty structures, but built in uniform design arranged in an orderly, unified manner.

²⁹⁴ The construction cost for each shack was only 30 *yuan*, much less than that for a unit in the commoner’s housing which was 170 *yuan*. Ibid., 3–8.



(Source: "Work Allocation for the Third Section of the Shanty Residential Area at Shimenxian," Nanjing Municipal Archives file 1001-3-276.)

Fig. 3.25 Individual shacks were arranged in rows at the Shanty Residential Area at Shimenxian.

Learning from the YMCA Model New Village, the government wished to use public housing to achieve the goal of social reform. In the Shanty Residential Areas, the government enforced a set of rules to control the behaviours of shanty tenants. Shanty tenants would be expelled from the area if they were caught taking or selling opium and harmful drugs, harbouring criminals and prostitutes, gambling, stealing or receiving stolen properties, and selling cigarettes. They needed to obey instructions from officers regarding fire safety, public hygiene, and protection of public facilities. Not only that, they needed to report to officers when inviting guests to stay overnight at their homes.²⁹⁵ These rules did not apply to the Commoner's Residential Area. This means that the government had not removed the bias toward shanty dwellers. It still perceived shanty dwellers as detrimental to social morality and hence they had to be educated.

In the original plan, the nine projects would accommodate 3,520 families. By October 1935, only three areas were completed.²⁹⁶ In one of the areas he visited, Chen Yuelin found that over a thousand shanty families had already moved in, but the

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 4-6.

²⁹⁶ The three completed projects were Sisuocun, Shimenxia, and Xiangchaomen. See Ibid., 3.

Public Works Bureau had yet to build any public facilities like street lamps, water wells, lavatories, etc. He sighed, “The so-called new Shanty Residential Area is still a filthy unbearable place... roads are unfinished, places are dirty, waterways are blocked, sewage overflows everywhere, and bad smells fill the air...”²⁹⁷

Despite the government’s efforts to build Shanty Residential District, according to a Police Survey, the number of shanty families had increased by 6,800 in just two years from 1934 to 1936.²⁹⁸ Many shanty families did not want to move outside the walled city, yet they were not permitted to construct new shacks in the city. As a result, they crammed into existing shacks yet to be demolished by the government. Mayor Ma Chaojun later admitted that the government should construct public housing projects “around people’s workplaces and docks.”²⁹⁹

3.3.3 The Future Laborer’s Residential Areas

There were three major differences between the Commoners’ Residential Areas and the Shanty Residential Areas. First, the forms of tenure were different. Commoners rented their units from the government, while shanty dwellers built and owned their shacks. Second, the housing standards were different. Commoners lived in row houses but shanty dwellers lived in shanty structures. Last, the social reform programs and rules were only present in the Shanty Residential Areas. (Table 3.10) According to a later proposal by the Municipal Government in 1935, these differences would be eliminated in the future, plausibly because of the change in leadership as Ma Chaojun replaced Shi Ying as the mayor of Nanjing since March 1935. The government suggested merging the two types of public housing into one and renamed it the Laborers’ Residential Area (*laogong zhuzhaiqu*),

The planning of the proposed Laborers’ Residential Area employed a hierarchical system that consisted of zones, sections, rows and units. The area was divided by roads into nine sections. The central section was reserved for public facilities, such as school, market, community hall, public toilet, and water well, etc. The surrounding sections were dedicated for residential use. Each section was composed of 15 row houses, and each row house was partitioned into eight units. The proposed density was one *mu* for 10 units, thus leaving around 50 per cent of the site area as open space.³⁰⁰ (Fig. 3.26) For the row house, each unit measured 3.5m x 4.5 m. The unit was further partitioned into a living room, a bedroom, and a kitchen connected to the backyard. (Fig. 3.27) For better fire safety, a tiled roof was used in lieu of a grass and straw roof.³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ Chen, *The Housing Problem in Nanjing*, 47950.

²⁹⁸ Nanjingshi mishuchu, [*Nanjing in the Past Decade*], 47949.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

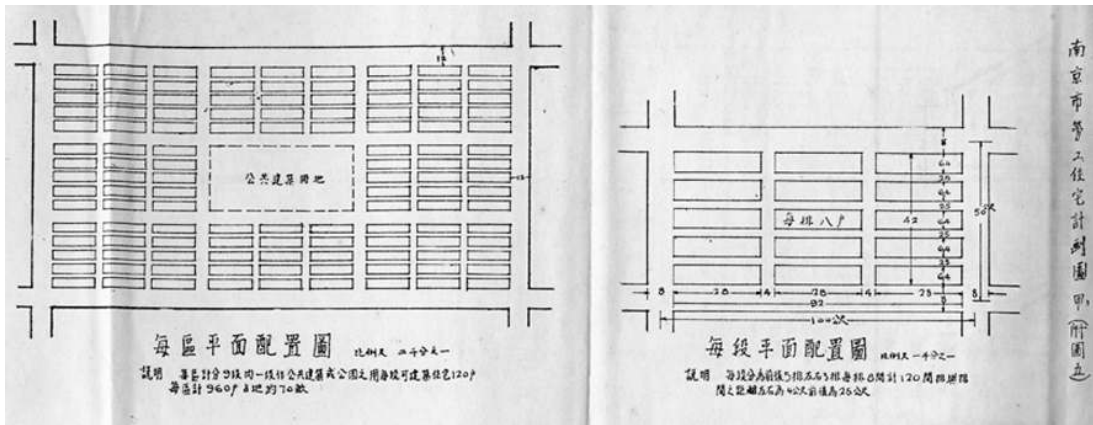
³⁰⁰ Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of the Laborers’ Residential Area in Nanjing*, 10–11.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 11–12.

Table 3.10 Comparison between the Commoners' Residential Area and the Shanty Residential Area.

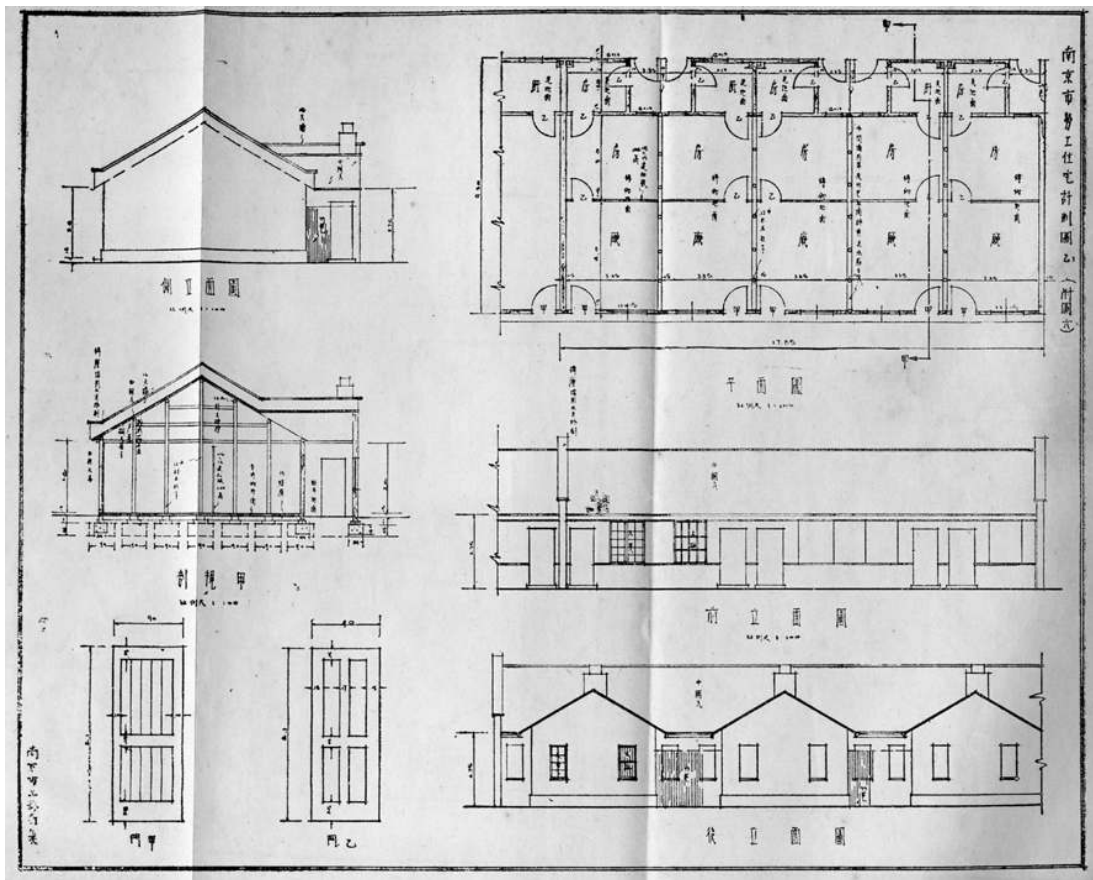
	Commoners' Residential Area	Shack dwellers' Residential Area
Eligibility	Tenants used to live in simple "tile house."	Tenants relocated from the straw shacks settlements in the city.
Planning of the Area	Row houses arranged in grid pattern.	Shacks aligned in rows, which were arranged in grid pattern.
Density	10 units per <i>mu</i> .	Not specified.
Public Amenities	Constructed by the Public Works Bureau, including public lavatories, schools, drainage, etc.	Constructed by the Public Works Bureau, including public lavatories, schools, drainage, etc.
Land and Public Amenities Cost	Each household paid 90 <i>yuan</i> .	Each household paid 50 <i>yuan</i> .
Form of Tenure	Rented to tenants.	Tenants owned the shacks. When they moved out of the area, they had to return the land plot to the government and sell the shack to the next tenant with price estimated by the government
Rent	Yes	No
Basic Architectural Module	Row houses subdivided into multiple residential units.	Individual shacks aligned to form rows.
Unit Size	17.5 sq. m.	5.5 x 4 sq. m. = 22 sq. m.
Unit Design	2 rooms, 1 in the front, 1 at the back.	2 rooms, 1 in the front, 1 at the back.
Unit Construction Cost	Cost per unit: 170 <i>yuan</i> (10 <i>yuan</i> from government subsidy)	Cost per unit: 30 <i>yuan</i> (10 <i>yuan</i> from government subsidy)
Unit Construction Materials	Wall: 10-inches thick brick for external wall; 5-inches thick brick for partition wall. Floor: brick flooring Roof: timber frame covered with tiles and straw mat. Window and Door: timber	Wall material: mud, or bamboo and banana leave wattle. Floor: mud floor Roof: timber frame covered with straw mat.
Social Reform Elements	No	Tenants must abide to a set of rules.

(Source: Summarized from Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of Laborers' Residential Area in Nanjing*.)



(Source: Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of Laborers' Residential Area in Nanjing*, no page no.)

Fig. 3.26 Proposed planning for the future Laborers' Residential Area.



(Source: Nanjing shizhengfu, *The Past and Future of Laborers' Residential Area in Nanjing*, no page no.)

Fig. 3.27 Proposed row houses for the future Laborers' Residential Area.

Did the proposal of the Laborers' Residential Area mean that the government no longer differentiated shanty dwellers from commoners? Did the government begin to accept that shanty dwellers, despite living in "substandard housing," were in fact part of the working class? We would never know the answer as the government did not have the opportunity to realize the project due to the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937.

EPILOGUE: SLUM CLEARANCE IN NANJING TODAY

This chapter discusses the ways the Nationalist State subjected housing as a domain of government. It explores how the changing biopolitics had generated a new housing standard. Nevertheless, "standard" is not absolute; once a building standard is prescribed, either by law or by social norms, the State has the power to request properties to conform to the new standard, and to remove properties that are now deemed as "substandard."

After the Anti-Japanese war, slums existed in Nanjing on an even bigger scale as more people had lost their homes and were rendered impoverished. (Fig. 3.28) In 1945, a civil war started in China between the Nationalists and the Communists. By 1949, the Nationalist Government abandoned Nanjing and fled to Taiwan. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) officially liberated the country, founded the People's Republic of China (PRC) and installed the new socialist capital at Beijing.



(Source: Available at http://news.longhoo.net/2010-07/12/content_3600733.htm.)

Fig. 3.28 A slum at the river bank, 1948.

In Nanjing, slum settlements survived under Communist rule, especially in the early years. Charles N. Li, a novelist, recalls his childhood memories moving from a luxury mansion to a disease-infested slum in Nanjing following the imprisonment of his father, a Nationalist official, shortly before 1949:

The slum of Nanjing was nothing like the urban concrete jungle of Harlem or the old, dilapidated ghetto of Watts. Nor did it resemble the banal monstrosities that sprung up on the outskirts of major cities such as Paris to house new waves of Third World immigrant laborers. Unlike those fringe products of modern urbanization, the Nanjing slum consisted of a few hundred makeshift hovels and shanties scattered among several rows of old, traditional farmhouses with black-tile roofs and white lime walls, each of which served as rental homes for multiple families. Those farmhouses, each more than two centuries old, were located about four hundred or five hundred yards apart from each other, some of them still surrounded by small, functioning farms and orchards.³⁰²

In recent decades, two new types of substandard housing dominated Chinese cities including Nanjing. The first type is poorly maintained old dwellings, which remained from the pre-socialist era. (Fig. 3.29) For instance, Zhimaying, one of the Commoner's Housing Areas constructed during the Nationalist era, has become a slum settlement in Nanjing. The second type is old rural houses. These houses are originally located in Nanjing's outskirts. As the city expands, they now fall into the urban areas, and are commonly called "urban villages (*chengzhongcun*)."



(Source: Nanjingshi Jianyequ difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Jianye District*, 257.)

Fig. 3.29 The Commoners' Residential Area at Zhimaying, 1950s.

³⁰² Li, *The Bitter Sea*, 40.

Facing these substandard forms of housing, local governments tend to employ a total eradication approach. Today, Nanjing undergoes rapid urban development ever since China implemented the economic reform in 1979. The Nanjing Government is determined to clear all slums in the city to obtain land for development. In October 2010, the Nanjing Government initiated a plan to redevelop Xiaguan, the area along the Yangtze River, into a new commercial zone. The plan which involves the eradication of the biggest slum has remained today. Over 11,000 inhabitants will be moved to relocation housings.³⁰³ (Fig. 3.30)



(Source: Available at Sun, “Commencement of the Biggest Slum Clearance in Nanjing's History.”)

Fig. 3.30 The biggest slum in Nanjing today is set to be demolished.

³⁰³ Sun, “Commencement of the Biggest Slum Clearance in Nanjing’s History.”

4

CHAPTER 4 SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: CLASS STRUGGLE TO RATIONALIZE SEIZURE OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES

“What are these people?” I asked my usual question.

“Counter-revolutionaries and landowners,” he replied.

Indeed, one of the diggers had a white cloth tag on his chest saying “landowner element.”

“So you are a landowner,” I addressed the convict, “What were you before the ‘cultural revolution’?”

The man – a pale and haggard elderly man, dressed in badly fitting overalls – just stood there looking helplessly now at me, now at the guard.

“Go on, tell him!” the guard gave his gracious permission.

“I used to be a member of the Party Bureau at the History Department,” he timidly replied.

“Do you mean to say you’d been a landowner before Liberation?”

“No, before Liberation, I was with the Eighth Army.”

“But when were you a landowner?” I insisted naively.

“I’ve never been one, but my father had some land and was considered a landowner. I myself had always taken part in the revolution.”

[...]

“But why do you seek to humiliate them, spit at them, and beat them up?”

The guard thought awhile before answering. “This is class struggle, and they are our class enemies. How can a class enemy have any human dignity? It is ridiculous!”

(Excerpted from *The “Cultural Revolution”: A Close-up: An Eyewitness Account* (1975) written by a Soviet exchange student in China.)³⁰⁴

INTRODUCTION

Socialist transformation (*shehuizhuyi gaizao*), or socialization, denotes the dispossession process by which socialist states convert private ownership into state ownership. This chapter explores how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), after defeating the Kuomintang and founding the People's Republic of China in 1949, carried out the socialist transformation of private properties. I discuss the socialist governmentality on private properties through the lenses of China's political trends, national economic plans, and housing need; specially, I discuss how the new Socialist State used class struggle as a technique of government to shape, regulate, and control the conduct of private property owners.

Since its victory in 1949, the CCP relocated the capital from Nanjing to Beijing. Although Nanjing remained as the provincial capital of Jiangsu, it has fallen out of political favor. When the Party formulated its First Five Year Plan (1953 – 1957), closely following the Soviet model to prioritize heavy industry, 18 cities were selected for the more important projects and investment.³⁰⁵ Nanjing, however, was not on the selected list. Even though the transfer of capital stopped further urban planning at Nanjing, the city's population recorded steady increase. By 1953, Nanjing's population was around one million inhabitants.

The Party was determined to destroy old social institutions and introduce new ones. The process began by redistributing key resources. Although land is one of the scarcest resources, current literature on the socialist period focuses heavily on the rural land reform, whereas the urban land and housing system has not been adequately explored.³⁰⁶ The socialist transformation of private housing was a particularly understudied area. One important reason is the difficulty to obtain information and data before the opening of the Chinese archives in the last two decades. As a result, many scholarly writings on China's urban property and housing history failed even to mention the socialist transformation process.³⁰⁷ These studies tend to assume that private property has been completely eliminated during the

³⁰⁴ Zhelokhovtsev, *The “Cultural Revolution”: A Close-up: An Eyewitness Account*, 86, 90.

³⁰⁵ The 18 cities selected are: Qiqihar, Harbin, Changchun, Jilin, Shenyang, Anshan, Beijing, Shijiazhuang, Zhengzhou, Luoyang, Datong, Taiyuan, Xian, Lanzhou, Baotou, Wuhan, Zhuzhou, Chengdu.

³⁰⁶ For China's agrarian reform, see Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*; Shue, *Peasant China in Transition*; Wong, *Land Reform in the People's Republic of China: Institutional Transformation in Agriculture*; Yang, *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition*.

³⁰⁷ For examples, Lim and Lee, “Political Ideology and Housing Policy in Modern China”; Howe, “The Supply and Administration of Urban Housing in Mainland China”; Lai, “Housing Reforms at Fifty (1949-1999).”

Socialist period. In fact, private homeownership was never outlawed. It persisted, albeit at low levels, throughout the Socialist era.

Fortunately, few new studies that came up in the last two decades have provided us brief descriptions of the socialist transformation policy.³⁰⁸ A more detailed study is written by Xing Quan Zhang, who argues that China's housing policy was "insensitive to housing needs but responds well to political and ideological principles."³⁰⁹ In his narration, the Chinese people were willing to endure housing shortage, poor housing conditions, and deprivation of property rights for their public interest in national economic development. This contradicted the reality that Chinese people were both worried and annoyed by inadequate living space and the long process of housing allocation. This sentiment had prompted the *People's Daily* to publish a series of articles and short stories in 1957 to promote patience and selflessness in housing allocation. For example, a fictitious story titled "The Story of Housing Allocation" describes the shortage of employees' housing in a factory, which caused intense competition among workers.³¹⁰ The story ends with how workers "united and assisted each others," and selflessly shared their living space with those who need it. Other studies have also portrayed the complaints and bitterness of private house owners during the socialist period.³¹¹

This chapter focuses on the governmental rationality that enables socialist transformation "thinkable and practicable," arguing that a "biographic politics" was created in Socialist China. Although China's policy towards private properties changed over time, it always targeted to socialize (1) properties belonging to class enemies, and (2) surplus rental housing. These involved the question of how the government defined class enemies and surplus rental housing and rationalized the socialist transformation. I suggest that class struggle was a technique of government to subjugate private properties, as well as their owners, under state control because it helps identifying class enemies and interpreting the exploitative nature of private rental housing, prioritizing interests of the workers and peasants over others classes. I must emphasize that this chapter is not an analysis of class struggle *per se*. My understanding of class struggle bases mainly on existing scholarship.³¹² Rather, this chapter seeks to explore how class struggle worked as a socialist technique of

³⁰⁸ For examples, Wang, "Private sector housing in urban China since 1949"; Randolph and Lou, *Chinese Real Estate Law*; Wilhelm, "Rethinking Property Rights in Urban China"; Wang, "Whatever-ism with Chinese Characteristics: China's Nascent Privatization of Property Rights and Its Political Ramifications."

³⁰⁹ Zhang, "Chinese housing policy 1949-1978," 435.

³¹⁰ Ceng, "The Story of Housing Allocation."

³¹¹ For examples, Whyte and Parish, *Urban Life in Contemporary China*, 78–85; MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, 117–131; Zhelokhovtsev, *The "Cultural Revolution": A Close-up: An Eyewitness Account*, 80–94.

³¹² For discussion of China's class struggle, see Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*; Watson, *Class and Social Stratification in Post-Revolution China*; Tsai, *Class Struggle and Deviant Labeling in Mao's China*; Parish, "Destratification in China"; Zhelokhovtsev, *The "Cultural Revolution": A Close-up: An Eyewitness Account*.

government. The focus is on the ways the Party manipulated class struggle both to rationalize and to mobilize the redistribution of resources from the propertied to the propertiless in order to solve China's urban housing shortage. As this chapter tells, the Party constantly redefined who constituted the class enemies to suit changing state goals, which led to different stages of property dispossession in China. The study of the socialist transformation of private housing sheds light on China's redistribution goals and the management of urban spaces.

Another important objective of this chapter is to defy the simplistic narrative of China's socialist urbanism that had often neglected the significance of private property. A number of scholars have already highlighted the work unit compound as an important housing type in Socialist China.³¹³ While these studies have provided us valuable information to understand Chinese cities, they have also created an impression that residential enclaves were the most prominent elements to China's socialist urban form. This impression obscures the fact that a lot of other urban space was privately owned. Many Chinese cities, including Nanjing, were in fact dominated by a large number of privately owned shop-houses, western-styled villas, apartments, shanty structures, etc. In fact, little new housing construction took place in Socialist China, especially from the 1960s until the economic reform in 1979. As a result, a significant number of urban populations lived in housing projects inherited from the pre-socialist era. As this chapter seeks to unfold, private housing had occupied a position in the Socialist era which was far more important than many people have expected.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the "biographic politics" of China, showing how the Party differentiated between its people as "friends" and "enemies." The rest of the chapter is organized according to China's changing attitudes toward private property in three political stages. In the first stage, the period of rehabilitation of national economy, China confiscated properties of its "enemies" but protected private property rights of its "friends." In the second stage, the General Line of Socialist Transformation, China defined surplus rental housing as exploitative in nature, thereby subjugating them to socialist transformation. In the third stage, the Cultural Revolution, China mobilized its people to attack the privileged classes through violent class struggle, resulting in massive dispossession and property destruction. The changes to private properties are illustrated in this section through case studies collected from local archives.

³¹³ For examples, Bray, *Social Space and Governance in Urban China: The Danwei System from Origins to Reform*; Lu and Perry, *Danwei: The Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective*; Bian, Logan, and Lu, "Work Units and Housing Reform in Two Chinese Cities"; Lu, *Remaking Chinese Urban Form: Modernity, Scarcity and Space, 1949-2005*; Li, "Danwei Culture as Urban Culture in Modern China: The Case of Beijing from 1949 to 1979."

4.1 BIOGRAPHIC POLITICS: CLASS STRUGGLE AS A TECHNIQUE OF GOVERNMENT

Governmentality concerns the management of the population. To conceptualize the population as objects of government, modern states break down existing community into individuals and then reassembled them using a new social category they can comprehend. In Socialist China, class designation was an important, if not the most important, way of resembling and redefining the population. As Gordon White argues, “class is not merely an abstract category but a term of living political significance, the definition of which has changed in response to dynamics of modern Chinese politics.”³¹⁴ By designating the Chinese people into different social classes, the Party directed them towards desirable conducts.

The concepts of class and class struggle have central importance in Marxist theory. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels famously proclaimed, “The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles.”³¹⁵ Karl Marx saw primary social relations, culture, and ideology as reflecting property relationships. Therefore, his theory of class depended solely on ownership, whether of land and means of production. In his conception, the population of modern society is divided into two principal classes: the propertied (bourgeoisie) and the propertyless (proletariat). He believed that class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was the primary contradiction of modern society, and that this would remain the same until the conflict was resolved by class struggle, leading finally to socialist revolution.

