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Rural Self-Organizing Resilience: Village Collective Strategies and Negotiation Paths in Urbanization Process in the TPSNT Framework: A Case Study of the Hongren Village, China

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Abstract: Studies on rural transformation in the context of urbanization have always analyzed it from a single linear perspective, either top-down or bottom-up. This leads to simplistic generalizations of rural transformation models and the standardization of policy implementation. Based on the TPSN analytical framework, this study adds the temporality dimension to form a more comprehensive TPSNT framework. This paper explores the complex construction of rural space in rural transformation from the five dimensions of “territory, place, scale, network and temporality” and takes the urban village, Hongren, in Kunming City, China, as a case study to analyze the specific transformation process of a village. The research revealed the following: First, in the face of land loss caused by government land acquisition, traditional rural autonomous organizations that have been hidden under the modern governance system have been revived under the influence of traditional elites and completed bottom-up territorialization by using some “maneuver spaces” to form a spatial base for negotiation with the government. Second, the cohesion of traditional rural autonomous organizations has increased during this process, and with the help of mobile capital such as media and personal connections, they have developed social networks that transcend the spatial boundaries of villages. Third, these newly constructed social networks are used to carry out various political strategies at various scales and finally negotiated with the government to rewrite the planning plan so that the village can continue to develop and integrate into the city. Finally, the analysis of the temporal dimensions of Hongren village revealed that even within the same village, changes in the other four dimensions develop dynamically, and rural transformation is an ongoing process. Therefore, when the government deals with rural issues in the process of urbanization, it should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. Unified policy implementation standards will have an irreversible negative impact on rural autonomous organizations.

Keywords: rural resilience; collective strategies; TPSNT framework; urbanization process; China



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1. Introduction

For a long time, studies on the interaction between the state and peasants in rural transformation in the context of urbanization have always analyzed this interaction in terms of dichotomies such as top-down deprivation and repression and bottom-up struggle and protest [1]. This simplified model of dichotomy ignores the complex interaction between the state and peasants in the process of urbanization and the countryside’s important contribution to unraveling the contradictory relationship between urban and rural areas [2–4]. Most of the studies from the farmers’ perspective see the state as a whole with its own interests, and the state exploits, dominates, and deprives farmers for its own self-interest maximization [5,6]. From this perspective, the state’s rural transformation activities, which are used to improve the rural living environment and enhance the lives of peasants, are viewed as the state’s dispossession of the countryside through the process of urbanization [7]. The “state”-centered research perspective views different levels and

departments within the government as rational subjects of interest [8–11]. Urbanization and rural transformation are essentially the top-down manipulation and planning of state action at various levels and departments [12]. However, most state-centered implementation programs are often carried out by bulldozing or completely transforming urban villages, ignoring aspects of villages that have long been important in resolving the contradictions in China's urban–rural relations and safeguarding the well-being of rural people. Rather than eliminating the *de jure* urban–rural divide and the insubstantial interaction between urban and rural areas, top-down state policies have reconfigured the divide in a new way that is more easily controlled by the government. Some researchers have pointed out that this dichotomous analytical perspective tends to reinforce the state's "planned" planning standards in practice, eliminating the diversity of collective coping strategies in the countryside that are "unplanned", demolishing the countryside or completely transforming it, and accelerating the rapid homogenization of the transformation of the countryside on the urban fringe in China. This has accelerated the rapid homogenization of China's urban fringe rural transformation [13]. Numerous studies have questioned the top-down state perspective and the bottom-up peasant perspective, as this dichotomous conceptualization implies an absolute chasm between the two opposing groups [14–16]. In China, it is too simple to analyze in terms of resistance/domination; developmentalism is a developmental discourse oriented jointly by peasants and the government, and the strong lineage organizations and rural cooperatives in the Chinese countryside provide the basis and space for grassroots self-development in the process of rural transformation [17]. The dichotomy will fail to recognize the pluralistic development of rural collective practices in a comprehensive way and will presuppose preconceptions about the exploration of the path of rural transformation in China.