Chinese Communists built upon Marx’s bourgeoisie-proletariat dichotomy. In an essay written in 1926, when the Party was still in its formative years, Mao Zedong asked the famous questions which Maoist class analysis has pursued ever since: “Who are our enemies? Who are our friends?” Mao claimed, “To distinguish real friends from real enemies, we must make a general analysis of the economic status of the various classes in Chinese society and of their respective attitudes towards the revolution.”³¹⁶ He concluded that the enemies of the people were “those in league with imperialism -- the warlords, the bureaucrats, the comprador class, the big landlord class and the reactionary section of the intelligentsia attached to them.” Mao called for the Chinese people to unite with real friends and to attack real enemies.

After the Party took control of China in 1949, its system of class designation became more complicated, involving more class categories. People were classified, first, in terms of their source of economic support during the three years immediately preceding 1949. Their class designation reflected their pre-revolutionary position as exploiters or exploited.³¹⁷ As such, the most basic rural class designations were

³¹⁴ White, *The Politics of Class and Class Origin*, 2.

³¹⁵ Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 34.

³¹⁶ Mao, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, 1:13.

³¹⁷ Whyte, “Inequality and Stratification in China.”

generally names of strata within classes, including hired agricultural laborer, poor peasant, middle peasant, rich peasant, and landlord.³¹⁸ During the Land Reform in the 1950s, a class designation was affixed to each rural household, categorizing the family's economic position under the feudal regime.³¹⁹

In the cities, however, the nature of class designation was somewhat more complex and ambiguous. During the early years of Communist rule there was considerable flexibility in the determination of class designations for urban residents.³²⁰ The fundamental categories ranged from worker, idler, petty bourgeoisie, and capitalist, reflecting the Party's perception of the cities as centers of capitalist rather than feudal social relationship.³²¹ Because of the greater complexity of the urban occupational structure, in practice more specific class designation came to be applied to urban residents. For example, the category of petty bourgeoisie was divided into urban pauper, peddler, small shop-owners etc. (Table 4.01)

Table 4.01 The hierarchy of class designations in China.

Rural Class Designation	Urban Class Designation
Hired agricultural laborer	Worker: Enterprise worker Transport worker Handicraft worker Sailor
Poor peasant	
Middle peasant: Old middle peasant New middle peasant Well-to-do middle peasant	
Rich peasant	
Small land lessor	Idler Petty bourgeoisie: Urban pauper Peddler Small shop-owner Small factory-owner Office employee Liberal professional
Landlord: Enlightened landlord Overseas Chinese landlord Landlord who is currently an industrialist or merchant Sub-landlord Hidden landlord Bankrupt landlord Despotic landlord	
	Capitalist: Commercial capitalist Industrial capitalist Compradore capitalist

(Source: Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism, 185-187.*)

Surprisingly, little is known about the ways in which urban class designations were applied to individuals. Based on limited information gathered by Richard Kraus, urban residents of the early 1950s were asked to specify their own class membership, either through their work units or their neighborhood administrations. Apparently, these self-reported class designations were then examined for accuracy by the Party

³¹⁸ Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*, 23.

³¹⁹ For rural class designation, see Unger, *The Transformation of Rural China*.

³²⁰ Whyte, "Inequality and Stratification in China," 703.

³²¹ Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*, 24.

and recorded in a person's dossier (*dangan*).³²² Because the basic unit of Chinese society was family, the class designation of the head of the family was the class designation of all directly-related family members.³²³

Class designation in socialist China was static – a family's class designation became fixed once it was officially certified. To facilitate political evaluation after the designation of class, the Party developed a dynamic device: political labels. The party assigned political labels on those who engaged in socially disapproved conduct in order to set them apart from ordinary society.³²⁴ As political labels focused directly on current behaviors and were assigned and removed on an ad hoc basis, they offered a malleable alternative to class designation in a de facto manner. Most serious political labels were often assigned during political campaigns, by ad hoc government organizations created to lead such campaigns.³²⁵

More often than not, the class designation commingled with political labels. For examples, during the 1957 Anti-rightist Campaign, a special Anti-rightist Office identified five categories of “black elements (*heiwulei*)”: landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, and rightist elements. The first two were class designations, while the last three were political labels. They formed the major “enemies” in China.

The class designation and political labeling in China signaled a “biographic politics” in China. This meant that a person's biography mattered. The biography determined how one was treated in the society, including how much property rights one was allowed to enjoy, as well as how many resources one was able to access. Class enemies, black elements, or other political labels, are all negative marks assigned on a person based on one's biography. They eased the Party's government, allowing the Party to easily identify, among the huge population, persons with deviant social and political conducts. In the Party's view, these “enemies” enjoyed social and material privileges before Communist liberation by exploiting the propertyless classes. By means of class struggle, the Party wished to end special privileges and to spread the benefits of the revolution more evenly throughout Chinese society. These “enemies” were subjugated to state control, surveillance, and education. They received some forms of punishment, including public humiliation, violence, incarceration, deprivation of political rights, or loss of employment. Sometimes, these people's properties were confiscated by the government; but in most cases, they could only receive unequal and incomplete property rights.

Democratic societies usually favour equal rights. This means that all people are entitled to the same rights regardless of nationality, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, language, or other status. Nevertheless, in Socialist China,

³²² Ibid.

³²³ This method of classification remained until 1983. See Li, *A Glossary of Political Terms of the People's Republic of China*, 190.

³²⁴ For the process of political labelling, see Tsai, *Class Struggle and Deviant Labeling in Mao's China*, 109–122.

³²⁵ Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*, 58–61.

different social classes had different rights and access to state resources, especially in areas in short supply, such as income, employment, education, and distribution of consumer goods. In larger cities, housing was a major area of competition. Many scholars note that certain social groups (notably cadres, industrial workers, technicians) were protected from the intense competition for living spaces, while class enemies had limited access to housing.³²⁶

Not only this, class enemies often had incomplete property rights. Scholars argue that property rights can be partitioned into a bundle of rights, including the rights to use, to earn income from, and to transfer or exchange the assets and resources.³²⁷ This bundle of rights conception has important economic implications: it allows several parties to hold partitions of rights to particular facets of a single resource.³²⁸ As Alchian and Demsetz point out, “It is not the resource (emphasis in original) itself which is owned; it is a bundle, or a portion, of rights to use (emphasis in original) a resource that is owned.”³²⁹ Having incomplete property rights, therefore, means owners did not have full control to select the uses therein bundled, or safe from interference from non-owners.

The following sections tell the ways class struggle rendered private house owners unequal and incomplete rights.

4.2 FRIENDS VS ENEMIES: PROPERTY POLITICS DURING THE PERIOD OF REHABILITATION, 1949-1956

4.2.1 Confiscation of the Enemies’ Properties

According to the party direction, the first few years since Communist victory were a period of the rehabilitation of the national economy. The major task of this period was to balance revenue and expenditure, to stabilize value of currency and commodity prices, and to improve people’s lives. To avoid drastic changes to the Chinese society, the Party’s early policy towards private property was framed along the conception of “enemies” versus “friends.” On the one hand, the State aimed to confiscate properties of its “enemies.” On the other hand, the State promised to protect private property rights of those who it designated as “friends.”

After occupying China, the CCP immediately authorized local governments to confiscate all properties of the defeated Nationalist regime, as well as those belonging

³²⁶ See Parish, “Destratification in China”; Whyte, “Inequality and Stratification in China.”

³²⁷ See Libecap, *Contracting for Property Rights*.

³²⁸ For the bundle of rights concept, see Alchian, *Economic forces at work*; Alchian and Demsetz, “The Property Right Paradigm.”

³²⁹ Alchian and Demsetz, “The Property Right Paradigm,” 17.

to warlords, traitors, bureaucrat-capitalists,³³⁰ counter-revolutionaries, criminals, bandit, spies, and tyrants.³³¹ For those properties with uncertain ownership, they were also put under custody of local governments. These properties were named “custodial properties (*daiguanfang*),” meaning that the government was the custodian until they were reclaimed by their original owners. In Nanjing, for instance, a total of 663,660 sq. meters of these properties were controlled by the government. Over 72 per cent belonged to war criminals, former Nationalist officials, and other counter-revolutionaries. The other 38 per cent were properties with no custodian, or previously occupied by the Japanese.³³² (Table 4.02)

Table 4.02 Types of custodial property in Nanjing, 1955.

Type	
Property of war criminals, Nationalist officials, and other counter-revolutionaries	72.05%
Property previously rented to the Japanese	11.38%
Property without a custodian	12.27%
Property previously requisitioned by the Japanese and ownership yet to be resolved after the war	4.10%
Total Area: 663,660 sq. m.	100%

(Source: compiled after “1955 Survey Report of Real Estate, and Opinions on Future Reform,” Nanjing Municipal Archives file no. 5095-1-0049.)

For other private properties, the Party had different policies toward the countryside and the cities. During the civil war years, the Party had commenced the agrarian land reform in the countryside to abolish the feudal land system. In war areas occupied by the party, properties of the landlord and enemy classes were confiscated and redistributed to those who had little or no land or houses. After 1949, the agrarian land reform expanded to cover all rural areas in China. The Party had showed that it was willing to seize and redistribute property in rural areas. With this in mind, what made the Party employ not the same strategy on urban property?

The Communists’ power was largely based in the countryside. The Communist leaders were not familiar with the cities. Therefore, before taking control of China, the Peoples’ Liberation Army covenanted with the Chinese people to ease their fear of Communist occupation. The “Eight Covenants (*yuefa bazhang*)” published on the *People’s Daily* on 26 April 1949 asserted that the feudal land system in the countryside would be abolished, but “the problem of land and property in the city should not be handled in the same way as that in the village.”³³³ The argument,

³³⁰ A Marxist term that refers to government officials who influence, exploit, and monopolize sectors of the economy in order to increase their own wealth.

³³¹ See *Directives on Confiscating the Property of War Criminals, Traitors, Bureaucratic Capitalists and Counter-revolutionaries; Provisions on Confiscating the Property of Counter-revolutionary Criminals*.

³³² “1955 Survey Report of Real Estate, and Opinions on Future Reform.”

³³³ “Headquarter of the People’s Liberation Army Announced the Eight Covenants; Willing to Abide to the Covenant with all Chinese People.”

which was explained in the *People's Daily* on August 12, 1949, was that “the exploitative relations” in the cities were different from that in the countryside. The Party claimed that rural land ownership serves as the basis of pure exploitation, as rural landlords extracted rents from peasants simply by occupying a piece of natural resources. On the contrary, urban house owners had actually invested their money and labors:

In a commercial society, housing is a commodity. To build a house requires investment, and to maintain it requires money too. When investment in property is used to earn rent and interest, it becomes a form of capital. In a revolution era of New Democracy, this form of capitalist property rights should be protected same as other forms of non-bureaucratic private capitals.³³⁴

The *People's Daily* article asserted that the Party would protect properties and business of private owners and prohibit confiscation of private property by any state agencies or individuals. House owners were free to sell, lease, pawn, or give away their properties.³³⁵

An important reason behind the protective policy was to ensure urban housing supply in China. The Party claimed that “it was impossible to invest huge capital on housing construction,” as most resources were devoted to expand industrial production.³³⁶ Hence, the supply of housing relied heavily on private capital. It was important to protect private property and to allow private house owners to make profit in the real estate market to ensure their continuous investment. Because of the protective policy, private property outnumbered state-owned property in many Chinese cities during the first decade of Communist rule. (Table 4.03) By 1956, private property occupied 61.30 per cent of total floor area in Nanjing. In Suzhou and Wuxi, over 80 per cent of total floor area in the city was privately-owned.³³⁷

³³⁴ “On the Real Estate in Cities, Nature and Policies of Rent.”

³³⁵ *Opinion from the Ministry of Home Affairs Land Politics Department on Current Real Estate Problems in the City.*

³³⁶ “On the Real Estate in Cities, Nature and Policies of Rent.”

³³⁷ *Opinion on Current Situations on Private Housing in the City and Opinions for Socialist Transformation.*

Table 4.03 Ownership status in major Chinese cities, 1956.

City	State-owned (% in terms of total floor area)	Privately-owned (%)	Foreigner-owned (%)
Beijing	44.35	53.85	1.80
Tianjin	43.41	53.99	2.60
Shanghai	25.80	66.00	7.60
Jinan	22.00	78.00	
Qingdao	57.90	37.90	4.16
Shenyang	64.00	36.00	
Harbin	55.31	40.20	4.46
Nanjing	37.75	61.30	0.95
Wuxi	19.75	80.25	
Suzhou	14.00	86.00	

(Source: "Current Situation of Private housing in Cities and Opinions to the Socialist Transformation.")

4.2.2 Unequal Rights to Housing: Private Property as a Key Part of the Socialist Housing System

In the first decade after Communist victory, China recorded rapid increase in urban population, from 11.1 per cent in 1950 to 18.8 per cent in 1960.³³⁸ This increase was due to a number of reasons, such as the growth of natural birth rate as a result of improved nutrition and medical technology and the decrease of death rate after wars ended. The major reason, however, was the flow of population from rural areas to urban centers following the collectivization of the countryside and the increasing number of industrial jobs provided in the cities. During the seven years from 1949 to 1956, two-third of the population growth in the cities had been the result of migration from rural areas.³³⁹

The accelerated increase in urban population created acute housing shortage especially in larger cities. In Nanjing, for example, the average living floor area for each person in 1949 was only 4.83 sq. meters. It had been reduced to 4.13 sq. meters by 1958 and 3.24 sq. meters by 1962. (Table 4.04) In other cities like Shanghai, the government persuaded, or even pressured, families to free up living spaces or accept a rearrangement.³⁴⁰ About eight per cent of families in Shanghai had no assigned housing at all and lived in kitchens, passageways, public sidewalks outside houses, attics and so forth.³⁴¹

³³⁸ Ma, "Urban Housing Supply in the People's Republic of China," 223.

³³⁹ Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 381.

³⁴⁰ See White, *Unstately Power*, 2:217; Howe, "The Supply and Administration of Urban Housing in Mainland China," 82.

³⁴¹ White, *Unstately Power*, 2:219.

Table 4.04 Density of Nanjing, 1949 to 1990.

Year	Total Built Floor Area (sq. m.)	Total Residential Floor Area (sq. m.)	Total Living Floor Area (sq. m.)	Average Living Floor Area (Per Person)
1949	11,840,000	7,430,000	3,851,000	4.83
1958	14,264,000	7,662,000	3,972,000	4.13
1962	16,444,000	8,954,000	4,641,000	3.24
1975	23,988,000	11,750,000	6,090,000	4.64
1980	32,437,000	15,290,000	7,925,000	4.80
1984	41,970,000	20,914,000	10,840,000	5.81
1990	61,968,000	31,115,000	16,127,000	7.10

(Source: Gazetteer of Nanjing's Real Estate, 40)

To relieve housing shortage and high housing costs in the cities, the State relied on the supply of private housing and the construction of new state housing.

Private Housing: from Luxury Residences to Shanty Structures

Private houses in Chinese cities varied in quality. The better built and equipped ones were residences of bureaucrats, politicians, compradors, and the bourgeois class before liberation. In Nanjing, for examples, luxury residences were usually built in western style and equipped with lavatories and kitchens. Some of them were built by the Nationalist Government; others were invested by private developers. (Fig. 4.01 & Fig. 4.02) Alongside these luxury residences, there were many poor, shabby, dingy, damp and risky houses and shanty structures. They were the major forms of dwelling for the common people. (Fig. 4.03)



新 住 宅 區 之 一 部

(Source: Nanjing shizhengfu mishuchu, *New Nanjing*, no page no.)

Fig. 4.01 Luxury houses at the New Residential Area, 1930s.



The Meiyuan New Village, located next to the KMT's Presidential Palace, was one of the biggest private housing development completed during the Nationalist era. It has survived until today.

(Source: Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's City Planning*, 2:465.)

Fig. 4.02 The Meiyuan New Village in Nanjing today.



Note: This photography was taken from south Nanjing in 1986. The city's moat can be clearly seen. The two sides of the moat were densely filled with old Chinese houses.

(Source: Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's City Planning*, 2:481.)

Fig. 4.03 The city of Nanjing was filled with old Chinese houses, 1986.

Nevertheless, after a long period of wars, most private houses in the cities were either destroyed or damaged. The remaining ones were usually overcrowded and in a sad state of disrepair. Official statistics revealed that run-down and risky structures made up about 50 per cent of all available houses in the cities. Two-third of the houses in Beijing were dilapidated, while over one-fifth of the inhabitants in Shanghai stayed in shanty areas, and many others had to live in crowded quarters in the attics or under the staircases and even in the streets. The number of squatters in Changsha was as high as 77 per cent.³⁴² In Nanjing, some 200,000 people were crowded in more than 360 slums, which were widely distributed throughout the city.³⁴³ (Fig. 4.04)

³⁴² Kwan and Lu, "The Current Urban Housing Problem in Our Country," 9.

³⁴³ Ma, "Urban Housing Supply in the People's Republic of China," 228.



(Source: Nanjingshi Xiaguanqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of the Xiaguan Administrative District*, 183.)

Fig. 4.04 A slum at Xiaguan, 1950s.

To increase housing supply, the government had urged private house owners to repair their risky structures.³⁴⁴ Nevertheless, many private houses owners were upset by numerous worries and refused to repair their houses and rent them out to those who needed them. According to an official survey of the Qinhuai districts in Nanjing in 1955, 248 private houses were left vacant for various reasons: some private house owners wanted to sell their properties; others had been reluctant to let their houses out as tenants tended to withhold rent. Most importantly, house owners were increasingly troubled by class struggle. One of them claimed that if the rent he collected was higher than his salary, he risked being labelled as a capitalist and would be banned from joining the work union. Therefore, he preferred to leave his house vacant than to let it out. Similar situations were observed in other Chinese cities like Jinan and Harbin.³⁴⁵

The direct result of housing shortage was high rent. In Nanjing, rent increased two to six times between 1951 and 1955.³⁴⁶ Subletting was common and had been a major cause of rent exploitation. The same 1955 survey indicated that 13.5 per cent of

³⁴⁴ Kwan and Lu, "The Current Urban Housing Problem in Our Country," 9.

³⁴⁵ Zhang, "Chinese housing policy 1949-1978," 438.

³⁴⁶ *Opinion on Current Situations on Private Housing in the City and Opinions for Socialist Transformation*.

tenants owed rent. Among them, 41.49 per cent could not afford to pay the high rent, while 58.51 per cent refused to pay rent due to unsettled conflicts with house owners over issues like high deposit and lack of housing maintenance.³⁴⁷ This situation lasted until the government implemented a rent control on private housing, basically making rental housing unprofitable. The rent control, however, had made private house owners even more reluctant to spend money to repair and maintain their houses. Because of the poor housing quality, private rental housing was the least favourable choice for urban residents.

Two Types of State Housing: Municipal Housing and Work Unit Housing

To relieve housing shortage and high cost, the Party instructed local governments to build public housing for urban residents. The municipal housing (*gong fang*), which sometimes refers to as “direct management public housing (*zhiguan gongfang*),” was developed and managed by the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau (*chengjianju*). However, many local governments did not have the financial capacity to build new houses. In most cases, they simply converted old Nationalist properties into rental housing.

Knowing the financial difficulties of local governments, the State began to encourage individual work units to provide housing as employee perquisites. In China, the work unit was a hierarchy of state-owned workplaces such as schools, factories, hospitals, government agencies, etc. They were the basic units of organization in Chinese society. Employees of a work unit were guaranteed -- besides basic salary -- a variety of perquisites, such as inexpensive medical care, a range of subsidies of everything from transportation to nutrition, and generous retirement pensions. Of all the perquisites, the most important one was housing. Work units could obtain free land from local government to construct work unit housing (*danwei fang*), which was sometimes called “work unit self-management housing (*danwei ziguanfang*).” The name refers to its independence from the control of local governments. Some resourceful work units (such as the army) could develop housing with better quality, cheaper rent, and equipped with facilities like kindergartens, schools, markets, clinics, etc. Some smaller work units, however, could not afford developing new housing for their employees. As a remedy, they either rented municipal housing or private housing for their employees, or simply offered them rent subsidies.

By providing work units housing in parallel to municipal housing, China had developed a dualistic management system for state-owned land and buildings. Local governments controlled the construction, development and management of municipal housings; whereas individual work units were responsible for work unit housing and their associated welfare facilities, as well as other constructions necessary to their operation, such as offices and warehouses. By 1964, the total floor area managed by individual work units in Nanjing (8.98 million sq. meters) far outnumbered those

³⁴⁷ “1955 Survey Report of Real Estate, and Opinions on Future Reform.”

managed by the municipal government (3.66 million sq. meters). Work units became what Hsing You-tien called “the socialist land masters.”³⁴⁸

The design of municipal and work-unit housing was influenced by the Soviet superblocks, which are usually multi-storey in height and linear in plan, with residential units linked up by a communal corridor. The Soviet model often features big residential compounds with integrated neighborhood planning. (Fig. 4.05) Nevertheless, these residential compounds were only prevailed in big Chinese cities (notably in the capital Beijing) as showcases of Soviet influence, or in suburbs where land was abundant. On the contrary, most Chinese cities had no space for large scale housing developments. In Nanjing, for instance, only four big residential compounds were constructed during the 1950s and the 1960s. (Table 4.05) Among them, only two were located within the walled city; both of them were municipal housing. The earliest one was the Workers’ New Village constructed in 1952. Comprising of 66 two-storey apartments, it was one of the pioneer public housing compounds in China. (Fig. 4.06) The two developments in the suburb of Nanjing were built by the work units as living quarters of factory workers. (Fig. 4.07) The limited number of big residential compounds shows that they were far from being a dominant spatial element in Chinese cities.

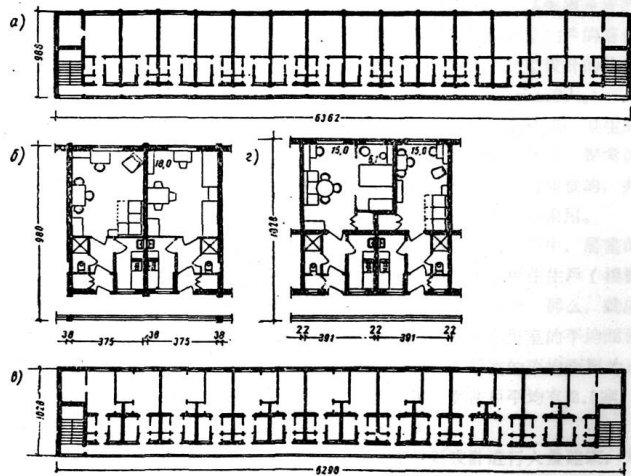


图 13 101-1型及101-2型外廊式住宅的定型设计 乌克兰
a——室户住宅标准层的平面；b——室户；c——室半户住宅标准层的平面；z——室半户及一室户

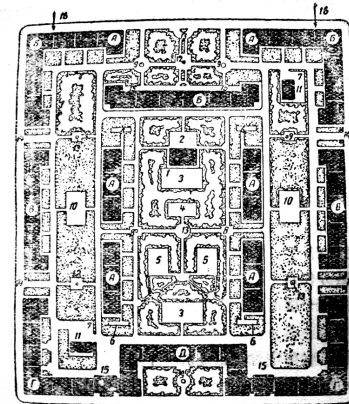


图 41 标准住宅所组合的住宅街坊(用嵌接段及併合方法连接)的总平面图

1—幼兒園；2—家務場地；3—兒童廣場；4—休息廣場；5—運動場；6—晒衣場；7—停車場；8—花壇；9—廁所；10—遊藝廣場；11—汽車庫；12—噴水池；13—揮花台；14—節廁；15—嵌接段；16—兩個住宅的連接點。

同一字母的住宅具有同樣數目的單元	
住宅街坊的面積	6.57 公頃
建築系數	27%
居住面積	33 218 平方公尺
每公頃平均居住面積	5 215 平方公尺

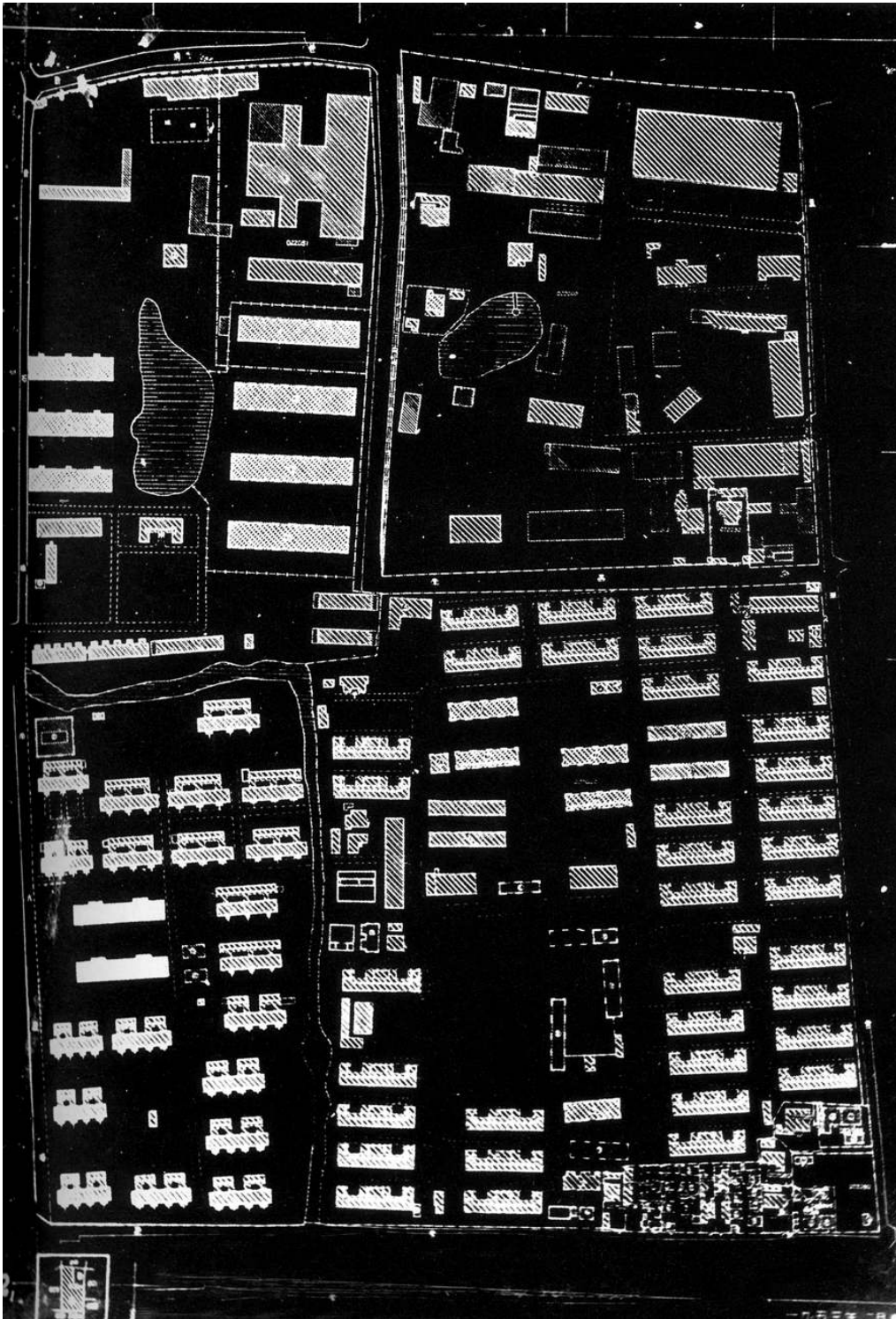
(Source: Jianzhu gongchengbu jishu qingbaoju, *The Current Level of Residential Building in the Soviet Union and its Development Prospect*, 11 and Кореньков, *Standard Design for Housing with 2-5 Storeys*, 40.)

Fig. 4.05 An example of the Soviet superblock compound.

348 Hsing, “Land and Territorial Politics in Urban China.”

Table 4.05 The residential compounds developed during the 1950s and 1960s.

	Workers' New Village	Wulao Village	Dachang Township No. 9 & 10 Village	Living quarters of Meishan Metallurgical Factory
Nature	Municipal Housing	Municipal Housing	Work-unit Housing	Work-unit Housing
Project Commenced by	1952	1958	Late 1950s/ early 1960s	1969
Location	Inside the walled city.	Inside the walled city.	Outside the walled city, at Dachang Township.	Outside the walled city, at Meishan.
Developed by	Municipal Labor Union	Municipal Government	Nanjing Chemical Industry Company	Meishan Metallurgical Factory
No. of housing blocks	66	Over 200 houses	45	Unknown.
Design	2-storey timber building	Simple single-storey houses.	2-storey row buildings.	4-storey buildings.
Remarks	First residential compound in Nanjing constructed in the Socialist era.	Redeveloped from a straw-shack settlement.	Expanded during the 1970s and 1980s.	Included both family dormitories and single person dormitories.



(Source: Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's City Planning*, 2:677.)

Fig. 4.06 Site plan of the Workers' New Village in Nanjing, 1953.



(Source: Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's City Planning*, 2:679.)

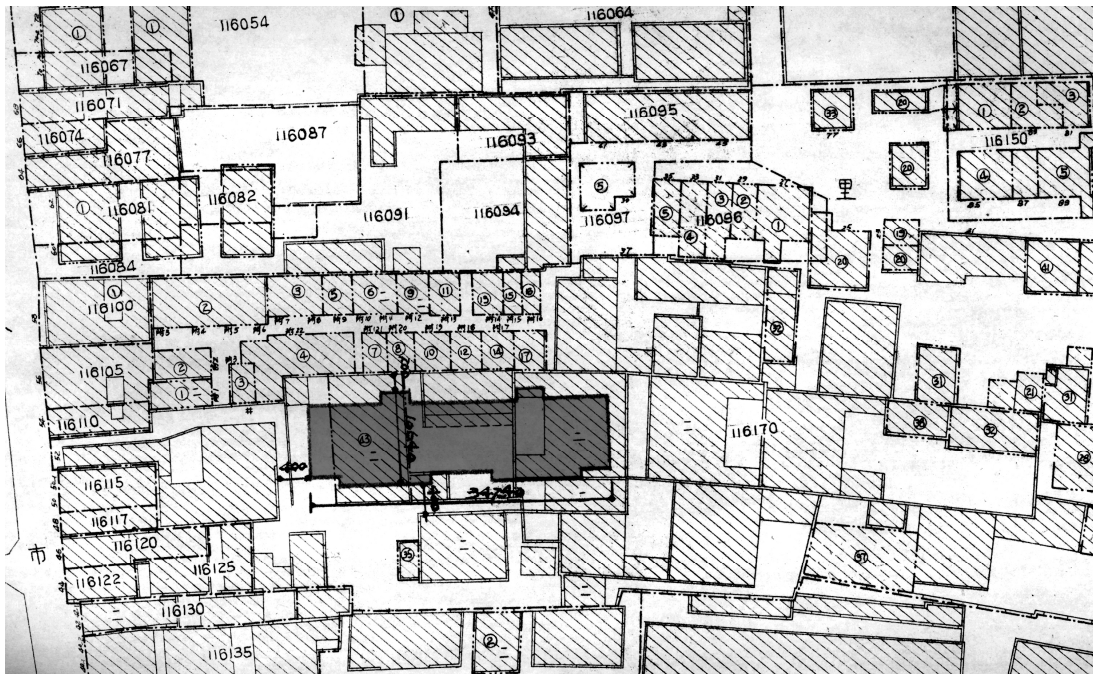
Fig. 4.07 Living quarters for the Meishan Metallurgical Factory in the suburb of Nanjing, 1971.

Besides these rare examples, most state housing in Nanjing -- no matter managed by the municipal government or work units -- were small in scale. They often employed an acupuncture approach, planting buildings in wherever spaces were available. (Fig. 4.08 & Fig. 4.09) Sometimes, several blocks formed a small housing cluster, mostly at less populated areas. (Fig. 4.10)



These two photos, taken in an alley in the Xinjiekou area of Nanjing, showed two single housing blocks completed in the Socialist era. They were constructed next to an old Chinese house and a western residence respectively.

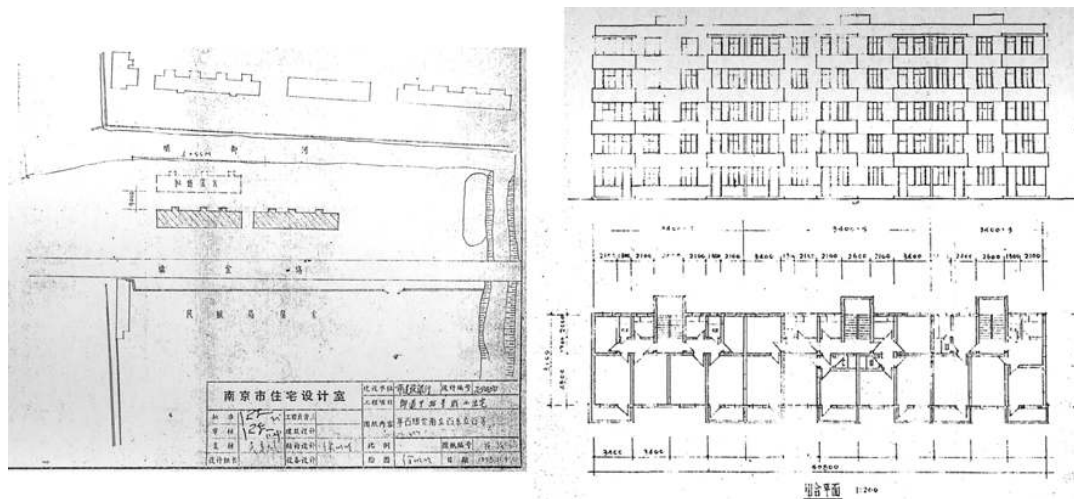
Fig. 4.08 Single housing block was developed in adjacent to old houses.



A single block of municipal housing was planned in the north of Zhujiang Road in the city center of Nanjing.

(Source: Redrawn after a drawing from Nanjing Urban Construction Archives.)

Fig. 4.09 Development of a single municipal housing block in a dense area.



These drawings show a work-unit housing project developed by the Nanjing Construction Bank in 1979. Located by the city moat, the cluster comprises of three apartment blocks. Each block has five storeys connected by three staircases. Each storey has six residential units with varied sizes. The design was done by the Nanjing Housing Design Studio (*Nanjingshi zhuzhai shejishi*).

(Source: Nanjing Urban Construction Archives file D30-1979-0548.)

Fig. 4.10 A cluster of three apartment blocks in a work-unit housing project, 1979.

The Politics of Housing Allocation

Because of the shortage of supply, housing allocation was a big topic which continuously troubled both the government and its urban residents. In general, private housing was old and usually lacked of maintenance, whereas municipal and work unit housing were new and better equipped. The difference in housing quality was reflected in a popular saying in Nanjing at that time: “living in private housing is inferior to living in municipal housing; living in municipal housing is inferior to living in work unit housing!” The question then is: who was eligible for work unit and municipal housing? And who had to live in private housing?

Class designation and political labels played major roles in determining a person’s housing status. People designated as “enemies” often had difficulty in employment. These people usually became self-employed individuals, working as small individual traders, peddlers, barbers, repairmen, etc. They did not belong to any work unit and were, of course, not entitled to work-unit housing.

Unfortunately, they were also not welcomed by municipal housing. In a meeting with local residents in Nanjing, a government representative called for the removal of all counter-revolutionaries, unemployed, and persons with unknown biographies from municipal housing so as to “maintain the unity among people” and to “better protect the properties that belonged to the whole people of China.”³⁴⁹ This reflected that the government did not consider persons with sinister political

³⁴⁹ “Special Report from the Nanjing Government on the Mandatory Leasing of State Property.”

biography as “the people.” As these people were excluded from state housing, they resorted to rent private houses. As a result, private housing usually carried a negative connotation in Socialist China – not only because they were poor in quality, they were also homes to the enemies of the people.

In sum, private housing was an important part of the socialist housing system. As state investment in housing was limited, the Party relied on private housing to accommodate the increasing urban population. Nevertheless, the difference in quality between private and state housing, the social stigma attached in private housing, and the unequal access to housing according to class, had created a social hierarchy. A person’s housing status was closely related to one’s social status in China.

4.3 ELIMINATING EXPLOITATION: THE SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION OF PRIVATE RENTAL HOUSING, 1956-1966

4.3.1 Equalling “Surplus” to Exploitation: the Policy of Socialist Transformation

From 1950 to 1956, the State had built over 60,000,000 square meters of houses in major Chinese cities, amounting to about 30 per cent of the original area of residential houses before liberation.³⁵⁰ Still, new housing construction failed to keep pace with the influx of new residents. The housing construction pace further slowed down by limited financial and material resources. Due to China’s low wage and low rent policy, investment in new housing never generated enough return to pay for maintenance, let alone new construction. Therefore by the mid 1950s, Chinese leaders began to have doubts about heavy investment in housing. They considered housing and other construction projects wasteful, non-productive, and even bourgeois in nature, and had promoted the slogan “production first, living condition later.” Premier Zhou Enlai commented that “more than a few cities, institutions, schools, and businesses have undertaken some overly lavish construction, willingly exhausting the limited resources of the country.”³⁵¹ As a result, the annual housing investment declined from 11.0 per cent of national construction expenditure in 1950 to only 3.0 per cent in 1958. (Table 4.06) In 1960, the Party further announced a three-year suspension on all city planning works in China as one of the many measures to reduce expenditure. Official publication claimed that altering the present housing situation within a short period was not only impossible on economic grounds, but it would also “greatly weaken the foundation of the socialist industrial construction and national defense as well as undermine the long range interest of the people.”³⁵²

³⁵⁰ Kwan and Lu, “The Current Urban Housing Problem in Our Country,” 9.

³⁵¹ Cited in Rowe and Kuan, *Architectural Encounters with Essence and Form in Modern China*, 97.

³⁵² Kwan and Lu, “The Current Urban Housing Problem in Our Country,” 10.

Table 4.06 Annual investment in housing development, 1950-1979.

Year	Total Investment in Construction (M yuan)	Total Investment in Housing (M yuan)	Percentage (%)	Year	Total Investment in Construction (M yuan)	Total Investment in Housing (M yuan)	Percentage (%)
1950	1134	125	11.0	1965	17089	943	5.5
1951	2346	821	11.0	1966	19942	877	4.4
1952	4356	448	10.3	1967	13052	496	3.8
1953	8001	947	12.5	1968	10413	521	5.0
1954	9062	844	9.3	1969	18565	1021	5.5
1955	9302	616	6.6	1970	29499	762	2.6
1956	14802	1274	8.6	1971	32126	1371	4.3
1957	13829	1284	9.3	1972	31279	1797	5.7
1958	26696	810	3.0	1973	32126	1985	6.2
1959	34465	1374	3.9	1974	33301	2155	6.5
1960	38407	1570	4.1	1975	39186	2294	5.9
1961	12334	743	6.0	1976	35952	2816	6.1
1962	5362	316	5.9	1977	36441	2506	6.9
1963	9416	728	7.7	1978	47955	3754	7.9
1964	13869	1116	8.0	1979	50000	7379	14.8

(Source: Zhongguo shehuikexueyuan caimao jingji yanjiusuo and Institute of Public Administration (New York, N.Y.), *China's Urban Housing Reform*, 104-105.)

Unfortunately, the Party found it unable to rely on private housing to solve the problem of shortage. In general, the Party believed that existing properties in the cities were overpriced, not efficiently and properly utilized, and poorly maintained. This prompted Chinese leaders to rethink the contradiction between private ownership and socialism. They wanted to find an economic way to solve the urban housing problem.

By October 1952, the Party promulgated the “General Line during the Transitional Period (*guodu shiqi zongluxian*)” to transition China from the stage of economic rehabilitation into the stage of socialist transformation.³⁵³ The fundamental task of the General Line was to gradually eliminate the system of exploitation and to build a socialist society through social industrialization and reformation. To achieve this, the Party had first “to solve the problem of the system of ownership.” Mao Zedong stressed that only when private ownership were transformed into state ownership could the forces of production be enhanced and industrialization of the country be realized.³⁵⁴ In the countryside, the State had collectivized land and houses, draught animals, farm implements, etc., basically eliminated all individual farmers and privately-operated firms. In the cities, the State launched in 1953 the “Socialist Transformation of Capitalist Commerce, Industry and Handicraft (*ziben zhuyi gongshangye he shougong ye shehui zhuyi gaizao*)” to nationalize private

³⁵³ *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 45–49, 164–175.

³⁵⁴ Mao, “Speech on Mutual Aid and Cooperativization in Agriculture,” 416.

enterprises.³⁵⁵ These efforts, which lasted from 1953 to 1958, were collectively known as “socialist transformation.” (Fig. 4.11)

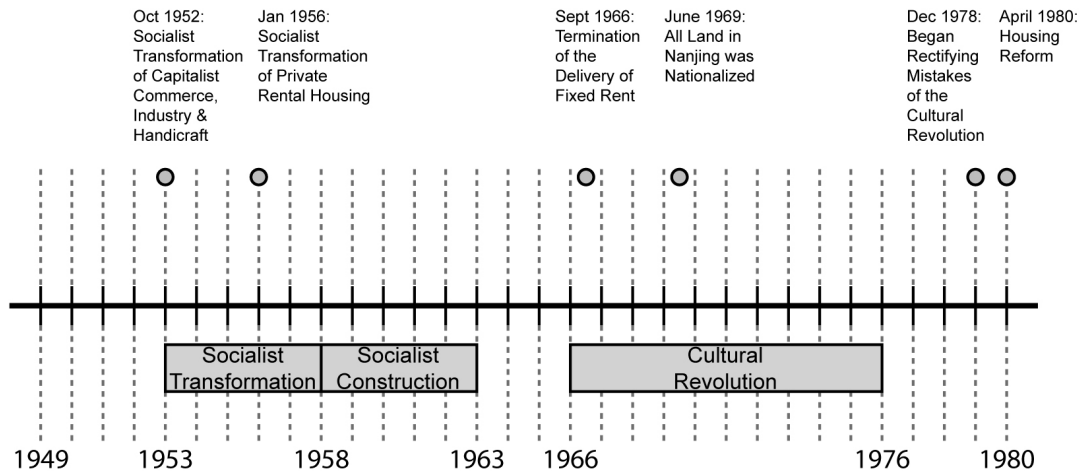


Fig. 4.11 Timeline of the socialist transformation in China.

“Everything has been socialist transformed. Why shouldn’t private housing?” some people questioned.³⁵⁶ Therefore in January 1956, the Central Committee of the Communist Government endorsed the policy of “Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.”³⁵⁷ At first, the Central Committee allowed great freedom for municipal governments to develop their transformation procedures to fit the local situation. As it turned out, the pace of socialist transformation in Chinese cities varied greatly. Official record showed that by October 1957, socialist transformation of private rental housing had already been completed in all the cities in the Heilongjiang Province, in most cities in the Liaoning and Jilin Provinces, and in cities like Wuhan and Xian. In other cities like Tianjin, Shanghai, Suzhou, Wuxi, Qinhuangdao, Chengdu, Nanchang, Jinan, the work had only been partially completed. In some big cities like Beijing, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Taiyuan, Xuzhou, and Urumqi, work has yet to be commenced.³⁵⁸ Until in late 1957 when the Party launched the Anti-rightists Campaign, it began to take socialist transformation more seriously. A new

³⁵⁵ For detail discussion of the campaign, see So, “The Policy-Making and Political Economy of the Abolition of Private Ownership in the Early 1950s: Findings from New Material.”

³⁵⁶ “Fully Completed the Socialist Transformation of the Cities.”

In Nanjing the municipal governments discussed the possibility to extend the campaign to transform private housing in December 1955. See “1955 Survey Report of Real Estate, and Opinions on Future Reform.”

³⁵⁷ The policy was found in *Opinion on Current Situations on Private Housing in the City and Opinions for Socialist Transformation*.

³⁵⁸ *Speech on the Management of Real Estate in the City by the Vice President of the Ministry of City Services Zhang Yongli at the Second National Department and Bureau Chairmen’s Meeting*.

set of policy guidelines was developed for local governments to follow.³⁵⁹ (Table 4.07)

Table 4.07 The Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing at various stages.

Year	Application	Rent
1956	All private housing that were for renting purpose.	Rent collected from tenants should be used for maintenance, administration and management, property tax, and fixed income to original owners.
1958	Private housing for renting, if the rental area exceeds: - Big city: 150 sq. m.; - Medium city: 100 sq. m.; - Small city: 50-100 sq. m.. (Note: the area limit was a guideline. Each municipal city could set its own area limit.) Exemptions were given to house owners who: - Did not rely on rent as source of income; - Retained only small area for their own living; - Transformation could be delayed for owners who were old, weak, sick or handicapped, until their situation improved.	Rent collected from tenants should be used for maintenance, administration, property tax, insurance, and a fixed payment t to original owners. The fixed rent to original owner should be lower than the original rent collected by the owners before the socialist transformation. It should be 20-40% of the rent collected.
1964	To adhere to the guideline made in 1958.	Fixed rent should be 20-40% of original rent.

(Source: Summarized from “The Central Committee Endorses the Opinion from the Second Office of the Secretariat on Current Situations on Private Housing in the City and Opinions for Socialist Transformation”; “Person-in-charge from the Central Committee Talks about the Works on the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing”; “Reports from the Second Ministry of Commerce on the Problem of the Socialist Transformation of Private Housing”; “Report from the Director of the No. 8 Office of the State Council Xu Dixin at the First National Working Meeting on Urban Real Estate”; “Talk by the Second Ministry of Commerce Vice President Zhang Yongli at the Socialist Transformation of Private Housing Conference”; and “Report on Issues Related to the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.”

³⁵⁹ For instance, from January 25 to February 8, 1958, the Second Ministry of Commerce (*dier shangyebu*) organized a national working meeting with representatives from 36 cities to discuss the problems encountered when implementing the program in local level. The meeting was recorded in *Reports on the Problem of the Socialist Transformation of Private Housing*.

Later in August 6, the *People's Daily* published an interview with the State official in-charge of the campaign, explaining the details of the policy to the public. See “Person-in-charge from the Central Committee Talks about the Works on the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.”

Speeches of state officials delivered on various occasions were also transcribed and form part of the transformation policy. For examples, *Speech on the Management of Real Estate in the City by the Vice President of the Ministry of City Services Zhang Yongli at the Second National Department and Bureau Chairmen's Meeting*; *Guowuyuan baban Xu Dixin fuzhuren zai diyici quanguo chengshi fangchan gongzuo huiyi shang de baogao [Director of the No. 8 Office of the State Council Xu Dixin's Report at the First National Working Meeting on Urban Real Estate]*; *Talk by the Second Ministry of Commerce Vice President Zhang Yongli at the Socialist Transformation of Private Housing Conference*.