As a unique phenomenon in China's urbanization process, urban villages not only demonstrate the complexity of urban–rural duality but also inspire important discussions on urban expansion and self-governance of urban villages [18]. Characterized by ambiguous housing property rights, a lack of settlement planning control, and an unregulated rental market, urban villages are rooted in the rapid expansion of urban land and the lack of government regulation during the process of rapid urbanization [19]. Unlike village-type settlements in Western cities or shanty towns in some developing countries [20], urban villages are a special phenomenon formed under China's traditional planned economy. As informal settlements, urban villages have long provided low-cost living spaces for new citizens while also providing important support for industrialization and urbanization, embodying a new dimension of post-socialist urban spatial transformation [21]. In China, urban villages have not only maintained a strong collective economy but also preserved village-style self-organization and social and cultural traditions that play crucial roles in sustaining stability and cultural heritage [22]. However, from the perspective of policymakers, urban villages are generally considered undesirable in terms of urban planning and governance because they are associated with unsuitable land use, poor housing construction, serious infrastructure deficiencies, increased social disruption, and deterioration of the urban environment [23]. Some scholars have also pointed out that the prevalence of urban villages is inevitable due to rising social inequality, urban land use specialization, and spatial segregation associated with large rural–urban migration [24,25]. The new social transformation has realized the reorganization, integration, and reconfiguration of urban–rural boundaries. It has prompted researchers to revisit the long-standing issues of social inclusion and exclusion in urban villages. Research on urban villages often treats them as transitional entities under the dichotomous urban–rural paradigm in anticipation of their future transition to full urbanization. However, it is an inappropriate simplification to consider the issue of urban villages within this dichotomous and linear framework of thinking, ignoring their unique social, economic, and cultural dimensions. Indeed, urban villages, as a complex interaction between rural and urban areas, exhibit a much richer process of interaction and transformation and should not be viewed only as a simple linear process [26].

In the context of China's new urbanization, the retention and transformation of urban villages have become important issues in the country's high-quality economic and social development [27]. As an important node city in China's "Belt and Road Initiative" and "Yangtze River Economic Belt City Cluster" strategies, Kunming city has undergone rapid urbanization in recent years, and urban–rural interactions and urban–rural conflicts have been pushed to an unprecedented level. In this process, 335 urban villages were established in Kunming. As one of these 335 urban villages, Hongren village has survived the urbanization process and become an exception in the transformation of Kunming's urban villages. Although the unprecedented pace of urbanization has deprived villagers of their farmland, they have been able to reshape their internal social organization through collective strategies and develop "maneuver space", which enables them to reorganize and maximize the strength of their local economy and preserve their locality, embodying the "acquaintance society" formed by geographical and blood relationships in rural China and the resilient structure of self-governance. This opens a discursive space for thinking about how the meaning of rurality is redefined and reconfigured in post-agricultural societies. Its existence strongly questions the linear perspective of the state as top-down and the peasantry as bottom-up and demonstrates that there is no absolute divide between the two opposing groups while providing a nonlinear analytical perspective on rural transformation.

Based on the above, we explored how Hongren village uses collective strategies to break through the binary path of opposition between the state and farmers in the context of urbanization and national modernization and to form a diverse development path in the process of urban village transformation. The "maneuver space" serves as an expression of villagers' local spatial freedom, which is a collective strategy to help them resist top-down urban expansion" [17]. Analyzing the production process and mechanism of the "maneuver space" can provide an in-depth understanding of the complexity of the nonlinear development and socio-spatial reorganization of urban villages in the process of urbanization, as well as identify other nondualism paths and mechanisms for the transformation of China's villages in the context of urbanization. Since the production of a "maneuver space" involves a complex social relation space, in the second part of the study, based on the TPSN framework, we explain in detail the four terms "territory, place, scale and network", which are closely related to space, and incorporate the temporal dimension at the same time, forming a social space analysis model containing five dimensions. This model is designed to explore the multiple paths of development and transformation of urban villages under the background of China's urbanization. In the fourth part of the study, the analysis framework and its effectiveness in breaking the tradition of binary opposition analysis are presented in detail.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Research Framework

2.1. TPSN Analysis Framework

To examine the creation of urban village collective strategies during urbanization, we must consider not only the physical space involved but also the social space connected to it. This includes examining how power processes affect territorialized space, as well as how urban villages use scale and network relationships that are dynamically embedded to cope with the territorialization of government. Paniagua noted how traditional rigid binary relationships in resistance are replaced by more flexible dynamics. Resistance can be both individual and collective, differing from person to person and place to place. This flexibility in resistance reflects the diverse interests and strategies of individuals within a rural collective space [28]. Jessop also emphasizes that the configuration of socio-spatial dimensions—territory, place, scale, and network (TPSN)—is dynamic and subject to contradictions and conflicts [29]. Therefore, these dimensions should not be viewed in isolation but as interconnected and mutually constitutive. This integrated TPSN framework is crucial for understanding socio-spatial relationality comprehensively and dynamically, offering a valuable approach to studying how these dimensions interact and influence each other [30]. The TPSN framework is based on several key spatial shifts in the social sciences that have