The purpose of socialist transformation was not to eliminate private housing ownership completely but to submit the renting of private housing under state control and to step by step convert the nature of ownership. Under the policy, private house owners could still possess their properties for self occupancy. They could even withhold some rental space to collect a small amount of rent to supplement their incomes. Only “surplus” rental space would be socialist transformed into state property. The underlying idea was that private housing *per se* was not an exploitation tool. Exploitation existed only when house owners made big profits in the rental market. This idea contradicted to the Party’s earlier argument that private properties in the cities should be protected the same as other forms of non-bureaucratic private capitals. The Party now recognized private house owners, sub-landlords, and rental brokers employed by the capitalists and big landlords as exploiters who required socialist transformation as well. It urged local governments to arrange new jobs for them so that they could support their lives without exploiting others.³⁶⁰ (Fig. 4.12)

³⁶⁰ *Opinion on Current Situations on Private Housing in the City and Opinions for Socialist Transformation.*

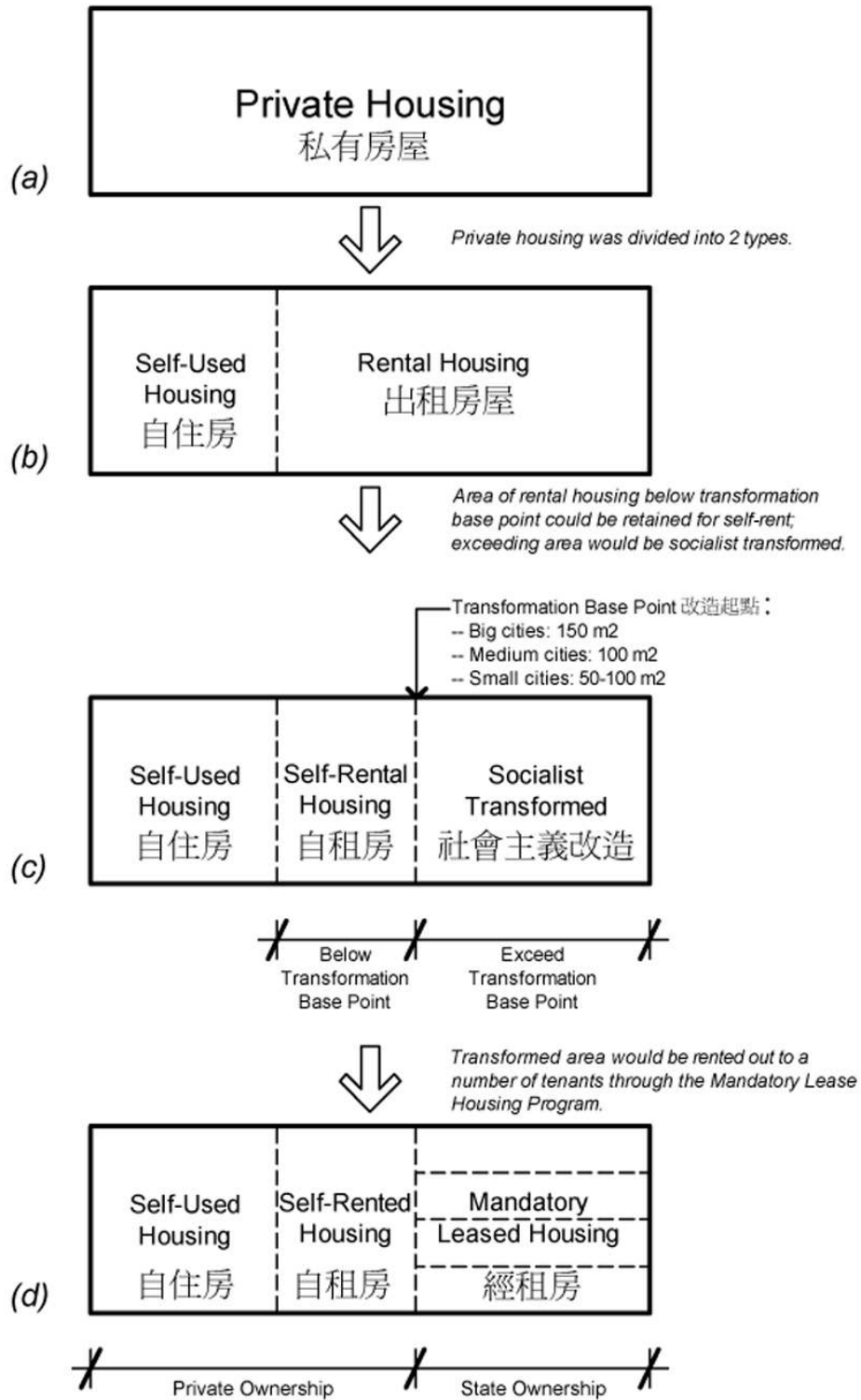


Fig. 4.12 The policy of socialist transformation in China.

The whole transformation policy anchored on the definition of “self-occupied housing” and “surplus rental housing.” How big a house could one retain for self occupancy? How big would the rental space be deemed as “surplus”? Nevertheless, both terms were poorly defined. For the former, the Party had never specified the permitted size of self-occupied housing but empowered local governments to assess it case by case. As such, ever since the policy was enforced, the size of self-occupied areas became a major conflict between private house owners and local governments.³⁶¹

For rental space, the Party asked local governments to set up a predetermined floor space limit called the “transformation base point (*gaizo qidian*).”³⁶² The area below the floor space limit could be withheld by house owners, whereas the area which exceeded the limit was defined as “surplus” and would be socialist transformed. As the transformation base point was a critical marker for socialist transformation, the Party provided a reference for local governments: (1) 150 sq. meters for big cities; (2) 100 sq. meters for medium cities; and (3) 50 to 100 sq. meters for small cities. However, the Party stressed that local governments were allowed the flexibility to determine its transformation base point.³⁶³ It also reminded them to delay transforming houses whose owners were poor, sick, or disabled, until the owners’ financial situation improved.

There were two methods of socialist transformation. For surplus rental housing originally owned by private real estate developers and house owners with huge assets, the State would invest in their companies and turned them into “joint state-private ownership.” For those originally owned by individual house owners, the State would purchase (*shumai*) their surplus rental housing by paying them a monthly dividend or “fixed rent (*dingzu*).”³⁶⁴ Although the Party had empowered local governments to determine the fixed rent, it suggested that the amount should fall into the range of 20 to 40 per cent of collected rent.³⁶⁵

After transformation, local government turned the requisitioned floor space into “mandatory leased housing (*jingzufang*)” and let it out to the Chinese people for a low rent. This means that the original house was now subdivided into multiple dwelling units. In some cases, tenant families occupied some of the rooms in the house. In other cases, they built their rooms by erecting temporary partitions. Very

³⁶¹ *Reports on the Problem of the Socialist Transformation of Private Housing.*

³⁶² *Speech on the Management of Real Estate in the City by the Vice President of the Ministry of City Services Zhang Yongli at the Second National Department and Bureau Chairmen’s Meeting.*

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ Xing Quan Zhang note that house owners still had nominal ownership to their houses. I disagree with this because according to *The State Council Endorses the Report from the State Real Estate Management Bureau on Issues Related to the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing*, owners no longer owned the transformed houses.

See Zhang, “Chinese housing policy 1949-1978,” 438.

³⁶⁵ “Person-in-charge from the Central Committee Talks about the Works on the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.”

often, owners had to share kitchens and toilets with the tenant families. As kitchens and toilets were typically small in size, only one family could cook at a time. Some tenant families would rather install their own stoves in their rooms. As a result, mandatory leased houses were usually cramped and unsanitary.

4.3.2 Problems in the Enforcement of the Policy in Local Level

Before carrying out the “Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing” in July 1, 1958, Nanjing had 5,600,235 sq. meters floor spaces of private houses, in which 50.8 per cent were self-occupied housing and 49.2 per cent were rental housing. Within a year, 1,854,731 sq. meters of rental housing had been socialist transformed.³⁶⁶ (Table 4.08) By 1964, the Municipal Nanjing Government managed 1.98M sq. meters mandatory leased housing, even more than the total floor space of municipal housing. (Table 4.09) While the pace of transformation in Nanjing looked encouraging, in China, overall, the process was far slower than the Party had anticipated. By the end of 1960, still 14 per cent of Chinese cities and two-third of towns had yet to begin the transformation process.³⁶⁷

Table 4.08 Private housing and its transformation in Nanjing, 1958 to 1959.

	Total Built Area	%	No. of Units	%
1958 July				
Self-occupied Housing	2,843,235 sq. m.	50.77	11,770	21.87
Rental Housing	2,757,000 sq. m.	49.23	42,042	78.13
Total	5,600,235 sq. m.	100.00	53,812	100.00
1959 December				
Transformed Housing	1,854,731 sq. m.	67.27 (out of all rental housing.)	6,133	14.95 (out of all rental housing)

(Source: The figures are based on “1959 Yearly Statistics on Real Estate in the City,” Nanjing Municipal Archives file 5095-1-0063.)

³⁶⁶ “1959 Yearly Statistics on Real Estate in the City.”

³⁶⁷ *Notification on the Acceleration of the Works of the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.*

Table 4.09 State-owned properties in Nanjing, 1964.

Managed by	Building Type	Area (M sq. m.)	Percentage (%)
Total Completed Floor Area in Nanjing		16.44	100.00%
Completed Floor Area of State-owned property		12.64	76.89
Urban Construction Bureau of Municipal Government	Ownership by the Whole People	1.68	
	Mandatory Leased housing	1.98	
	Sub-total	3.66	22.3%
Individual Work units	Residential*	2.63	
	Office	0.80	
	Housing#	3.14	
	Business	0.14	
	Educational	1.31	
	Medical	0.23	
	Cultural and Recreational	0.18	
	Warehouse	0.27	
	Hotel and Guesthouse	0.14	
	Temples and Religious	0.17	
	Subtotal	8.98	54.6%

* Original Chinese is *shenghuo yongfang*.

Original Chinese is *zhuzhai yongfang*.

(Source: The figures are based on "Opinion on the Strengthening of the Unified Management of Housing with Ownership by the Whole," Nanjing City Archives file 5041-3-0062.)

In Nanjing, the socialist transformation of private rental housing was poorly enforced. An official investigation carried out in 1963 on the Xijiekou area showed that a total of 1,733 sq. meters surplus houses were wrongly omitted from socialist transformation by the government. In one case, the government had rented out a mandatory leased housing to a factory but had forgotten to put it down on record. Because of that, no rent had been collected from the factory for the 58 months prior to the investigation. In another case, the authority had transformed a surplus house in July 1958, but had forgotten to let it out afterward. The house remained vacant, until in August 1962 the original house owner secretly sold it to someone else. Furthermore, the Xiejiakou area recorded 68 unsettled disputes between house owners and the government. 55 cases involved the retaining of self-occupied housing and 13 cases involved the payment of fixed rent.³⁶⁸

Not only in Nanjing, self-occupied housing and fixed rent had been two major causes of disputes in many Chinese cities. In a report on the "Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing" compiled in 1964, the State Council pointed out that many house owners petitioned to reclaim their houses, arguing that their self-occupied space was either too small from the outset, or was no longer big

³⁶⁸ See "Summary of the Survey on the Real Estate of the Experimental Xinjiakou Area in Xuanwu District."

enough due to expanding family size; others requested the government to raise the fixed rent because of financial difficulties. In view of these claims, the State Council re-emphasized that the purpose of socialist transformation was to gradually purchase private rental housing by paying original owners with a fixed rent over a certain period of time. Hence, house owners no longer possessed the ownership of the transformed houses, and had no right to reclaim them back despite changes in family size and financial situation.³⁶⁹

Illegal expropriation and redistribution of common people's houses were often heard in Chinese cities, showing that the socialist transformation policy was not perfectly enforced at the local level.³⁷⁰ The State Council realized that in some places, local governments had set a very low transformation base point. As a result, house owners could only withhold a small floor space for self-renting purpose. In other cases, the local government had encroached on owners' self-occupied spaces. The State Council thus advised local governments to adhere to the party guidelines in determining the transformation base point and to return those wrongly transformed houses to their original owners. To ensure fair compensation, the State Council also urged local governments to raise the fixed rent if it was lower than 20 per cent of the original rent.³⁷¹

A major blind spot in the transformation policy was that the length of fixed rent payment was never mentioned. The socialist transformation policy of private business enterprises -- which served as a model for the transformation of surplus rental housing -- allowed the delivery of dividends to original enterprise owners over a 20-year period. However, the State had never suggested that the same 20 year payment period would be applied to surplus rental housing.

³⁶⁹ *The State Council Endorses the Report from the State Real Estate Management Bureau on Issues Related to the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.*

³⁷⁰ Ding, "It was Wrong to Equally Distribute Housing in the Cities."

³⁷¹ Regarding the fixed rent, the State Council clarified that it should not be altered simply because of changes in the owner's financial condition. Curiously, there was a discrepancy concerning the amount of fixed rent between the State Council report in 1964 and earlier documents. In various documents made in 1958, the suggested fixed rent payable to property owners was set at a range of 20 to 40 per cent of monthly collected rent. However, in the State Council report, the term "collected rent (*fangzu*)" was replaced by "original rent (*yuan fangzu*)." That meant the fixed rent should be set between 20 and 40 per cent of the rent originally received by the owner before the socialist transformation. It was not sure if this discrepancy was a mistake, or a result of the change in the socialist transformation policy. Refer *The State Council Endorses the Report from the State Real Estate Management Bureau on Issues Related to the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing.*

4.4 UNLAWFUL PROPERTY TAKING DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1966-1976

4.4.1 The Cultural Revolution as Class Struggle

Following the socialist transformation of private enterprises and surplus rental housing, many Chinese leaders, including Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, believed that old exploiting classes had been successfully eliminated. But Mao Zedong held a different view. Believing that classes and class conflicts still pertained in China, Mao advanced the slogan of “never forget class struggle.” He showed increasing concern to the emergence of a new privileged class, which was not fashioned from the remnants of the old bourgeoisie but rather from the bureaucrats within the Party who now appropriated an increasing share of what the laboring masses produced. Maurice Meisner notes that from Mao’s perspective, China's bureaucrats had a vested interest not in private property but rather in public ownership by a state that they controlled, and from which they derived social and economic benefits for themselves and their families.³⁷² Mao even proclaimed that the new bureaucratic class was becoming “bourgeois elements sucking the blood of workers.”³⁷³ He worried that the rise of the privileged bureaucratic class posed the threat of abandonment or reversal of socialist revolution, leading to the restoration of capitalism.

Mao Zedong insisted that privileged classes, bureaucrats, and rightists be removed through violent class struggle. Therefore in 1966, he launched the “Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution,” usually known simply as the Cultural Revolution.³⁷⁴ The fundamental principle of the Cultural Revolution was to fight selfish ideas in one’s own mind and to struggle against the handful of people within the Party who were in authority and taking the capitalist road. He mobilized the Chinese people to form the Red Guards and other urban revolution organizations and to treat the Cultural Revolution as a class struggle, in which “everything which does not fit the socialist system and proletarian dictatorship should be attacked.”³⁷⁵ As a result, class designation determined how a person was treated during the Cultural Revolution. Anyone who belonged to a bad class background was to be attacked and anything which could be taken to be “bourgeois” or “feudal” culture was to be destroyed. Houses of cadres, intellectuals, bourgeoisies, and counter-revolutionaries were raided, libraries were burnt, temples and museums containing priceless works of art were ransacked.

³⁷² Meisner, *Mao’s China and After: a History of the People’s Republic*, 302–311.

³⁷³ Mao, “Comment on Comrade Chen Cheng-jen’s Report on Stay at a Selected Spot,” 49.

³⁷⁴ For background of the Cultural Revolution, see MacFarquhar, *The Coming of the Cataclysm, 1961-1966*; MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*.

³⁷⁵ Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 607.

Shortly after the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, the State declared in September 1966 that all joint-ownership business enterprises were to be nationalized and stopped delivering dividends to the original enterprise owners.³⁷⁶ Many local governments had considered the policy on private enterprises as the model for that on private housing, so they immediately stopped delivering fixed rent to house owners, even though the State had never formally authorized this. By June 10, 1969, all land in Nanjing was nationalized.³⁷⁷ Yet, there was no official document issued on how private housing should be treated. Therefore, any action against private housing during the Cultural Revolution was carried out illegally.

4.4.2 The Taking of Private Houses in the Xiangyang Street Neighborhood

During the height of the Cultural Revolution, in 1973, the Street Office of the Xiangyang Street Neighborhood in the Gulou District of Nanjing carried out a housing survey.³⁷⁸ (See Appendix A.) The neighborhood had 68 private houses, whose owners were classified into eight political categories: general masses (*yiban qunzhong*), persons with normal political biography (*yiban zhengli*), united front targets (*tongzhan duixiang*),³⁷⁹ intellectuals, overseas Chinese, capitalists, four bad categories (*silei fenzi*),³⁸⁰ and persons with unidentified biography (*shengfen buming*). These houses occupied a total floor space of 8,528.57 sq. meters, in which 3,926.67 sq. meters was self-occupied space and 4,601.90 sq. meters was rental space.

Over two-third of the private houses in the neighborhood were taken in the first three years of the revolution. I use the term “taking” to denote the Chinese phrase *jieguan*, which literally means “receive and manage.” It is worth to note that during the Cultural Revolution, the word “confiscation (*moshou*)” was rarely used; most of the times, the occupation of private houses was described as *jieguan*. Most of the property taking was approved by government agencies, such as the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau (*chengshi jiansheju*), the mass organization (*qunzhong zuzhi*)

³⁷⁶ *Report on Several Questions Concerning Finance, Trade and Handicraft Industry.*

³⁷⁷ Nanjingshi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Gazetteer of Nanjing's Land Management*, 152.

³⁷⁸ The Gulou District was temporarily renamed as Yanan District during the 1960s. The survey can be found in “Survey Materials of Private Housing in the Xiangyang Street Neighborhood of Yanan District during the Cultural Revolution.”

³⁷⁹ United front targets (*tongzhan duixiang*) denoted the persons that the CCP State wanted to unite, such as members of other political parties, persons not belonged to any political parties, intellectuals not belonged to CCP, ethnic minorities, members of religious groups, former KMT officials willing to change side, self-employed persons, etc.

³⁸⁰ The four categories (*silei fenzi*) denoted the four class enemies, including landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, and bad elements.

formed under the Housing and Property Company (*fangchan gongsi*), the District Urban Transportation Branch (*qu chengjiaoke*), and the District Housing Administration Office (*qu fangguansou*). A small number of houses were directly occupied by work units and the people. This had made the returning of private housing after the Cultural Revolution difficult as many agencies were involved in the taking process.

These 68 houses were taken for various reasons. The largest case was found whereby owners voluntarily surrendered their properties to the State. Although it was not documented in the survey, it was plausible that the voluntary surrendering was a result of intense political pressure.³⁸¹ For the rest of the cases, most of the private houses were taken for political reasons, including 14 cases whereby owners were mobilized during the political campaign to surrender their houses, and eight cases, whereby owners were purged (*chongji*). The purge usually involved public interrogation, denouncement, beating, confession of one's wrong doings, and expropriation of personal possessions.

In one case, the affected property was a luxury western-styled residence owned by Mr. Li (false name), a university professor. Completed in 1947, the residence measured 384.66 sq. meters, accommodating Mr Li, his wife and three children, his mother, sister and brother-in-law, and a nanny. (Fig. 4.13) After 1949, Mr Li had been working as an engineer in a number of factories and state agencies in Nanjing. During the socialist transformation, the government taken some parts of Mr Li's house and redistributed them to numerous tenants. During the Cultural Revolution, more interlopers move into Mr Li's house. One tenant gave an account of the housing situation during a confession meeting in March 1973:

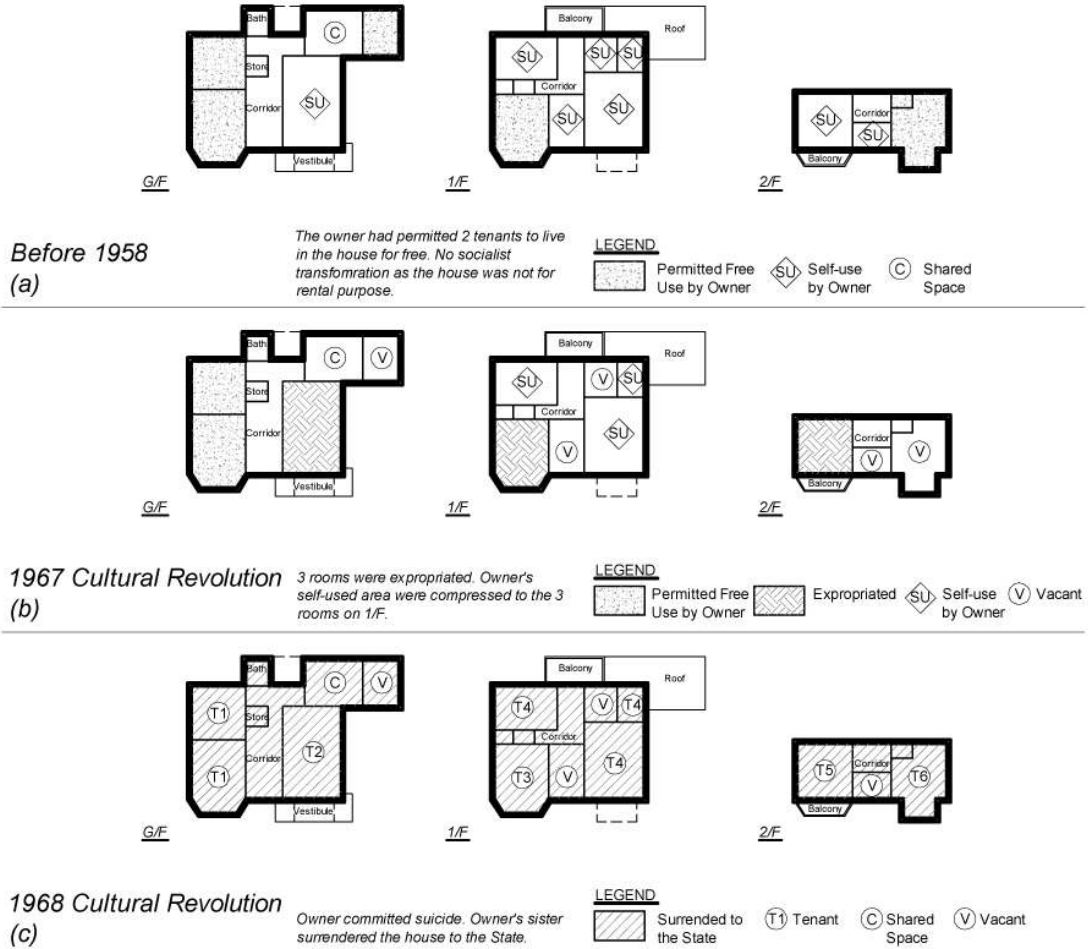
At first, Mr Li's sister lived here. Their grandma was here too. They have been living in Nanjing for over ten years... but then there was the call for [socialist] transformation... I moved in during the Great Leap Forward and occupied four rooms. Miss Li, her grandma, three kids and the nanny occupied the rest of the house. After [Mr Li has been] purged, more people moved into the house ... Now I only occupy two rooms. The nanny has left ... Those who live here have never paid any rent. Since August 1967, Mr. Zhang has moved in, thus pushing the Li family into the three remaining rooms. In 1968, the Worker's Combat Corps came and beat Mr Li to the floor. They forcibly took away his possessions...

Later, Mr Li and his wife moved to Shanghai and took up an engineer position in the Municipal Telecom Bureau, while his sister, a factory accountant, stayed in this house. Nevertheless in Shanghai, Mr Li was denounced by his colleagues at work, yet he refused to admit committing any wrongdoing. In May 24, 1968, Mr Li and his wife committed suicide at their Shanghai home. After they died, the couple were being labelled as "counterrevolutionaries" by the government. Immediately, Mr Li's sister filed an application to the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau to inherit his brother's house; while the application was still in process, she was being put under

³⁸¹ This explanation is supported by many scholars. See Randolph and Lou, *Chinese Real Estate Law*; Wilhelm, "Rethinking Property Rights in Urban China."

political investigation. Finally in August 1968, she wrote to the bureau, stating her willingness to surrender the house to the State.

Owner: Professor / Engineer, Intellectual



(Source: Based on "Survey Materials of Private Housing in the Xiangyang Street Neighborhood of Yanan District during the Cultural Revolution," Gulou District Archives file 0403-0000-002-0042.)

Fig. 4.13 The transformation of Mr Li's house over years.

In another cases, the affected property, completed in 1948, consisted of a three-storey residence and a single-storey annex. The total floor space measured 400 sq. meters. (Fig. 4.14) The owner, Mr Chen (false name) was a Deputy Commander of the Nationalist Army. After 1949, Mr Chen chose to switch sides, which made him carry the political label of "united front target." Since then, he worked in the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum Managing Committee, earning a monthly salary of 120 *yuan*. Nevertheless, this was not Mr Chen's only source of income. He had rented out four

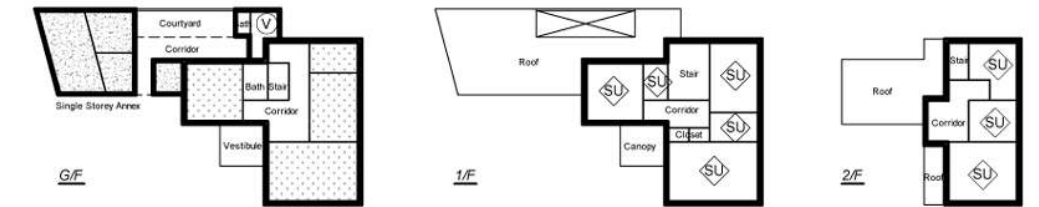
rooms, measured 90 sq. meters in total, on the ground floor of his Xikang Road house. He also permitted a friend to occupy two of the rooms in the annex free of charge.

During the socialist transformation in 1958, the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau allowed Mr Chen to retain two rooms on the first floor and three rooms on the second floor to accommodate his family -- including him and his wife, his daughter and son-in-law, his grandchildren, and a nanny. The rental part of the residence was socialist transformed, even though the 90 sq. meters rental area was far below the 150 sq. meters transformation base point. Mr Chen's original tenants remained in the house but they were asked to pay rent directly to the bureau.

By 1963, the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau recognized its mistake, accepting that the rental area in Mr Chen's Xikang Road residence did not exceed the transformation base point and should not be socialist transformed. Hence, the bureau returned the transformed rooms to Mr Chen. The tenants remained in the house but they now paid rent directly to Mr Chen.

During the Cultural Revolution, Mr Chen was being "purged (*chongji*)" for his united front target status. Finally in September 1966, Mr Chen was mobilized to surrender most parts of his Xikang Road residence. The surrendering was approved by the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau. Mr Chen ended up retaining only four rooms on the first floor. The rest of the house was redistributed to five different tenants, who were allowed by the bureau to live in the residence without paying any rent. It was not until November 1968 that the bureau began to collect rent from them.

Owner: Former KMT Official / Now CCP State Official, United Front Target



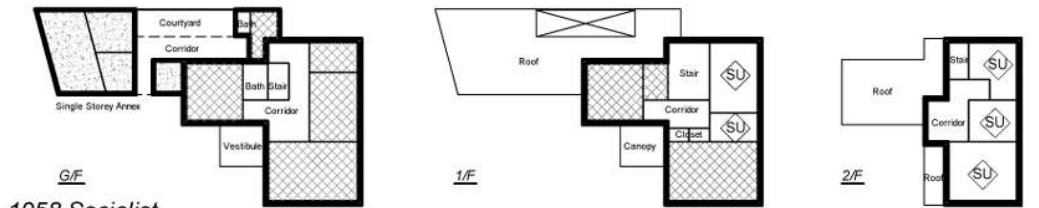
Before 1958

(a)

Owner occupied 1/F & 2/F, rented out G/F, and allowed 2 tenants to live in the annex for free.

LEGEND

Permitted Free Use by Owner Rented Out by Owner SU Self-use by Owner V Vacant



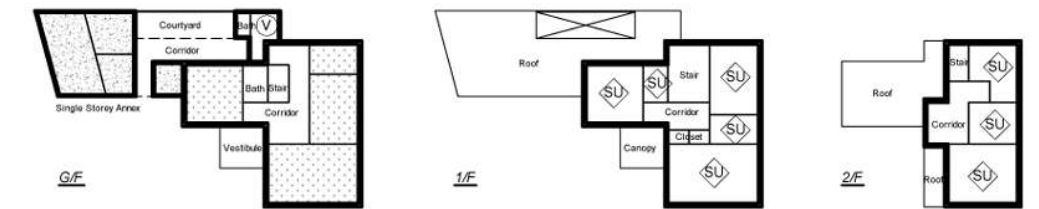
1958 Socialist Transformation

(b)

All rental rooms were socialist transformed even though the area was below the transformation base point. 3 self-used rooms on 2/F were wrongly transformed too.

LEGEND

Permitted Free Use by Owner Socialist Transformed SU Self-use by Owner V Vacant



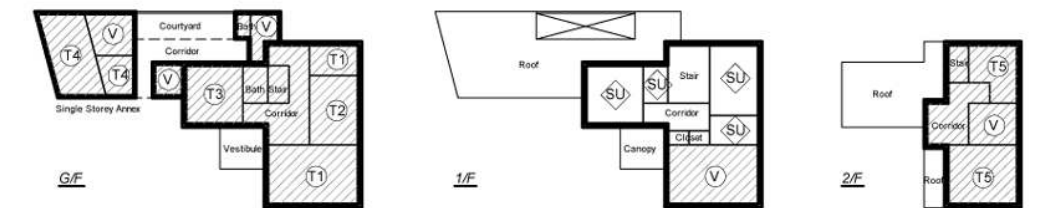
1962

(c)

The State rectified the mistake and returned all transformed rooms to the owner.

LEGEND

Permitted Free Use by Owner Rented Out by Owner SU Self-use by Owner V Vacant



1966 Cultural Revolution

(d)

Owner kept 4 rooms on 1/F and surrendered the rest to the State.

LEGEND

Surrendered to the State SU Self-use by Owner (T) Tenant (V) Vacant

(Source: Based on "Survey Materials of Private Housing in the Xiangyang Street Neighborhood of Yanan District during the Cultural Revolution," Gulou District Archives file 0403-0000-002-0042.)

Fig. 4.14 The transformation of Mr Chen's house over years.

Mr Li and Mr Chen's cases were only the tips of the iceberg. Similar incidents happened all over China. For instance, in August and September 1966, the homes of 33,695 families in Beijing and 84,222 homes of bourgeois families in Shanghai (including 1,231 homes of intellectuals and teachers) were looted by the Red Guards

or people claiming to be Red Guards.³⁸² Record shows that 17,730 sq. m. floor space in Kunming was impounded and occupied by the Red Guard.³⁸³ A government document also indicates that 340,000 households in 130 major cities and 265 towns lost their private houses to the government. After the Cultural Revolution, the proportion of private ownership in urban housing in China was reduced to below 10 per cent of the total housing stock. In some cities, the percentage of private ownership was less than four per cent.³⁸⁴

EPILOGUE: RECTIFYING THE MISTAKES IN SOCIALIZATION

The Cultural Revolution ended in 1976 following the death of Mao Zedong. During the Third Plenary Session of the Thirteenth Central Committee of the Party held in December 1978, the Central Committee decided to rectify the mistakes of the Cultural Revolution by returning those private houses illegally seized to their original owners. Nevertheless, the returning process was carried out in a slow pace. In particular, the fact that many of these private properties were confiscated by state agencies, the army, and state-sponsored urban revolutionary organizations had made house owners nurture a great dissent toward the Party, prompting them to lodge complaints and petitions. Therefore in July 1980, General Secretary Hu Yaobang criticized that the slow returning process “had damaged the prestige of the Central Government and the army.”³⁸⁵ To echo Hu’s call, the Ministry of Urban-Rural Construction and Environmental Protection issued a number of documents to (1) implement the transformation policy, (2) return wrongly confiscated housing, and (3) return fixed rent owed.³⁸⁶

³⁸² MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao’s Last Revolution*, 117.

³⁸³ Zhang, “Chinese housing policy 1949-1978,” 440.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Notification from the Beijing Municipal Committee On the Further Implementation of Policy Concerning Private Housing Confiscated by State Institutions and Army.*

³⁸⁶ Most important documents issued by the Ministry of Urban-Rural Construction and Environmental Protection: *Opinion on the Further Implement of Policy on Private Housing*; *Opinion on the Handling of Problems Remained from the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing in the City*; *Notification on the Further Handling of Problems Remained from the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing in the Cities.*

Related documents issued by local government agencies, including Nanjing: *Method to Handle the Problems Remained from the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing in Nanjing*; *Report from the Construction Bureau of Liaoning Province on the Handling of Illegal Seizure of Private Housing during the Cultural Revolution*; *Notification from the Beijing Municipal Committee On the Further Implementation of Policy Concerning Private Housing Confiscated by State Institutions and Army*; *CCCPC forwards the Notification from the Beijing Municipal Committee on the Further Implement the Policy of Private Housing in regards to the Confiscation by State Organizations and Army*; *Reply on the Ownership Problem of Self-occupied Housing Remained from the Socialist Transformation of Private Housing*; *Notification on the Transferral of the Report*

Although the Ministry is keen to implement (*luoshi*) the policy of “Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing,” it employed two different approaches to cities and towns that have, or have never, carried out the socialist transformation respectively. (Fig. 4.15) For those cities and towns that have already begun the transformation process, all lawfully transformed housing remained state-owned and to be handled by the municipal housing management authority. In case there is any surplus rental housing previously omitted from transformation, local governments should implement the policy and finish the transformation accordingly. On the contrary, for cities and towns that have never begun the transformation process, the Ministry decides not to pursue the work, claiming that “there are enormous changes in private housing over the years,” and that “the focus of the Party’s works has already been shifted.”³⁸⁷

The Ministry confirmed that all private housing wrongly seized would be returned to original owners. The basic idea is that the ownership of the property is to be returned to original house owners without evicting current tenants. The government is to help house owners to establish a new leasing contract with current tenants, who are required to pay a standardized rent (*biaozhunzu*) to the owners.

from the Sichuan Provincial Construction Committee on the Handling of Problems Remained from the Transformation of Private Housing.

For the policy on the property belonging to overseas Chinese, refer *Supplementary Opinions on the Implementation of the Private Housing Policy for Overseas Chinese.*

³⁸⁷ *Opinion on the Handling of Problems Remained from the Socialist Transformation of Private Rental Housing in the City.*

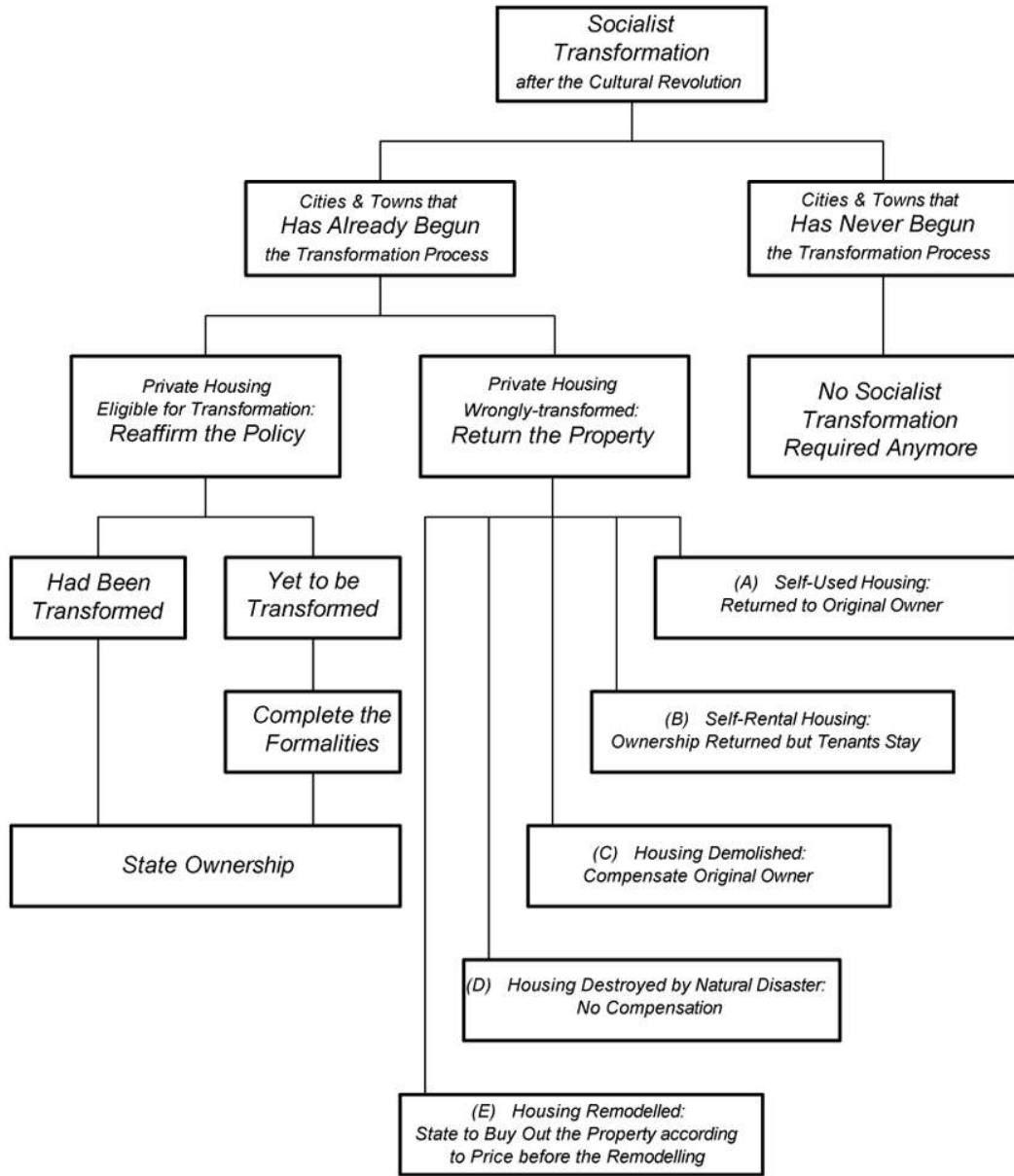


Fig. 4.15 Socialist transformation after the Cultural Revolution.

Most local governments have stopped delivering fixed rent to house owners during the Cultural Revolution. The Ministry confirms that fixed rent should have been delivered to original owners for at least five years or until the end of September

1966, whichever was later.³⁸⁸ Based on this date, local governments are asked to repay all the fixed rent it had owed.

Although the Socialist State has never intended to completely eliminate private housing, it did infringe, in various degrees, on the essential substance of private property rights, such as the owners' rights to sell, to transfer, and to profit from their properties. This was reflected in the following: firstly, private house owners had no choice but to sell their rental housing to the State if the area exceeded the transformation base point. Secondly, house owners were forced to accept without negotiation the monthly fixed rent given to them by the State in purchasing their rental housing. Lastly, even though the State had returned those private housing wrongly taken over during the Cultural Revolution, house owners had no power to evict current tenants allocated to their properties and had to accept the standardized rent set by the State. In this regards, house owners could only enjoy nominal property rights and had no full control over their properties. Its interest was being submitted, involuntarily, to the State's interest.

³⁸⁸ End of September 1966 was the date when the Party stopped delivering dividend to transformed private enterprises. For the Ministry's policy to return owed fixed rent, see *Opinion on the Further Implement of Policy on Private Housing*.

5

CHAPTER 5 COMMUNIZATION: THE REORGANIZATION OF URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

“I’ve heard that after joining the urban commune,” a woman working in a stone factory in the Gulou district told her neighbors, “if you have three sets of clothes, you have to surrender one set; if you have two blankets, you have to give away one.”

In another occasion, a resident, who had been living in Nanjing since the Nationalist era, told his colleagues, “Why do you still bother looking for a wife? After communization, we will practice Communism and have communal wives!”³⁸⁹

(Excerpted from an investigation report of the Gulou District Committee.)

INTRODUCTION

Communization is a dispossession strategy used in Socialist China to organize the population into collective production force and to collectivize resources into state ownership. This chapter traces the short-lived Urban Commune Movement from 1958 to 1962 with a case study on the Gulou Urban Commune in Nanjing. It seeks to understand the socialist governmentality by exploring how the Party developed urban communes into the basic-unit of organization of production in Chinese cities. I explore how the urban communes changes urban neighborhoods, creating a new urbanism that fused working life with personal life.

Interestingly, on the night before the establishment of the Gulou Urban Commune in Nanjing, people found their own ways to protect their personal assets. For instance, 11 residents from the Majia Street Neighborhood and five households from the Workers’ New Village sold all their furniture; a resident of the Zhenjiang Road Neighborhood killed seven chickens in one time; another resident in Shuizogang hurried to cut all his vegetables off the field at three o’clock in the morning.³⁹⁰ These incidents driven by the fear of urban residents did not match the

³⁸⁹ Zhonggong Gulou quwei jingji shenghuo gongzuo zu, “Investigation Report on the Policy to Organize People’s Economic Lives.”

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

state's propaganda, which described the people's commune as the "golden bridge to Communism."³⁹¹ The State claimed that the people's communes offered China "a good form of organization to accelerate socialist construction and the transition to Communism," and would "grow and become the primary unit of future communist society."³⁹² However, the press outside China, particularly those in Hong Kong, generally despised such an optimistic view. The *Zhen bao* in Hong Kong commented: "Finally the Chinese Communist Party wanted the total mobilization of urban residents, so that it can exercise a more stringent control and further exploit their labor." It also labelled the communal mess hall as "the most sinister means of control from the Chinese Communist Party" as it allowed the control of the basic necessity of life.³⁹³

The history of urban communes is often overlooked by scholars. Current literature on urban communes is written mostly by scholars of the 1960s shortly after China's communization movement ended.³⁹⁴ A. V. Sherman, one of the earliest scholars who studied the urban communes when it was first appeared in China, describes the short-lived Urban Commune Movement as an "afterthought or a by-product" of the People's Commune Movement in the countryside.³⁹⁵ Likewise, Franz Schurmann suggests that Chinese leadership "probably had no clearcut plan for the establishment of urban communes."³⁹⁶ I disagree with these propositions based on three main arguments. Firstly, Chinese leaders were very cautious about establishing urban communes in the cities. They repeatedly claimed that "the city conditions were more complex than those in the countryside" and suggested first to experiment with the urban communes in selected spots.³⁹⁷ Also, when the communization process came across resistance in the local level, Chinese leaders immediately halted the establishment of new urban communes. (Fig. 5.01) During the peak of the movement, 77 per cent of the total urban population had joined urban communes.¹ This shows that urban communes, albeit failed in the end, were not an afterthought of Chinese leaders.

³⁹¹ *People's Commune is the Golden Bridge* was a popular poem in China written by Kang Sheng, former Vice Chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party during the Great Leap Forward.

³⁹² "Greet the Upsurge in Forming People's Communes." Official English translation can be found in *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 457-459.

³⁹³ Cited in Li, *Research on the Movement of the People's Commune in the City*, 128.

³⁹⁴ For examples, Luard, "The Urban Communes"; Salaff, "The Urban Communes and Anti-City Experiment in Communist China"; Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*; Donnithorne, *China's Economic System*; Lethbridge, *China's Urban Communes*; *The Chinese Communes; a Documentary Review and Analysis of the Great Leap Forward*; Shih, *Urban Commune Experiments in Communist China*.

³⁹⁵ Sherman, "The Chinese Communes," 45.

³⁹⁶ Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 383.

³⁹⁷ *Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People's Communes*. Official English translation can be found in *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 491.

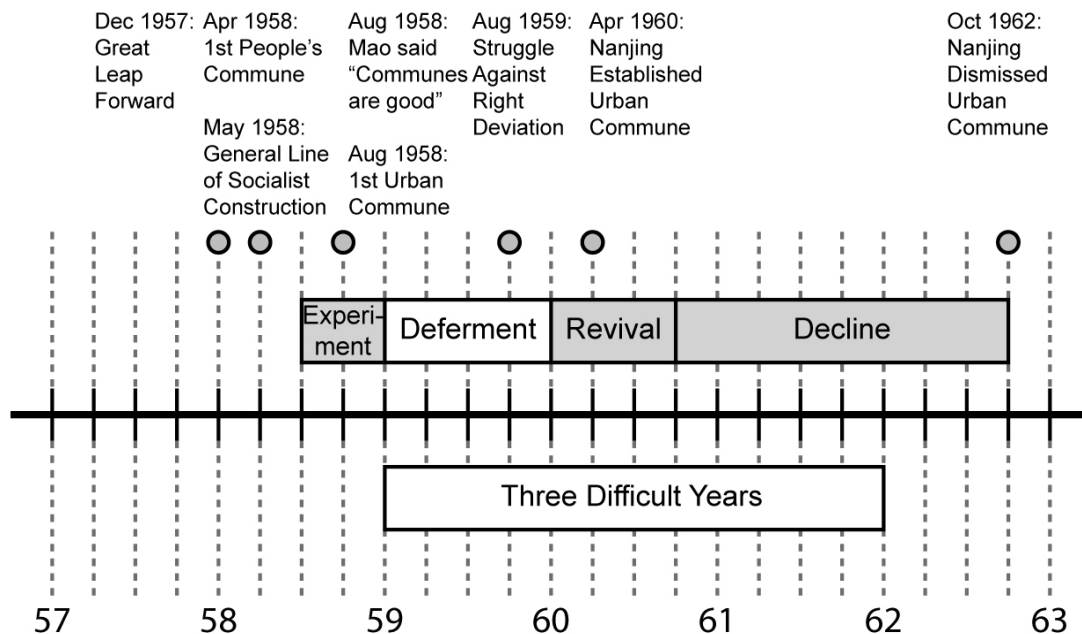


Fig. 5.01 Stages of development of the Urban Commune Movement.

Secondly, rural communes and urban communes served different functions. The major function of the rural communes was to introduce industry to the countryside so that the difference between town and country, between agriculture and industry, and between mental and manual labor could be eliminated; whereas for urban communes, the major function was to incorporate surplus laborers in the cities to serve the ambitious economic plan, the Great Leap Forward, and to give urban residents a sense of community at the same time. Thus, the urban communes influenced less on people who had already been working in an area which had a central production focus, but more on those dependent population and unproductive inhabitants in the neighborhoods. Nevertheless, most urban commune examples studied by scholars of the 1960s were developed around state-owned factories where the impact of communization was least strong. In this chapter, I use a neighborhood commune in Nanjing as a case study to explore how communization had created a new form of urbanism that integrated city administration, production, and residential collectivity.

Lastly, even before communization, many local governments had already started the efforts to create street industries to fully mobilize the surplus workforce in response to the Great Leap Forward. To these cities, the Urban Commune Movement was not a by-product of the People's Commune Movement in the countryside; rather, it was a continuation or expansion of their earlier efforts in developing street industries.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section focuses on the governmental rationality for communization. What made Chinese leaders believe that

the urban communes could drive socialist construction and be the solution to massive rural-urban migration, surplus labor, and food shortage in the cities? The second section is a brief history of the Urban Commune Movement, staging its beginning, temporary deferment, and climax. The third section focused on the Gulou Urban Commune in Nanjing. I analyze how the urban communes created a new urbanism by integrating political life, working life and social life in Nanjing's neighborhoods. The last section analyzes factors about how the communist wind led to the decline of the Urban Commune Movement, and explores how Nanjing reformed the urban communes by re-providing material incentives to commune members.

5.1 GOVERNMENTAL RATIONALITIES FOR COMMUNIZATION: PROMOTE STATE OWNERSHIP, ORGANIZE SURPLUS POPULATION, INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

Communization was carried out in China since the late 1950s for three main reasons. The first reason for communization was to “quicken the tempo of our socialist construction.”³⁹⁸ After the end of the First Five Year Plan (1953-1957), Chinese leaders believed that it was time to transition from the stage of socialist transformation to the state of socialist construction. The Second Session of the Eighth National Party Congress in May 1958 officially replaced the old “General Line during the Transitional Period” with the new “General Line of Socialist Construction.” The meeting outlined a series of important policies in amplification of the General Line by achieving “greater, faster, better, and more economic results.”³⁹⁹ The Party believed that the success of socialist construction anchored on the “development of the socialist whole-people ownership and collective ownership.”⁴⁰⁰ In China, there were three forms of ownership:

- (1) Private or individual ownership, in which the means of production belonged to individual working people.

³⁹⁸ *Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People's Communes*. Official English translation can be found in *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 488–502.

³⁹⁹ These policies included: (1) developing industry and agriculture simultaneously while giving priority to heavy industry; (2) combining centralization of powers with decentralization; (3) the necessity of making full use of industrial bases in the coastal areas and amassing ample funds for economic construction; (4) the necessity to handling correctly the relations between the individual and the collective, between the part and the whole, and between consumption and accumulation; and (5) correctly handling contradictions among the people.

See Liu, “The Present Situation, the Party's General Line for Socialist Construction and Its Future Tasks.” See also Mao, “Ten Sets of Relation.”

⁴⁰⁰ “To Strive for the Realization of the General Line of Socialist Construction.”

- (2) Collective ownership in which the means of production belonged to working masses as a whole but individual working people still held limited means of productions such as houses, vegetable plot and livestock. It was the major form of ownership adopted by small collectives and production teams.
- (3) Ownership by the people as a whole (hereafter, whole-people ownership) in which all properties belonged to the State.