been found over the past three decades, which have worked to unearth and elucidate under-discussed spatial assumptions in the research while deepening our understanding of the spatial transformations of socio-spatial relations. Furthermore, spatial assumptions have been discussed while deepening our understanding of the relationship between society and space. By introducing the four core spatial concepts of territory, place, scale, and network, the TPSN framework aims to capture the theoretically and empirically researched interconnections between these spatial shifts and to provide an understanding of how they work together to unravel large-scale transformations in the organization of socio-spatial space, particularly those related to the crisis of North Atlantic Fordism, intensified globalization, and globalization's impact on the accumulation of capital, regulation of the state, urbanization, social reproduction, and restructuring of the geography of social and political struggles. Moreover, transformations in terms of the reorganization of the geography of political struggle are systematically understood. The TPSN has been used in research in areas including urban and regional planning, political geography and electoral behavior, energy transition, immigration policy, information security, social crisis management, and urban anti-eviction struggles [31–34]. As a framework for understanding and analyzing the multidimensionality of socio-spatial relations, the TPSN framework facilitates in-depth exploration of the role of territorial boundaries, locality, scaling strategies, and network interactions in shaping social dynamics.

“Territory” is a form of organizing space that involves the construction of internal and external boundaries through borders, boundaries, or encapsulation. Another important aspect of territoriality is the control of space [35], not only in the definition of physical space but also, more critically, as a reflection of the spatial organization and exercise of social and political power. The purpose of territorialization is to build a network by connecting resources and relationships at multiple scales to form new territories. These newly formed territories can be dynamically adjusted to “maneuver spaces” or constructed to achieve specific strategic goals called “strategy spaces”. The reconstruction of territorial space revolves around power relations and promotes the optimization of element organization and the evolution of governance methods, which involve the reconstruction of power levels and the reconfiguration of relationship structures.

“Place” is seen as the spatial manifestation of social structures, which can be thought of in terms of proximity, spatial embeddedness, regional differences, and identity. A place is produced within a specific set of social relations that are associated with a specific location, and places are constructed under the geometry of rights. Places are the locus of social practices and meanings and sites of innovation and change, as well as sites of resistance and conflict [36]. The relationship between places and territories is reflected in how processes of territorialization affect the construction of places and the formation of local identities. Territories provide physical and political boundaries for places, and the social practices and cultural significance of places counteract the perception and utilization of these territorial boundaries. While the definition and management of territories is the embodiment of the organization and control of space at the macro level, places become concrete sites of territorial policy and the exercise of power at the micro level. The development and change of places thus reflect strategies of territorial management and spatial governance, reflecting the dynamism and diversity of spatial organization.

“Scale” refers to the hierarchization and vertical differentiation of social relations, or as a scalar division of socio-spatial structure, and its construction involves the ways in which political, economic, and social processes are organized and interact at spatial levels [29]. Never fixed but constantly reconfigured in terms of their scope, content, relative importance, and interrelationships [37], the existence of scales emphasizes the fact that places and territories are not static and unchanging entities but are constantly changing in response to multiple forces, such as globalization, national policies, local actions, and individual practices. This dynamism enables us to analyze, from a more nuanced perspective, how individuals counter or adapt to the impacts of national policies and market forces by interacting and strategically deploying at different scales.

The “network”, as the final dimension of the framework, is characterized by interconnectedness and interdependence. By highlighting the characteristics of mobility, connectivity, and boundary crossing, networks not only challenge the notion of boundaries inherent in territories and places but also redefine the notion and role of scale. Networks can be understood on the basis of the connectivity of nodes in a topological network and the social relations of associations between nodes, an understanding that can remind us of the relational nature of space [38]. In the network dimension, social space is viewed as a dynamic, interconnected structure in which nodes (which can be local, urban, regional, etc.) are connected to each other through various forms of mobility (e.g., movement of people, information, and resources). This perspective emphasizes that space is not only a physical location but also a product of intertwined social relations, power structures, and cultural meanings. In contrast to other dimensions, the concept of network inherently escapes fixity and is not contained by a particular spatial form or the existence of specific coordinates [39]; in contrast, it transcends, rather than covers, space, breaking through the boundaries that divide political entities [40] and endowing actors with greater mobility to mobilize a wider range of social forces. Furthermore, the uneven distribution of power in networks shapes the different political strategies that actors adopt to access various resources. In addition, networks also connect elements such as capital and information as well as different spatial units and create different types of mobility spaces [13].