Whole-people ownership was considered by the Communists as the most advanced form of the ownership in communist society.⁴⁰¹ When all the means of production in China turned into whole-people ownership, the Party believed that “the productive forces of society would be expanded even more greatly” and the products of society would become extremely abundant.”⁴⁰² The increase in production would eliminate “the disparities between workers and peasants, between town and country as well as between mental and manual labor.” Not only this, “the remnants of unequal bourgeois rights which reflect these differences would also gradually disappear.”⁴⁰³

The Party believed that the people’s commune constituted the best form to transition private and collective ownership into whole-people ownership. Members of the people’s commune gave up their ownership of tools, and all means of production, so that everything was collectively owned by the commune. In the Party’s plan, the people’s commune would be turned into whole-people ownership in the future. However, Mao Zedong constantly reminded his colleagues that the process might take up to five, ten, or even twenty years.⁴⁰⁴ The Central Committee also stressed: “After the establishment of the people’s commune, there is no need immediately to transform collective ownership into ownership by the people as a whole. It is better at present to maintain collective ownership to avoid unnecessary complications arising in the course of transformation to ownership by the people as a whole.”⁴⁰⁵ However, it pointed out that collective ownership in people’s communes had already contained some elements of whole-people ownership. The Central Committee claimed that these elements would grow constantly in the course of the continuous development of the people’s communes and would gradually replace collective ownership.

The second reason for communization was to improve productivity. After the end of the First Five Year Plan, Mao Zedong visited Moscow to request more aids from the Soviet Union so that China could develop its agriculture and industry extensively. Nevertheless, the negotiation with Soviet leaders disappointed Mao Zedong. As Soviet funds were suspended, Chinese leaders needed to plan the Second Five Year Plan carefully. They debated among themselves on the speed of economic

⁴⁰¹ Kuo, *A Comprehensive Glossary of Chinese Communist Terminology*, 498.

⁴⁰² “Greet the Upsurge in Forming People’s Communes.”

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Mao, *Mao Zedong’s Writings since the Founding of the Nation*, 8:148, 180.

⁴⁰⁵ *Resolution on the Establishment of People’s Communes in the Rural Areas*.

growth. Mao Zedong had taken a clear-cut stand, insisting that a fast pace should be adopted.⁴⁰⁶ Therefore in the winter of 1957, China launched the Great Leap Forward Movement to increase the speed of internal economic development.⁴⁰⁷

Chinese leaders had ambitious goals about the Great Leap Forward. At the Supreme State Conference from January 28 to 30, 1958, Mao Zedong declared that China could catch up with and outstrip Britain in the output of major industrial production in the next 15 years or in an even shorter period. Under party direction, the backyard steel furnace campaign and numerous water conservation projects were vigorously pushed to spur agricultural and industrial production. Later, a slogan, “one day equals to 20 years,” was adopted during the the Second Session of the Eighth National Party Congress, which was held in Beijing from May 5 to 23, 1958.⁴⁰⁸ The slogan suggested that the national economy of China should be accelerated in the rate that “one day equaled to 20 years of development.”

To increase productivity, Chinese leaders believed that a new form of organization of production needed to be developed. Before, China had experimented with various forms of organizations of production, such as the production teams and brigades, the cooperatives, and neighborhood factories. Chinese leaders tended to agree that the bigger these organizations of production were and the more people they had recruited the better productivity would be yielded. As such, Chinese leaders called for, firstly, the agglomeration of small organizations into bigger one; and secondly, the agglomeration of various functions into one single organization. It was under this rationale that the people’s communes were founded. The people’s communes were a form of organization that offered the highest degree of agglomeration of people and means of production, allowing the greater manoeuvrability of laborers. In the cities, urban communes were set up to provide side-line production for state industries and mines.

The last reason for communization, which was specific to the urban context, was to better utilize surplus labor force. Since 1949, there was a huge influx of rural migrants to the cities. Although a household registration system which identified a person as a rural or urban resident had already existed, it did not strictly require the

⁴⁰⁶ Mao Zedong once famously argued that there were two methods of carrying on socialist transformation and construction: one would result in doing the work faster and better; the other slowly and not so well. He provided a theoretical solution to the struggle between these two methods regarding the socialist revolution in the ownership of the means of production. See Mao, *On the Question of Agricultural Co-Operation*. See also Liu, “The Present Situation, the Party’s General Line for Socialist Construction and Its Future Tasks.”

⁴⁰⁷ The phrase “Great Leap Forward” was first appeared in the *People’s Daily* editorial on November 13, 1957, which urged the Chinese people to criticize and repudiate rightist conservative ideology, because it was time for “a great leap forward on the production front.” The movement was put into execution after the December 1957 Politburo Meeting. See “Mobilize the Whole People, Discuss the 40 Articles of the Outline, Create the New Upsurge of Agricultural Production.”

For background of the Great Leap Forward, see MacFarquhar, *The Great Leap Forward, 1958-1960*.

⁴⁰⁸ This slogan was taken from Karl Marx’s prophesy that the proletarian revolution would usher people into a great epoch when “twenty years are concentrated in a day.” See Liu, “The Present Situation, the Party’s General Line for Socialist Construction and Its Future Tasks.”

person to live in the place where his registration held. As a result, the population growth in the cities far outnumbered that in the rest of China. (Table 5.01) During the seven years from 1949 to 1956, two-third of the population growth in the cities had been the result of migration from rural areas.⁴⁰⁹ Nevertheless, among the increased urban population, only five per cent of the increase was working population, whereas 70 per cent was dependents on the workforce.⁴¹⁰ The large amount of non-productive population had imposed huge burdens, not only on housing that have been discussed in the last chapter, but also on food supply and social welfare. The big question for the Party was how to organize this vast population to further economic growth. By recruiting them to work in urban communes, the surplus population was turned from “consumers” to “producers.” Women were free to join in production, and housewives became a key workforce.

Table 5.01 Population increase in Chinese cities since 1949.

Year	Total population (M)	Percentage Increase	Urban Population (M)	Percentage Increase	Rural Population (M)	Percentage Increase
1949	541.67		57.65		484.20	
1950	551.96	1.90	61.69	7.00	490.27	1.29
1951	563.00	2.00	66.32	7.50	496.68	1.31
1952	574.82	2.10	71.63	8.00	503.19	1.31
1953	587.96	2.29	77.67	8.43	510.29	1.41
1954	601.72	2.34	81.55	4.99	520.17	1.94
1955	614.65	2.14	82.85	1.59	531.80	2.24
1956	627.80	2.14	89.15	7.60	538.65	1.29
1957	656.63	3.20	92.00	7.10	564.63	1.30

(Source: Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 381.)

The people’s commune, in both the cities and the countryside, has two main characteristics. The first characteristic can be summarized by the Chinese phrase, *zhengshe heyi*, which literally means the integration of political and social functions into one entity. Mao Zedong suggested that politics, production, education, and social life were indispensable from each other.⁴¹¹ As a new organization of production, the people’s commune served an agglomeration of functions. On the one hand, the people’s communes were an extended arm of the Party. Local cadres and government officials were often assigned to the people’s communes. On the other hand, it organized the social lives of urban residents, providing them with jobs and communal welfare facilities like mess halls, nurseries, retail shops, schools, clinics, etc. As the urban communes integrated working life with personal life, the government could enforce better control to the city and the urban population, absorbing those surplus

⁴⁰⁹ Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 381.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 382.

⁴¹¹ Mao, *Mao Zedong’s Writings since the Founding of the Nation*, 7:596–597.

workforces, such as self-employed individuals, housewives, disabled into production. At the same time, the urban government could make better distribution of resources like raw materials, means of production, food, and housing.

The second characteristic of the people's commune can be summarized by the Chinese phrase, *yida, ergong*, literally means "first, big, and second, publicly-owned." "Big" means that urban commune covered a wider scope, more people, and a larger area. With big membership and the expanse of land, the communes could carry out production and construction of a comprehensive nature and on a large scale. "Publicly-owned" means that people's communes were more socialistic and more collectivized than other cooperatives.⁴¹² The Central Committee declared that urban commune was to employ collective ownership at the beginning of its development "to avoid unnecessary complications arising in the course of transformation to whole-people ownership."⁴¹³ However, it pointed out that the continuous development of urban communes would gradually replace collective ownership.

In the cities, early urban communes took three forms of organizations:

- (1) *Communes created around existing state factories or mines.* This type of urban communes embraced employees of large state-owned factories or mines. They worked as satellite factories to provide sideline production.⁴¹⁴
- (2) *Communes centered on state organizations and schools.* This type of urban communes worked as the production units in appendance to state organizations and schools. Families of staffs in these state organizations and schools were often assigned to work in these urban communes.
- (3) *Communes created with inhabitants of streets and neighborhoods.* This form of urban communes was created based on a residential neighborhood, not a workplace. It aimed to bring production into the sphere of residence where none existed previously. Small-scaled backyard workshops, in which the main workforce was housewives, were commonly set up in the neighborhood communes.

5.2 HISTORY OF THE URBAN COMMUNE MOVEMENT

The people's commune first appeared in China's countryside in April 1958 as a result of locally-initiated effort to amalgamate agricultural cooperatives.⁴¹⁵ The term

⁴¹² "Hold High the Red Flag of People's Communes and March On." Official English translation can be found in *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 459-463.

⁴¹³ *Resolution on the Establishment of People's Communes in the Rural Areas.*

⁴¹⁴ By March 1960, it consisted of a complex of five branch communes, each of which was centered on state-owned enterprises. It had 24,822 employees and workers, 13,923 dependants of employees and workers, 871 commune industries employees and workers, 1,337 consumer service personnel, and 1,641 peasants. See Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 390.

“people’s commune” was first seen in July 1, 1958 in the party magazine *Red Flag*.⁴¹⁶ Since then, local cadres began to call for the communization of the cities. Mao Zedong himself also predicted that setting up urban communes would be an inevitable move in the near future. The summer of 1958 thus rendered with the optimism that not only the countryside but also the cities would be able to complete socialist construction in a few years’ time.⁴¹⁷ Nevertheless, Chinese leaders remained sceptical about communizing the cities. General Secretary of the Party Deng Xiaoping believed that it was the general trend to communize the cities, but he reminded the Party to be cautious and to test the urban commune in selected experimental areas first before actually promoting it to all China.⁴¹⁸ Same as Deng, Mao Zedong was equally cautious. When his subordinates asked him if the cities should also be communized, Mao Zedong did not answer it directly.⁴¹⁹

The first urban commune, the Red Flag People’s Commune, was founded in August 15, 1958 at a spinning and weaving machinery factory in Zhengzhou, appearing to be a locally-initiated effort. (Fig. 5.02) Ever since it was publicized in the October 1958 issue of the *Red Flag*, a number of local cadres came out and claimed the middle months of 1958 or thereabouts as the date when they founded their urban communes. A report claimed that by the end of September 1958, there were 482 urban communes founded in the Henan Province alone.⁴²⁰ As Henry Leithbridge argues, these claims from local cadres are merely an expression of hindsight, making a statement “to show that a certain urban commune had always been in the forefront of socialist construction.”⁴²¹ In fact, the earliest urban communes showed little differences to existing urban administrations. The director of the Zhengzhou Spinning and Weaving Machinery Factory was quoted as telling a foreign visitor that turning the factory into the Red Flag People’s Commune was simply a change of name to him. “It makes no difference,” he said, “Just another damn committee with me as Chairman and the Secretary of the Trade Union as

⁴¹⁵ The “Satellite People’s Commune” founded in April 1958 at the Suiping County of the Henan Province was claim to be “spontaneously started by the mass of peasants on the basis of great socialist consciousness.” In the summer that followed, the trends into communes spread rapidly in Henan, Hebei, and some areas of Manchuria. Although the movement grew without official party sanction, it gained the encouragement from Chinese leaders.

See “Hold High the Red Flag of People’s Communes and March On.”

⁴¹⁶ Chen, “New Society, New People.” English translation in *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 453.

⁴¹⁷ Bo, *Recount of Several Important Decisions and Incidents*, 2:767, 769.

⁴¹⁸ *Wenhui Bao*, 20 October 1958.

⁴¹⁹ Mao, *Mao Zedong’s Writings since the Founding of the Nation*, 7:402.

⁴²⁰ Bo, *Recount of Several Important Decisions and Incidents*, 2:781.

⁴²¹ Leithbridge, *China’s Urban Communes*, 6–7.

Deputy.” The foreign visitor, however, remarked that with the formation of the commune, private ownership of houses and shops came to an end.⁴²²



(Source: *People's Daily*, 7 April 1960, 1.)

Fig. 5.02 Founding of the Zhengzhou Red Flag People's Commune.

⁴²² Crossman, "Chinese Notebook," 19.

The urban commune experiments were not as popular as many local cadres had expected. For instance, the establishment of the experimental urban communes at Zhengzhou had been accompanied by considerable opposition.⁴²³ The *Red Flag* also reported that “dependents of some capitalist families and of some high-level intellectuals showed resistance to the idea;”

Some asked: “If we join the commune, is it all right if we don’t work?” Others said: “If the commune accumulates profit, how much should an individual get?” “How much are we supposed to put out?” Others asked: “Is it all right if we hire someone else for money to work for us in the commune?” These people had many more worries about participating in collective laboring than did the ordinary masses.⁴²⁴

Resistances in the local level worried Chinese leaders. Mao Zedong felt that there was a need to cool down the heated discussion of the urban communes. As such, the Central Committee decided in December 1958 to put a temporary deferment to the communization of the cities because bourgeois ideology was “still fairly prevalent among many of the capitalists and intellectuals.”⁴²⁵ It decided to postpone large-scale communization in the cities until “only after rich experience has been gained and when the sceptics and doubters have been convinced.”⁴²⁶ This was also the first time a Chinese leaders publicly discussed the urban commune.

In the year of 1959, the Urban Commune Movement as a whole was halted. The term “urban communes” almost disappeared in all newspapers and periodicals. Nevertheless, local cadres continued to press for the organization of small neighborhood factories. During the early months of 1960s, a new campaign to organize street industries was mounted. Some places, Nanjing included, began to promote the automation of production in small neighborhood factories.

It was until the end of 1959 when a great famine hit hard on China’s countryside that the Party had revived the Urban Commune Movement. The famine lasted from 1959 to 1961, a period that was labeled as the “three difficult years” by the Party in retrospect.⁴²⁷ Until today, there was a huge debate on whether the famine was actually caused by the recurring natural disasters in those three difficult years, or by the unrealistic planning of the Great Leap Forward that sought to meet the target of

⁴²³ Lethbridge, *China’s Urban Communes*, 11.

⁴²⁴ Originally published in *Red Flag*, 11, 27-30; cited and translated in Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 396.

⁴²⁵ Mao Zedong and Liu Xiaqi approved a resolution during the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eight Central Committee that held between November 28 and December 20, 1958. The resolution addressed the several issues relating to the rural commune, but it also announced the temporary deferment of the development of the urban communes. See *Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People’s Communes*. Official English translation can be found in *Communist China 1955-1959; Policy Documents with Analysis*, 491.

⁴²⁶ *Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People’s Communes*.

⁴²⁷ See Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China*; Yang, *Tombstone: Factual Record of the Great Famine in 1960s China*.

“one day equals to twenty years.” Some Chinese leaders at that time questioned the Great Leap Forward as a whole. Mao Zedong reaffirmed the Great Leap Forward during the two meetings at Lushan in August 1959, and blamed opposing party leaders as rightists.⁴²⁸

Because of the famine, many peasants moved into the cities to find jobs. Chinese leaders believed that the urban communes would be a good solution for grain control and for better use of surplus laborers and rural migrants. Therefore in the Enlarged Politburo Meeting held in January 1960 at Shanghai, the Politburo declared China to enter the stage of the Second Leap Forward (*jinxu yuejin*) and to commence the “five great campaigns,” in which the Urban Commune Movement was one of the five.⁴²⁹ Reports of experimental urban communes in Hebei and Heilongjiang were also discussed during the meeting.

By March 1960, the Central Committee pushed vigorously the communization of the cities within a short span of time, urging local governments to establish experimental urban communes.⁴³⁰ Curiously, the Central Committee reminded local governments that, because the urban communes were still in an experimental stage, no news should be reported in the media, and no public celebration should be organized in the cities. Two weeks later, at the Tianjin Meeting of the Central Committee on March 24, 1960, Mao Zedong declared that the Urban Commune Movement should be promoted to cities of all scales. Another week later, at the Second Meeting of the Second National People’s Congress, Vice Premier Li Fuchun suddenly proclaimed that urban communes had been developed in China on a large scale. According to him, “all the cities were setting up people’s communes, energetically running neighborhood industry, public welfare services, communal mess hall, nurseries and neighborhood service stations.” Moreover, “tens of thousands of housewives were emancipated from house-hold chores and took part in neighborhood industries.”⁴³¹ Li Jiebo, Vice President of the All China Federation of Trade Unions also reported that over 20 millions of urban residents had already joined the urban communes. This included a majority of population of most cities Henan, Hebei, and Heilongjiang province.⁴³² The Second Meeting of the Second National People’s Congress was also the first time that urban communes were widely reported in the *People’s Daily*.

The first half of 1960 marked the peak of the Urban Commune Movement. By May 1960, there were 1,039 urban communes founded in 180 cities in China. Over 39 millions urban residents, which equalled to 55.6 per cent of total urban population,

⁴²⁸ The most notable party leader against the Great Leap Forward was Peng Dehui. Mao Zedong’s severe criticism on Peng Dehui had initiated the “struggle against right deviation campaign.”

⁴²⁹ The five great campaigns were: technological innovation campaign, mess hall campaign, people’s communes in the cities campaign, city supports village campaign, and hygiene improvement campaign.

⁴³⁰ *Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People’s Communes*.

⁴³¹ Li, “Must Continue to Leap Forward, Must be Able to Leap Forward.”

⁴³² Li, “The Working Class and the Urban Communes.”

had joined the urban communes. Such numbers were rapidly increased in only two months. By July the same year, the urban commune population had reached 55 millions, which equalled to 77 per cent of total city population in China.⁴³³ (Table 5.02) It was during the peak of the movement that Nanjing was communized.

Table 5.02 Development of the urban commune, May to July 1960.

Date	No. of Urban Communes	Urban Commune Population	% of Total Urban Population
May 1960	1,039	39 Millions	55.6%
July 1960	1,064	55 Millions	77.0%

(Source: The figures are based on “Report on the Problems of the Current Development of the Urban Communes,” 1960)

5.3 NEW URBANISM: DEVELOPMENT OF THE GULOU URBAN COMMUNE

5.3.1 Political Life: Urban Commune as a Party Organization

Ever since the beginning of the Great Leap Forward, Nanjing had launched a campaign to “organize the economic lives of street residents.” Beginning in the summer of 1958, the campaign aimed to boost industrial production by mobilizing residents on streets and in neighborhoods. Shortly after, 1,745 street factories and 2,148 production teams were founded. By 1959, over 60 per cent of small metal hardware and small commodities in Nanjing were produced by these street factories. More than 90 per cent of the street residents had participated in different forms of production and social services.⁴³⁴

So, when the Urban Commune Movement had reached its peak in spring 1960, the municipal government felt that Nanjing had all the necessary conditions to be communized. However, the communization process was carried out in a rush manner. In a meeting on April 3, 1960, the Municipal Party Committee had given only three days for its subordinating District Committees to devise plans on how to development urban communes in their respective administrative districts.⁴³⁵ Immediately, a temporary regulation about the organization of urban commune in Nanjing was drafted.⁴³⁶

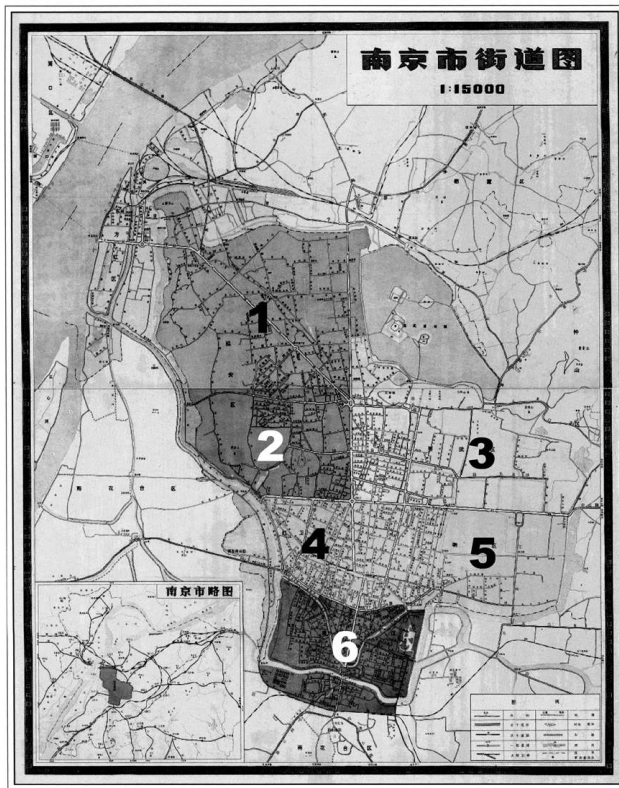
⁴³³ *Report on the Problems of the Current Development of the Urban Communes.*

⁴³⁴ Peng, “Production as the Core to Organize Street Residents,” 47.

⁴³⁵ Zhang and Gu, “Development Process of the Gulou Urban Commune.”

⁴³⁶ Zhonggong Nanjingshi weiyuanhui, “Drafted Trial Regulation for the Organization of the Urban Communes.”

Urban communes were party organizations set up in parallel to the government structure. Before communization, the municipality of Nanjing was divided into several administrative districts (*qu*). (Fig. 5.03) A district was further divided into several neighborhoods managed under street offices (*jiedao banshichu*). Besides, there were numerous residents committees (*jumin weiyuanhui*), which were self-governing bodies, and sometimes, the elementary form of production units in the cities. This three-tiered structure maintained after communization: an urban commune was established in each administrative district; under each urban commune there were several branch communes (*fengshe*); and the existing residents committees were renamed into the street committees (*jiedao weiyuanhui*). By May 1960, 24 branch communes were founded in Nanjing, of which 19 were organized around existing neighborhoods, four around state-owned enterprises, and one around a state institution.⁴³⁷ They were enormous in scale, sometimes accommodating more than 10,000 members. (Fig. 5.04)



Note: (1) Gulou; (2) Baixia; (3) Xuanwu; (4) Xiaguan; (5) Jianye; (6) Qinhuai.

(Source: Nanjing Planning Department, *Urban Traces - Selected Old Maps of Nanjing*, 88.)

Fig. 5.03 The six administrative districts within the walled city of Nanjing.

⁴³⁷ “Drafted Resolution on the Further Consolidation of Several Questions Related to the Urban Communes.”

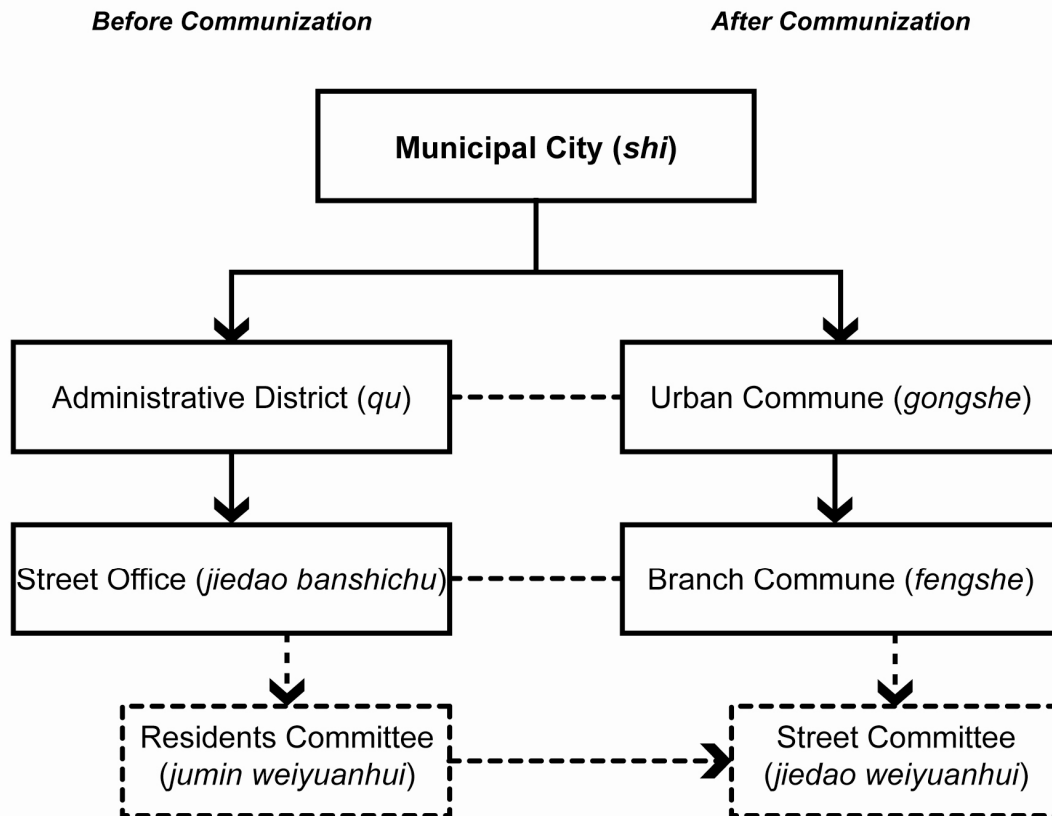


Fig. 5.04 The three-tiered administrative structure of Nanjing before and after communization.

The Gulou Urban Commune was established in the Gulou Administrative District in mid April 1960. The name Gulou comes from the landmark architecture of the district, the imperial drum tower (*gulou* in Chinese). Before communization, the district had a population of 249,254. It had eight street offices and 90 residents committees.⁴³⁸ After communization, four branch neighbourhood communes were created: Wutaishan, Dingjiaqiao, Yijianmen, and Sanpailou.⁴³⁹ Each was created from merging two existing street offices. The member population for each branch commune ranged from 50,000 to 80,000. (Fig. 5.05 & Table 5.03) It was important to note that a resident of the neighborhood did not automatically become a commune member. Although Nanjing government stressed that commune membership was voluntary, not everyone was eligible to become a member. The Gulou Urban Commune decided not to take the initiation to recruit capitalists, intellectuals, and

⁴³⁸ “Drafted Opinion on the Establishment of Urban Communes in the Gulou District.”

⁴³⁹ Later, the fifth commune was founded at the city’s fringe. It was called Yanziji, which was not an urban commune but a rural one.

members of other political parties and religious groups. If these people wanted to join the urban commune, their applications would be strictly reviewed. Also, they were not allowed to perform in any leading position in the urban communes. And for those five black elements (landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, and rightists) they were simply banned from the membership of the Gulou Urban Commune.⁴⁴⁰ The people's commune, after all, was not for all the people.

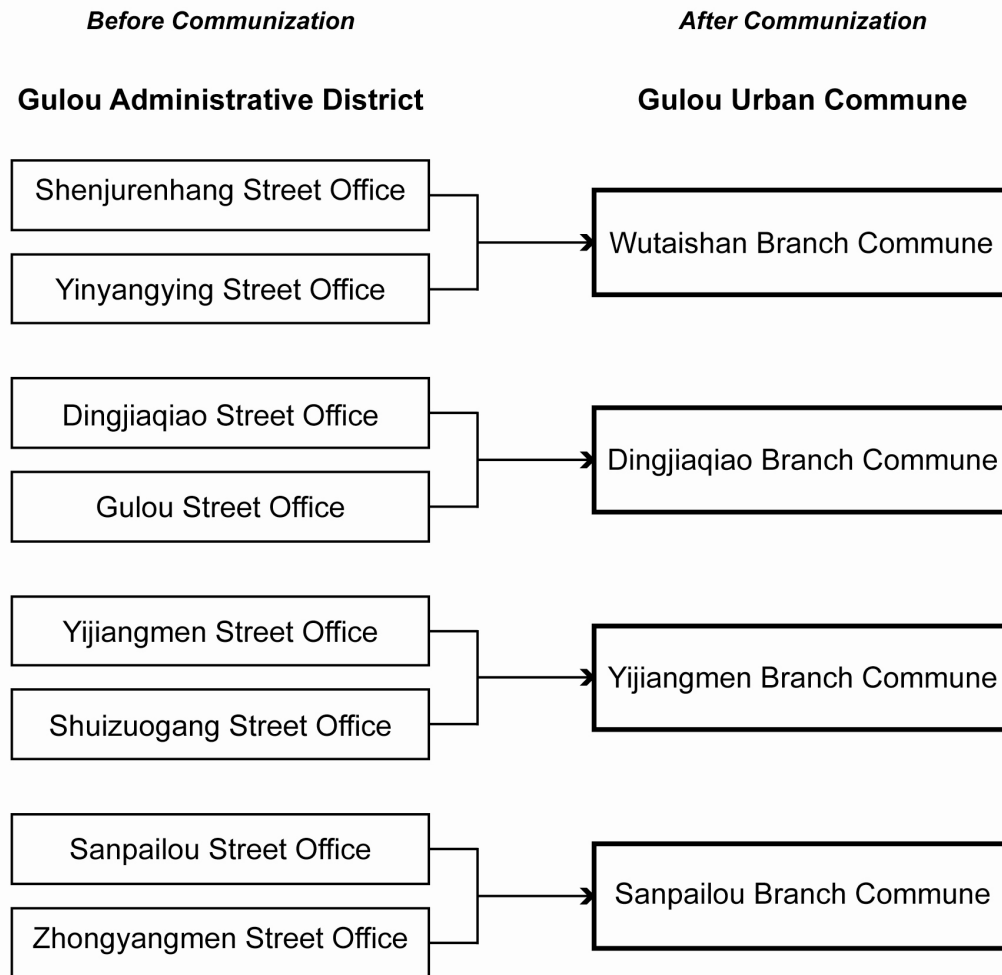


Fig. 5.05 Gulou Administrative District before and after communization.

⁴⁴⁰ See Zhonggong Nanjingshi weiyuanhui, "Drafted Trial Regulation for the Organization of the Urban Communes." See also "Preliminary Comments on Several Issues about the Urban Commune."

Table 5.03 Compositions of the four branch communes in Gulou.

	Wutaishan		Dingjiaqiao		Yijiangmen		Sanpailou		Total	
	No.	Staff	No.	Staff	No.	Staff	No.	Staff	No.	Staff
Factories	11	4058	11	3866	15	14433	10	6633	47	28990
Street Factories	78	3423	62	1984	43	1834	48	1854	231	9095
Universities & Schools	27	3114 27693*	20	1672 15845*	15	595 8387*	21	2141 16165*	83	7522 68090*
Hospitals	5	2052	3	728	6	288	4	339	18	3407
Street Clinics	3	57	4	52	1	11	2	7	10	127
Shops	14	224	71	1699	7	135	30	531	122	2589
State Institutions	22	2630	50	2365	13	738	9	166	94	5899
Other Work Units	29	3754	36	629	29	2796	19	5490	113	12669
Residents	--	32311	--	21165	--	21948	--	25412	--	100836
Sub-total		79316		50005		51162		58738	718	239224

Note: * Number of students.

(Source: compiled after "Development Process of the Gulou Urban Commune.")

As Nanjing employed a strategy called "one set of personnel, two different titles," both the government and the Gulou Urban Commune were led by the same group of cadres who carried two work titles simultaneously.⁴⁴¹ They performed both as party cadres as well as work managers in commune enterprises. More than 200 cadres were assigned into 90 different committees in the Gulou Urban Commune and its four branch communes, further strengthening the power of local cadres.⁴⁴² The only difference before and after communization was that the cadres were now living, eating and sharing welfare facilities with commune members.

⁴⁴¹ Zhang and Gu, "Development Process of the Gulou Urban Commune."

⁴⁴² Zhonggong Gulouqu weiyuanhui, "Report from the Gulou District Committee."

5.3.2 Working Life: Commune Enterprises and the Complicated Ownership System

In general, urban communes followed dualistic ownership systems. (Table 5.04) Unfortunately, the coexistence of these two systems of ownership caused confusions. The first system concerned the nature of the asset. On the one hand, all means of production of the urban commune were collectively owned. If there was any mean of production originally owned by commune members, the urban commune should purchase it by installment with reasonable price. The urban commune could also negotiate with its members for the borrowing of their houses. On the other hand, all means of subsistence (bank savings, household goods, houses, watches, radios, bicycles, sewing machines for personal uses, etc), would still be owned privately by commune members.⁴⁴³ The second system concerned the scale of business. State factories and joint state-private corporations in the Gulou district were put under the control of the Gulou Urban Commune and employed whole-people ownership. Although commune factories, markets, repairing and service industry, transportation, and construction teams were also managed under the Gulou Urban Commune, they were generally smaller in scale and employed collective ownership. Street factories, production teams, cooperative businesses and agriculture, and shops were managed by the four branch communes and were collectively owned. A number of small traders retained private ownership. (Table 5.05)

Table 5.04 Ownerships of asset of different nature.

Nature of Asset	Ownership
Mean of Production	Collective ownership
Mean of Subsistence	Private ownership

⁴⁴³ Zhonggong Nanjingshi weiyuanhui, "Drafted Trial Regulation for the Organization of the Urban Communes."

Table 5.05 Ownerships of business in various scales in the Gulou Urban Commune.

Level	Nature of enterprises	Ownership system
Urban commune level	Enterprises with investment from the State.	Whole-people ownership mixed with collective ownership at urban commune level.
	Urban commune operated factories, markets, repairing and service industry, transportation, and construction teams.	Collective ownership at urban commune level.
Branch commune level	Street factories, production teams, cooperative business and agriculture.	Collective ownership at branch commune level.
Individual Economy	Self-financing small traders scattered around the neighborhood.	Private ownership.

(Source: Summarized from “Drafted Resolution on the Further Consolidation of Several Questions Related to the Urban Commune.”)

The dualistic system created a major conflict in ownership: the state factories, mines, state organizations and schools were state-owned, but the urban communes were collectively owned by commune members. While state workers enjoyed higher wage and received better welfare and perquisites, workers in urban communes were not considered as state employees and earned less and received less welfare benefits. This dualism conflicted with the purpose of urban communes to achieve complete integration.

Most commune enterprises were humble backyard workshops, acting as handmaidens to provide semi-finished products to big state factories. Some of them also produce small commodities for local consumption. Believing in the principle of “first, big, and second, publicly-owned,” Gulou Urban Commune often merged backyard workshops of related trades into bigger factories. Not only this, it also agglomerated small traders and self-employed individuals into bigger enterprises. The net profit from all these commune factories and enterprises would be shared among four parties (the municipal city, the administrative district, the urban commune and the enterprise itself) according to an agreed ratio; commune members would only receive a monthly salary.⁴⁴⁴

5.3.3 Social Life: New Residential Collectivity

A major function of the urban commune was to supplant home life with collective life. The idea was to centralize the provision of social welfare in the commune level, so that the needs of individual household could be handled collectively, and hence

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

more economically and efficiently.⁴⁴⁵ In Gulou, various types of communal welfare facilities were developed: commune members dined collectively in mess halls, children attended nurseries and kindergartens, elderly were taken care of by nursing homes, and house works such as laundry and furniture repairing were done at the service stations. (Table 5.06) As grain control was introduced at time of poor harvesting, grain management offices were established in the Gulou Urban Commune to ration on some non-staple foods and household necessities.⁴⁴⁶

Table 5.06 Provision of communal welfare facilities in Gulou Urban Commune, May 1960.

Type	No.	No. of Members using the Facility	% of Total Member Population
Mess Hall	442	142,575	65%
Nursery & Kindergarten	262	54,807	38%
Service Station	99	---	---
Nursing Home	5	19	---

(Source: The figures are based on “Report from the CCP’s Gulou District Committee,” Gulou District Archives file 0101-0000-004-0014.)

Among all these communal welfare facilities, the mess halls were the largest in number and perhaps the most important. The mess halls were not only places for dining, but also meeting points in neighborhoods. By early May 1960, only two weeks after the founding of the Gulou Urban Commune, 142,575 commune members (equalled to 65 per cent of total member population) dined at 442 communal mess halls. Three types of communal mess halls were developed. Big mess hall, each served over 150 diners, was equipped with both kitchens and dining areas. Medium mess hall, each served 100 diners, did not have dining area and provided only take-away meals. Each mess hall served around 100 diners. Small mess halls were developed around the neighborhoods. The cooking duty was shared among eight to ten families.⁴⁴⁷ (Table 5.07)

⁴⁴⁵ For instance, by early March 1960, over 53,000 mess halls were established in big and medium-sized cities in China in addition to those already developed around state institutions, armies, factories and schools before communization. The total diners in these mess halls reached 5.1 millions. Furthermore, there were over 50,000 nurseries, taking care of over 1.46 millions children. There were also over 55,000 street service stations, employing over 450,000 staffs

See Yao, “Duties of the Commercial Department in Organizing the Urban Commune.”

⁴⁴⁶ “Preliminary Comments on Several Issues about the Urban Commune.”

⁴⁴⁷ Zhonggong Gulouqu weiyuanhui, “Report from the Gulou District Committee.”

Table 5.07 Three types of mess halls in Gulou Urban Commune, May 1960.

Type	Nature	No. of Diners	Percentage
Big	Kitchen and dining hall.	Over 150	41 %
Medium	Kitchen only, no dining hall.	Around 100	40%
Small	A	8-10 households	19%

(Source: The figures are based on "Report from the CCP's Gulou District Committee," Gulou District Archives file 0101-0000-004-0014.)

The Gulou Urban Commune was very keen on boosting the number of communal mess halls in a short span of time with minimal expense. It boasted that over 35 per cent of mess halls were built by voluntary commune members with construction materials donated by them as well.⁴⁴⁸ Many of the completed mess halls were therefore very simple and crude. In one mess hall, commune members did not have adequate money to buy construction materials; they ended up tearing down doors of their homes and using the timber to make streamers and cooking pot lips. And to meet the deadline set by the urban commune, many members had to "work day and night" in building the mess halls in their neighborhoods.⁴⁴⁹

Not all the people were so generous and devoted to the Gulou Urban Commune, however. Many people were sceptical about the mess halls and collective dining. Generally, they had four main worries: increased expenses, inadequate food, inconvenience, and lack of freedom.⁴⁵⁰ People wondered if the mess halls could serve the different needs of so many people. They worried that they would not have enough food, or the choice of food would be limited. Most importantly, they questioned if eating at the mess hall would be more economical than eating at home. To ease their worries, the District Committee launched a series of propagandize campaigns, stressing that eating at the mess halls saved money, had more food choices, and was, above all, voluntary.

Because house works were now handled by communes, housewives could now take part in production. In the month of April 1960 alone, 2,116 women workers had joined the commune industry.⁴⁵¹ By December 1960, women workers equaled to 41.27 per cent of total workforce in the Gulou Urban Commune. (Table 5.08)

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

Table 5.08 Compositions of the labor force in the Gulou Urban Commune, December 1960.

	Male		Female		Total	
No. of Households	---		---		45,437	
No. of Commune Members	147,773	56.00%	115,098	44.00%	263,871	100.00%
Able-bodied Workers	69,308	58.73%	42,638	41.27%	111,946	100.00%
Semi Able-bodied	13,923		15,917		29,860	
Auxiliary	9,382		6,549		15,931	
Total Workforce:	92,633		65,104		157,737	

(Source: The figures are based on “Annual Survey Report on the Basic Situation of the Urban Commune by the end of 1960,” Gulou District Archives file 0306-0000-002-0003.)

5.4 FEAR OF DISPOSSESSION: DECLINE OF THE GULOU URBAN COMMUNE

5.4.1 Communist Wind and Productivity Decrease

Nanjing residents had different reactions towards the urban communes. Some people welcomed them, believing that the urban communes would fully emancipate housewives from the drudgery of house works and contribute to production. Some people, however, feared that they would be dispossessed after communization. Rumors spread around neighborhoods that bank savings and personal assets of commune members would all be nationalized. Worrying that their bank account would be wiped out, some people rushed to withdraw their moneys and brought gold;⁴⁵² others feared that their assets would be confiscated once joining the urban commune, so they hurried to squander all their savings on feasts.⁴⁵³ Chinese leaders had also expressed their concerns about the people’s sentiment towards the Urban Commune Movement. They understood that opposing sentiment aroused “when the urban commune had conflicted with people’s personal interest.”⁴⁵⁴

The worries of Nanjing residents were not without reasons. Since the beginning of the People’s Commune Movement, a tendency of absolute equalitarianism, which was commonly termed as the “communist wind,” emerged in China. The communist wind expressed in the manner of “first, equal distribution, and second, property redistribution without compensation (*yipping, erdiao*).” Proponents of the communist wind argued that an ideal communist society should strike for the

⁴⁵² Zhonggong Gulou quwei jingji shenghuo gongzuozu, “Investigation Report on the Policy to Organize People’s Economic Lives.”

⁴⁵³ Zhang and Gu, “Development Process of the Gulou Urban Commune.”

⁴⁵⁴ “Cities in Our Country,” 79.

equalization of wealth so as to eliminate the differences between the rich and the poor, as well as for the redistribution of property without compensation in pursuit of developmental and ideological objectives.

In Nanjing, as in the rest of China, the communist wind was blowing strongly. Illegal expropriation of commune members' means of production was very common. For instance, an ironwork factory under the Sanpailou Branch Commune was established by merging over 160 individually operated ironmongery repairing stalls. Many stall owners reluctantly joined the factory because their tools and machines had been expropriated by the commune without compensation.⁴⁵⁵ In another case, some commune members had brought in their own sewing machines when joining a glove factory of the Dingjiaqiao Branch Commune. Later, it was found that the glove factory had sold all these sewing machines without compensating original machine owners.⁴⁵⁶ Moreover, redistribution of properties was often involved. In order to find space to accommodate a nursery and two mess halls in a municipal housing development, the cadres requested residents to surrender surplus housing space. A redistribution guideline was formulated to demand those who had occupied more than the permitted floor space had to surrender their surplus area. (Table 5.09) In the end, 72 surrendered rooms were converted into a nursery, while 48 rooms turned into two mess halls.⁴⁵⁷ It was also common for the Gulou Urban Commune to expropriate properties of the capitalist class in the name of developing street industry.⁴⁵⁸

Table 5.09 Redistribution guidelines of the Workers' New Village, 1960.

Original Living Condition	New Arrangement
Occupying 3 rooms.	To surrender one of the rooms.
Occupying 2 rooms.	To surrender one of the rooms.
Occupying 2 rooms, but the three generations of the family were not living together.	To occupy a proper room and a kitchen.
A family of 3, with not too many furniture	To occupy a kitchen.
Single person.	To live in collective dormitory.

(Source: Summarized from "Investigation Report on the Policy to Organize People's Economic Lives," Gulou District Archives file 0101-0000-004-0013.)

Besides the communist wind, there were also tendencies to exaggerate, to rely on commandism, to give special privileges to cadres, and to give arbitrary orders for in production. Together they were labelled as the "five winds (*wu feng*, or the five tendencies)," which were five bad working styles common in the urban communes. Typical examples of the practice of the five winds in Nanjing included corruption and

⁴⁵⁵ Zhang and Gu, "Development Process of the Gulou Urban Commune."

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Zhonggong Gulou quwei jingji shenghuo gongzuo zu, "Investigation Report on the Policy to Organize People's Economic Lives."

⁴⁵⁸ Zhonggong Gulou qu wei yuan hui, "Report on the Requisition of Properties of the Capitalist Class during the Process to Develop Street Industry."

embezzlement of cadres, poor management of commune industry and social facilities, and excessive spending. For examples, many cadres dined in the mess halls without paying any fee; mess halls staffs stole food and oil to feed their families; nurses took away candies and snacks from nursery children for their sons and daughters. Other cadres took an opposite approach. They wanted to boast their contributions to the urban commune by setting unrealistic work plans and spending big money on extravagances and splendid constructions.⁴⁵⁹

The five winds and the strong tendency of absolute egalitarianism made commune members lack motivation at work, which directly affected the quality of production and services. Commonly described as feeding by the “big rice pot (*daguofan*),” commune members found that no matter how they performed at works, they would receive the same salary and benefits from the urban commune. The problem exaggerated when the Gulou Urban Communes adopted a low wage policy, as most of the workforce was unskilled workers and housewives. There were lots of complaints from commune workers about low wage, exhausting work, and inadequate job training. A survey of communal mess halls in Gulou conducted in May 1960 indicated that 289 services workers and 77 accountants felt “unsettled (*bu anxin*)” at work.⁴⁶⁰ Franz Schurmann argues that the change of nature of street industry did not help relieving workers’ discontent. He pointed out that street enterprises before communization were family affairs. The bonds of family ties kept these undertakings going even at times when economic difficulties endangered the operation. The commune industries were not held together by such ties. But if family income did increase because of commune industry employment, shortage of goods made money less attractive.⁴⁶¹

5.4.2 Re-providing Material Incentives: Reform to the Gulou Urban Commune

Seeing the problems of the five winds in urban communes, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions compiled a report to the Central Committee on September 3, 1960, calling for the termination in developing new urban communes and the rectification of existing ones.⁴⁶² Mao Zedong agreed with the need to reorganize and consolidate urban communes, and for the first time, admitted that he was not familiar with the

⁴⁵⁹ See Zhonggong Gulou quwei jiedao gongzuo lingdao xiaozu, “Working Plan to Smoothen the Works of Mess Halls and Nurseries.” See also Zhonggong Gulou quwei jingji shenghuo gongzuo zu, “Investigation Report on the Policy to Organize People’s Economic Lives.”

⁴⁶⁰ Zhonggong Gulou quwei jiedao bangongshi, “Concluding Report on the Consolidation of Mess Halls.”

⁴⁶¹ Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 397.

⁴⁶² The report was endorsed by the Central Committee on September 18, 1960. *Report on the Reorganization and Consolidation of the Urban Commune*.

ownership system.⁴⁶³ By November 3, 1960, the Central Committee issued the *Urgent Letter of Instruction on Current Policy of the People's Commune in the Countryside*, declaring its strong stance in opposing the communist wind and the practices of “first, equal distribution, and second, property redistribution without compensation.” Believing that the major cause for the communist wind laid in the system of commune ownership, the Central Committee declared that whole-people ownership would not be promoted to new communes for the seven years that followed. Furthermore, it also allowed commune members to retain small land plots for cultivation or to involve in small-scaled family sideline production so that their incomes could be increased.⁴⁶⁴ Although the letter concerns mainly the rural communes, it also reflected that the State saw material incentive as an important solution to the problem of the communist wind.

In the same month, Mao Zedong had personally written a directive to instruct all local governments to rectify the problems of the five winds (*zhengfeng yundong*) in China.⁴⁶⁵ This decision was echoed during the Ninth Plenary Session of the Eight Central Committee held between January 14 and 18, 1961 at Beijing. Following party directive, Nanjing reformed its 24 branch urban communes.⁴⁶⁶ The reform program imposed since September 1961 concerned four major areas:

Breaking down the scale of commune enterprises. The urban commune realized that the original approach of “first, big, and second, publicly-owned” did not work well. As such, all big commune enterprises were broken down into smaller scales, including commune factories (*sheban gongchang*), cooperatives (*hezuoshe*), small cooperating groups (*hezuo xiaozu*), household sideline production (*jiating fuye*), and individual economy (*geti jingji*). For examples, among the 137 commune factories in ten experimental spots in Nanjing, only 44 were being kept, whereas the rest were split into 77 cooperatives, 139 small production teams, 373 household sideline productions, and a small amount of individual economies.⁴⁶⁷

Readjusting the ownership of commune industry. The State stressed that all commune enterprises should employ collective ownership instead of whole-people ownership. Nanjing further stipulated that all commune enterprises were to be self-financed. A new distribution system was implemented, allowing commune enterprises to keep as high as 30 per cent of the net profit. Commune enterprises were only requested to pay

⁴⁶³ Mao, *Mao Zedong's Writings since the Founding of the Nation*, 9:55, 56, 214.

⁴⁶⁴ *Urgent Letter of Instruction on Current Policy of the People's Commune in the Countryside*.

⁴⁶⁵ *Directive to Completely Rectify the Problems of the Five Winds*.

⁴⁶⁶ The reform program was first carried out in the rural communes in January 1961 and on some experimental spots in the city in the same year. By September 1961, the program was officially promoted to all urban communes in Nanjing.

⁴⁶⁷ Zhonggong Nanjingshi weiyuanhui, “Second Report on the Rectification of the Communes.”

ten and 60 per cent of net profit to the urban commune and branch commune respectively.⁴⁶⁸

Providing material incentives to workers. In order to eliminate absolute egalitarianism and motivate workers to increase production, Nanjing abandon the old wage system that paid workers a fixed amount of salary disregard of works and performance. After that, a survey of 119 commune enterprises in Nanjing indicated that 54.3 per cent of employees were remunerated for work calculated on a piecework basis, 21.2 per cent by the method of profit-sharing between the enterprise and the employees, whereas the remaining were remunerated for work calculated on hourly basis.⁴⁶⁹ (Table 5.10)

Table 5.10 Survey of wages systems in 119 commune enterprises in Nanjing, October 1961.

Workers were remunerated according to:	% of total employees
Number of pieces finished	54.3%
Profit sharing	21.2%
Number of hours spent, plus bonus	14.0%
Number of hours spent	10.5%
Total	100.0%

(Source: The figures are based on “Second Report on the Rectification of the Communes,” Gulou District Archives file 0101-0000-004-0014.)

Removing class enemies from commune membership. The Gulou District Committee blamed the participation of class enemies as part of the reason for the mismanagement of the urban communes. It claimed that some five black elements, counter-revolutionaries, people with bad political history, and hooligans had secretly joined the urban commune, taking up different positions in communal mess halls, nurseries, and commune factories.⁴⁷⁰ It was these people, the district committee claimed, who had committed corruption and theft, or who were incompetent to manage commune enterprises.⁴⁷¹ They therefore proposed removing these people and their families from membership, claiming this could purify the Gulou Urban Commune.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁸ “Drafted Resolution on the Further Consolidation of Several Questions Related to the Urban Communes.”

⁴⁶⁹ Zhonggong Nanjingshi weiyuanhui, “Second Report on the Rectification of the Communes.”

⁴⁷⁰ Zhonggong Gulou quwei jiedao gongzuo lingdao xiaozu, “Working Plan to Smoothen the Works of Mess Halls and Nurseries.”

⁴⁷¹ Zhonggong Gulou quwei jingji shenghuo gongzuo zu, “Investigation Report on the Policy to Organize People’s Economic Lives.”

⁴⁷² Zhonggong Gulouqu weiyuanhui, “Report from the Gulou District Committee.”

These measures, which emphasized material incentives for individuals and discouraged whole-people ownership, implied that China's socialist construction was in fact halted. Chinese leaders began to realize that urban commune was not a suitable basic-unit to organize the cities. Unlike the homogenous villages where most people were peasants and involved in the same agricultural production, the complex cities were supported by a diversity of jobs that required different skills and talents. It was too difficult to develop a single form of organizational unit that could satisfy the different needs of urban residents.

By September 15, 1961, the Central Committee issued a directive, which prohibited the coexistence of whole-people ownership and collective ownership in one single enterprise. This directive basically demanded all state-operated factories with whole-people ownership to retreat from the urban communes. As a result, urban communes that were organized around state factories, mines, institutions and schools existed no more. Only those that were organized around neighborhoods remained, but they faced tremendous financial difficulties without the support of state-owned enterprises anymore.

Beginning April 1962, China launched a new campaign to send excess population back from cities to the countryside. This campaign was accompanied by the resolution to reduce both the numbers of workers in cities as well as the overall urban population.⁴⁷³ By August the same year, China had successfully laid off 18.3 million workers in the cities and reduced an overall of 20 million urban populations, saving the country from spending 260 million *yuan* salary annually.⁴⁷⁴ All these measures had made the operation of urban communes difficult.

By May 1962, the Central Committee and the State Council decided that industrial enterprises in urban communes should be terminated in view of its low productivity. They also decided to reform commune handicraft enterprises, suggesting most of handicraft items were to be produced by individuals or families.⁴⁷⁵ Since then, most urban residents were nominal commune members only; they had to find ways to support their lives by working outside the urban commune structure. A Reuters dispatch which appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*, July 17, 1962, reported on the appearance once more in the streets of Beijing of peddlers, barbers, repairmen:

Their reappearance apparently reflects changes in the scope of the urban people's commune, now seldom mentioned in the press. The communes, however, do still exist, and their small factories are still in operation. But shortage of raw materials and increased emphasis on agriculture rather than industry, the return to the countryside of many people who had come to live in the city in recent years, and the drive to provide more consumer goods have led to visible changes.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷³ *Resolution on the Reduction of Worker Number and Urban Population.*

⁴⁷⁴ *Directive on Several Questions about the Current Works of the Cities.*

⁴⁷⁵ *Resolution on the Reduction of Worker Number and Urban Population.*

⁴⁷⁶ Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, footnote 42.

Following the general trend, the Municipal Party Committee of Nanjing announced the dismissal of all urban communes in Nanjing. The eight street offices before communization were restored on October 16, 1962. By then, China's attempt to install the urban commune as the basic-unit of organization in the cities was ended in failure.

EPILOGUE: OWNERSHIP SYSTEM IN CHINA TODAY

The Party believed that the bigger the organization of production, the more resources it had collectivized, the more functions it had agglomerated, and the more "socialist" the ownership system, the better the productivity would be. This was the main theory behind the Urban Commune Movement from 1958 to 1962. Urban communes were established to agglomerate surplus urban population and individual and small production units into big, collectively owned organizations. The Party conceptualized urban communes as the basic-unit to organize the cities, especially the urban neighborhoods, paving ways for China to transition into whole-people ownership. Nevertheless, the Chinese people did not appreciate the new urbanism brought by the establishment of the urban communes, which allowed state power to extend to their working and residential sphere. The fear to dispossession and the discontent to absolute equalitarianism made commune members lack motivation at works and decreased their productivity, a contradictory result to what the Party had anticipated. The remedy to these two problems suggested by the Nanjing Government was a reversion to the collectivization effort: the scale of commune enterprises was broken down, and material incentives were provided to commune workers. The failure of the urban communes made the Party realized that it was pre-mature then to promote whole-people ownership as the only form of ownership.

Since the Third Plenum of the 11th CPC Central Committee held in December 1978 that marked the beginning of the economic reform, China has undergone various reforms to its ownership system, especially to real property such as land and housing. In principal, the three forms of ownership, namely private ownership, collective ownership, and whole-people ownership, still maintained, but the Party now recognizes the role of private sectors in China's development of socialist market economy. In 1979, the Party tried out a new policy in Fuzhou, giving permission to people to build houses with their own money to solve housing shortage, in return for a land rent.⁴⁷⁷ This paved the way for the revival of private real estate market in China.

Since 1986, a new Land Administration Law is adopted, which declares that land in urban areas is owned by the State, whereas land in rural areas is collectively owned by the peasants of a village.⁴⁷⁸ Since then, China adopts a land lease system. Individuals and private enterprises can lease state-owned land by paying a land-leasing fee. The length of a land lease varies according to its usage. The maximum

⁴⁷⁷ Zhou, "Housing China's 900 Million People," 27.

⁴⁷⁸ *Chinese Constitution*, Article 8.

term is 70 years for residential housing, followed by 50 years for industrial estates, and then 40 years for commercial estates, according to a law passed in 1990.

In the countryside, the Party also carried out large-scale decollectivization and restored family farming.⁴⁷⁹ Although rural land is not the focus of this dissertation, it is worth to note that the vaguely defined collective ownership of rural land has created confusion and contention among the peasants since the economic reform. Villagers are uncertain about the rights they enjoy to land property.⁴⁸⁰ As there is no well defined owner, illegal selling of collectively-owned rural land by local cadres is often heard.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁹ For decollectivization effort in the countryside, see Unger, “The Decollectivization of the Chinese Countryside: A Survey of Twenty-eight Villages.”

⁴⁸⁰ *Who's Who in China*, 397.

⁴⁸¹ See Cai, “Collective Ownership or Cadres’ Ownership? The Non-agricultural Use of Farmland in China.”

6

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1.1 Shifting Governmental Rationality: From Bio-Politics to Biographic Politics

This dissertation argues that the Chinese governmentality and the psychological, biological, sociological, and economic processes that constitute them were property-related. The control of real property has been considered by both the Nationalist Government and the Communist Government as prerequisite to the production of governable subjects and governable spaces. Following the analytical perspective of the Foucaultian governmentality studies, this concluding chapter analyses the dispossession practices and the governmental rationalities and technologies of government that inform them, as well as the governable subjects and governable spaces thus produced. It is important to point out that these four dispossession practices were resulted not from a single governmentality but a pluralistic of governmental rationalities. (Table 6.01) Two of them, eminent domain and slum clearance, were first practiced extensively in the Nationalist capital Nanjing. They remain two major dispossession practices in China today. The other two, socialist transformation and communization, were socialist inventions enforced from the late 1950s until the economic reform in 1979. The dominance of different practices in different times shows the shift in relations between knowledge, power and subjectivity in China's management of urban property, urban spaces, and urban population.

Table 6.01 The four dispossession practices in China, 1927 to 1979.

Dispossession Practice	Eminent Domain	Slum Clearance	Socialist Transformation	Communization
Time	Nationalist era. Since late 1920s.	Nationalist era. Since late 1930s.	Socialist era. From 1956 to 1979.	Socialist era. 1958-1962.
Technology of Government	City planning	City planning	Property redistribution	Property redistribution
Governable Subjects	Property owners who obstruct urban development.	Slum dwellers.	Class enemies and exploiting classes with surplus rental housing.	Surplus laborers, self-employed individuals, and small business owners.
Governable Spaces	Restructuring of the city.	Housing became domain of government.	Residential collectivity in private housing.	Residential collectivity in urban neighborhood.

The governmental rationality of the Nationalist State was largely related to the primary goal of state building. The Nationalist period was a period of political instability. After a decade of disintegration following the fall of the imperial dynasty, the new Republic of China was troubled by both internal strife and external hostility. Internally, the Nationalist leadership was challenged by the imperialists, the warlords, the Communists, and the various factions within the party. Externally, China was threatened by the European nations and Japan. As such, it became a prime concern for Nationalists leaders to reinforce the infant statehood, to establish the party as the legitimate ruler of China, and to invest a sense of modernity to the national capital, so that China could regain its prestige in front of both the Chinese people and foreigners.

These political agendas had created a bio-politics in China. Nationalist leaders had developed a medicalized view towards China's problems. To strengthen China, they focused on improving the biomedical conditions of the human bodies. Government programs such as "the New Life Movement" and the "Three Prohibition Campaigns" were introduced to discipline the human bodies and to shape the conducts of the Chinese population through militarized trainings, punishment, and education. Through these programs, Nationalist leaders wanted to create modern urban residents who were physically healthy, who could take care of their personal hygiene, who maintained public sanitation, and who had high moral standards. At the same time, they equally, if not more, concerned about the physical conditions of the urban environment where the Chinese population lived. On the house level, the condition of Chinese dwellings and shanty structures were poor and unsanitary, posing a great risk to the safety and hygiene of Nanjing. On the city level, the dilapidated and disordered urban landscape of Nanjing did not match its capital status. Nationalist leaders considered the reconstruction of Nanjing as a strong

political statement to reinforce statehood. They believed that a modern capital could be a source of political legitimacy, showing that the Nationalist Government was capable to reconstruct Nanjing, and by extension China, from a war-torn, disordered, and unsanitary city into a scientific, orderly, and aesthetic metropolis more prosperous than London, Paris and New York.

City planning was the main technology of government adopted by Nationalist leaders to achieve their bio-political goals. With the help of foreign experts and technocrats, the Nationalist Government proposed the comprehensive *Capital Plan* for Nanjing. The programs of the *Capital Plan* included the rezoning of the city, the construction of new residential areas, the building of new roads, the provision of urban services, etc. It provided a scientific ways to organize urban functions and urban spaces in the city. Most importantly, the *Capital Plan* helped the Chinese people to envision a utopian picture of Nanjing's future.

Nevertheless, without the control of real property, the Nationalists were not able to reconstruct Nanjing into the modern city that they desired. As the Nationalist Government was building a modern property system which recognized private property rights, seizure of private land and homes for the capital reconstruction would contradicted such system. The government needed to rationalize why state interventions were needed. This prompted the making of the two dispossession practices, eminent domain and slum clearance. The eminent domain enabled the Nationalist State to lawfully requisition real property for public works without the consent of private property owners, while slum clearance was enforced to eradicate unsightly, unsanitary neighborhoods and substandard structures. In the government's argument, property taking was acceptable when it was in the name of the public interest or when the affected properties were deemed substandard.

It is important to emphasize that bio-politics existed throughout the Socialist era. The eminent domain was included by the Communists in the 1954 Constitutions of the People's Republic of China. The Communist Government had never stopped eradicating slums. City planning remained an institutionalized discipline after 1949. Nevertheless, new forms of governmentalities dominated the Socialist era, leading to what I called "biographic politics" and the dispossession practices, socialist transformation and communization.

Like its Nationalist counterpart, the Communists put state building atop its political agenda. However, they approach the goals differently. They wanted to create a self-sufficient economy so that China had no need to rely on the non-socialist world for food, energy and raw material supplies. Therefore, the First Five Years Plan prioritized the developments of agriculture and heavy industry to produce what the Chinese population needed. Nevertheless, before the economic goals were achieved, China broke its tie with the Soviet Union in the late 1950s, leading to the shortage of financial and material resources. Because of that, the Party launched the Great Leap Forward and other campaigns to increase production and to discourage wastage. City planning was suspended from 1960 to 1963, and investment in housing greatly dropped since the 1960s.

Because of the shortage of resources, the Party began nationalizing private properties into state ownership so that resource allocation could be centrally planned.

In the countryside, rural land and houses were nationalized. Curiously, the Party did not pursue the same approach to urban real properties. It had never intended to completely eliminate private ownership in the city; instead, the Party opted for the selective elimination of private ownership and redistribution of private houses. The crucial step for the government was to define whose properties were to be nationalized or redistributed.

Property redistribution led to the making of the “biographic politics” in Socialist China. The biography of a person determined his or her rights to property. The two dispossession practices, socialist transformation and communization, were introduced to redistribute the properties of two types of people respectively. The first type of people was class enemies and exploiters. They were identified through the state’s system of class designation and political labels. The Party manipulated class struggle, a socialist technology of government, both to rationalize and to mobilize the redistribution of resources from the propertied to the propertiless in order to solve China’s urban housing shortage. To make socialist transformation practicable, the technology of government of property redistribution involved a series of programs, such as the system of class designation and registration to identify friends and enemies, the campaigns of class struggles (such as the Anti-Rightist Campaign and the Cultural Revolution) to subjugate class enemies, the mandatory leasing program to redistribute the transformed properties, etc. The Party constantly redefined who constituted the class enemies to suit changing state goals, leading to different stages of property dispossession in China: During the stage of rehabilitation of national economy, the Party confiscated real property belonging to class enemies; during the stage of socialist transformation, the Party identified surplus rental housing as exploitation in nature; and during the Cultural Revolution, homes of the old bourgeois class and the new privileged class were often illegally raided or taken by various public and private agencies.

The second type of people was surplus laborers and self-employed individuals. Unlike the first category, they did not carry political stigmas. Rather, they were considered as non-productive in the socialist economy. From 1958 to 1962, China carried out the Urban Commune Movement. There were a number of goals behind the movement. First, it was to mobilize surplus laborers, such as housewives, dependents, the disabled, and new migrants, who had not been engaged into production. These people were now recruited as commune members and worked in commune enterprises. Second, it was to agglomerate self-employed individuals and small businesses into bigger production units so as to offer side-line production to big state mines and industries. Last, it was to turn the means of production of the urban communes first into collective ownership, and in the future to whole-people ownership. Although by the State’s definition, private houses should not be considered as a mean of production, many of them were collectivized as commune properties or reallocated for production uses. The Party used communization as a technique of government to organize the urban population. The rationale was that the bigger the urban communes were and the more people they had recruited the better productivity would be yielded. To make communization practicable, the technology of government of property redistribution involved the restructuring of existing

municipal administrative structure, the setting up of the urban communes, including its workplaces and communal facilities.

In sum, the difference in social, political, and economic contexts between the Nationalist and the Socialist periods had produced different forms of governmentalities. The shift in governmentalities had induced the shift from the bio-politics in the Nationalists period to the biographic politics in the Socialist period. Corresponding to this shift, city planning and property redistribution were employed in the two political regimes, respectively, as the main technologies of government to manage urban property, urban spaces, and the urban population.

6.1.2 The Chinese Art of Property-Government

Although the Nationalist and the Socialist periods were dominated by the bio-politics and the biographic politics respectively, the four dispossession practices produced under the two different forms of governmentalities share several commonalities. They inform us several features of China's art of property-government.

First, the power/knowledge in rationalizing state interventions. The enforcement of these four practices anchored on how some important terms were defined: what constituted the “public interest”? What kinds of structures were deemed as “substandard”? Who were “class enemies” and what was “surplus rental housing”? Who was “surplus laborers”? All these terms had no clear definition and were subject to interpretation. As a result, when the State obtained the authority and knowledge to define these terms, it also had the power over the subjects concerned. This creates what Foucault called a “power/knowledge” relation, that the collection of information and knowledge on human activities further reinforces the exercising of power over human subjects. Within the Nationalist Government, many of the leaders had technoscientific backgrounds. These technocrats used their knowledge in planning, engineering, public health, social science, etc., to derive development plans and to set modern living standards. Because of their knowledge and their positions in the government, they acquired the authority to declare what constituted the public interest and what the modern standards were. The Communist leaders, however, adopted a different approach. Claiming that they had good knowledge about the Chinese people, they obtained the authority to define biographical terms like “class enemies” and “surplus laborers” through mass supports. As such, the Communist Government's dispossession programs were accompanied by corresponding mass movements, such as the “Anti rightist campaign”, the “Cultural Revolution,” and the “Urban Commune Movement,” to gain support from the people.

Second, the discursive production of the public interest and the public obligation in the process of subjectification. The seizure of private real properties was carried out for different reasons, such as for better city appearance, for public health, for solving housing shortage, for productivity increase, etc. All these reasons could be put under the larger framework of the “public interest.” Interesting, the Chinese tended to intertwine the concept of the “public interest” with the “public obligation.”

On the one hand, the government argued that it was for the public interest to seize private homes. On the other hand, it argued that the affected inhabitants shouldered a public obligation to support state plans. Furthermore, stigmatization was also a technique commonly used by the government to subjugate its targets. During the Nationalist period, inhabitants who opposed to compulsory land requisition were stigmatized as anti-progress and selfish while slum dwellers were stigmatized as uncivilized and detrimental to the society. During the socialist period, the propertied class was often categorized as class enemies or exploiters while the surplus laborers and dependents were blamed as non-productive.

Third, the production of urban spaces out of dispossession. The Nationalist Government adopted city planning as a technology of government. This approach had led to the creative destruction of Nanjing. Old neighborhoods and settlements were eradicated and gave way for new developments. City planning allowed an active and direct approach in the production of new urban spaces. New developments in the Nationalist Nanjing were often planned in a rational, orderly, and uniform manner. On the contrary, the Communist Government adopted property redistribution as a technology of government. This approach produced new urban spaces which challenged the conventional public-private domains. Under the socialist transformation, private houses were divided and redistributed for multiple families. Owners and tenants shared kitchens and toilets. Tenants built stoves and cooked in their occupied areas. In the urban communes, however, a different kind of residential collectivity had changed the urban neighborhoods. Commune cadres and members lived and worked together. Housework was collectively taken care of by the communes. Despite the fact that new constructions were limited in Socialist China, a new semi-public/semi-private domain was created by the new residential collectivity.

Last, the engagement with different groups in the society. The four dispossession practices show that property politics in Chinese cities affect not only property owners but different social groups in the society. This shows that the analysis of China's property politics should not be limited by the conventional class struggle approach, which focuses mainly on the class conflicts between the propertied and the propertyless.

Socialist transformation and communization does not exist in China today. After the economic reform, the new party leadership have declared the restoration of private ownership. Nationalization of private property because of the owners' biographies no longer happened. This leave rooms for two future research questions. First, what are the legacies of these two practices to present-day China? How have the dispossession experiences of the Chinese people affect their property choices and behaviour today? The epilogue in each chapter of this dissertation tries to outline some of the implications of each dispossession practices to the property politics of China today but a systematic research will be required in the future.

Second, does the elimination of the practice of socialist transformation and communization imply that China is now returning to the dominance of bio-politics? What are the new forms of governmentality in today's China? How does the present Chinese State govern urban property, urban spaces, and urban population? Apparently, bio-politics play an important role in shaping China's urban development

today and city planning remains the main justification for property requisition. However, after the dispossession efforts in the recent past, China has nationalized all urban land. It will require further exploration on whether a different kind of bio-politics is result due to the state monopolization of resources.

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APPENDIX: HOUSING SURVEY OF THE XIANGYANG NEIGHBORHOOD, 1973

Source: In 1973, the Street Office of the Xiangyang Neighborhood in the Gulou District of Nanjing carried out a housing survey. The record can be found in "Survey Materials of Private housing in the Xiangyang Street Neighborhood of Yanan District during the Cultural Revolution," Gulou District Archives file number 0403-0000-002-0042.

Status of private houses before the Cultural Revolution.

	General Masses	Normal Political Biography	United Front Targets	Intellectuals	Overseas Chinese	Capitalists	Four Categories	Unidentified Biography	Subtotal
No.	22	13	10	12	5	2	2	2	68
Self-occupied (sq. m.)	568.98	322.40	865.24	1459.25	196.20	396.10	118.50		3926.67
Rental (sq. m.)	966.52	739.76	1325.12	456.80	958.40	19.10	82.90	53.30	4601.90
Total (sq. m.)	1535.50	1062.16	2190.36	1916.05	1154.60	415.20	201.40	53.30	8528.57

Year that the private houses were taken.

Year	General Masses	Normal Political Biography	United Front Targets	Intellectuals	Overseas Chinese	Capitalists	Four Categories	Unidentified Biography	Subtotal
1966	6	5	4	6	4			1	26
1967	3	1	3	1	1	2			11
1968	5	1	1	3			1		11
1969									0
1970	6	3	1	1			1		12
1971	2	2	1	1				1	7
1972	1								1
Total	23	12	10	12	5	2	2	2	68

Public and private agencies that had taken the private houses.

Taken by	General Masses	Normal Political Biography	United Front Targets	Intellectuals	Overseas Chinese	Capitalists	Four Categories	Unidentified Biography	Subtotal
Approved by the Municipal Urban Construction Bureau	5	3	5	3	3			1	20
Approved by the Mass Organization under the Housing and Property Company	8	3	1	1	1	1	1		16
Approved by the District Urban Transportation Branch	9	5	2	3			1	1	21
Administered by the District Housing Administration Office		1	2	1	1				5
Direct Occupation by Work-units						1			1
Direct Occupation by the People	1			4					5
Total	23	12	10	12	5	2	2	2	68

Reasons for the private houses to be taken.

Reasons	General Masses	Normal Political Biography	United Front Targets	Intellectuals	Overseas Chinese	Capitalists	Four Categories	Unidentified Biography	Subtotal
Owner died				1					1
The property had no custodian		1		1				2	4
Owner could not afford retrofitting the endangered property	6	1					2		9
Owner voluntarily surrendered the property	10	8	2	2	2				24
Owner was mobilized during the Cultural Revolution to surrender the property	3	1	6	3	1				14
Owner was purged during the Cultural Revolution and the property was confiscated	2			4	1	1			8
The renting of the property had been handled by the Housing Administration Bureau		1	1	1	1	1			5
Owner failed to complete necessary formalities before being sent to the countryside	2		1						3
Total	23	12	10	12	5	2	2	2	68

Conditions of the private houses at time of taking

At Time of Takeover	General Masses	Normal Political Biography	United Front Targets	Intellectuals	Overseas Chinese	Capitalists	Four Categories	Unidentified Biography	Subtotal
Property owner was not present	2	1	1	1	2				7
Property had never been encroached	9	1	3		1		2		16
The rental space had been encroached	8	1	1				2		12
The self-occupied space had been reduced in the past	5	2	5	9	2				23
Property owner had already moved out	2	2	1	2	2	2			10