2.2. Development of the TPSN Analytical Framework

Paasi pointed out that while the framework proposed by Jessop et al. is highly illuminating in the multidimensional quest to theorize socio-spatial relations, the task of the researcher in the concrete social world is to shape the theoretical content of these categories by conceptualizing them in order to analyze the social world’s dynamics and to develop new conceptual solutions during their research in order to respond to emerging needs [41]. At the same time, Ludger indicated that the TPSN framework is not perfect and that it can be complemented by categories such as ‘power’ and ‘politics’ in order to broaden its perspective [30]. Smith transformed the traditional TPSN model and proposed an analytical framework for the transformation process of Chinese villages by adding the temporality dimension and removing the place dimension [13]. An attempt was made to reveal that top-down and bottom-up strategies are not independent but are intertwined and mutually constitutive in the transformation process of Chinese urban villages. This perspective challenges the conventional view of limiting interventions to top-down planning hierarchies and emphasizes the need for a more nuanced consideration of the diverse processes of village transformation. The temporality dimension was also introduced to emphasize the temporal dynamics of spatial organization, social relations, and power structures.

Smith first highlighted the dimension of scale to weaken the linear perspective of top-down exploitation by the state and bottom-up resistance by peasants in the study of urban village transformation. The traditional top-down/bottom-up structure greatly simplifies the scale relations involved in village transformation, reducing the multidimensional process to a unidimensional vertical relationship between the top and the bottom. The hierarchical order of the state and planning institutions has an undeniable influence on the emergence of urban village transformation. Competition, cooperation, and negotiation between actors at different scales are important in the process of settlement transformation [42–44]. Scale analysis enables the identification and critique of scale presence in national policies, as well as the deepening of urban–rural disparities that result from such mismatches and the impediments to the formation of more effective and inclusive spatial governance strategies. Scale is both material and discursive [45]. The scaling analysis perspective facilitates the revelation of farmers’ initiatives in global–national–local scale relations and their active role and potential in spatial organization. The importance of multi-scale interactions in constructing more equitable and sustainable urban–rural relationships is highlighted [46].

After highlighting the importance of scale analysis in breaking down dichotomous analytical perspectives, Smith emphasizes the logical relationship between network analysis and scale analysis. Network analysis emphasizes that urban and rural areas are no longer segregated or antagonistic entities but rather nodes that are closely connected through forms of mobility such as population migration, information dissemination, and economic exchanges, facilitating interactions between different scales. Networks emphasize the process by which urban–rural relations are reconstructed and negotiated at multiple scales through connectivity, mobility, and interdependence in the context of globalization and technological progress [47]. Close top-down/bottom-up analyses of village transformation that isolate villages from various intersecting networks are avoided. These circulation networks, which include capital and labor, represent sources of dynamic change that threaten to destabilize the vertical hegemony of the planning hierarchy.

While territories are primarily concerned with the definition and control of space, in the context of scale and networks, territories are not an established and unchanging entity but a process of being redefined and renegotiated in the context of constant sociopolitical interactions. Territories become more dynamic and are the product of the interaction of a variety of forces, including state policies, market pressures, community resistance, and individual strategies. The territorial dimension puts the analytical spotlight on the ambiguous definition of collective ownership of rural land and on land disputes that not only reveal power struggles but are also key to understanding the dynamics of urban–rural transformation. The territory as a battleground reflects the power inequalities and social contradictions in urban–rural transformation [48]. The territorial dimension emphasizes how land and the built environment become objects of acquisition, control, and exploitation by various actors—from governments to local communities. This perspective highlights territory as a kind of capital, a common currency for the strategies and negotiations of the different actors in the urban village transformation process, whose value and significance change according to the strategies and negotiations in urban–rural relations. Territory is understood as a spatial abstraction that is produced by actors' efforts to acquire, control, and mobilize spatial resources, including land and the built environment [35,49].

The analytical perspective of the temporality dimension, on the other hand, recognizes that both the process and the outcome of sociocracy transformations are open and uncertain and are influenced by a variety of factors, including policy decisions, economic changes, social dynamics, and individual behaviors [50]. Temporality, although often excluded from discussions of socio-spatiality [51], is a perspective that goes beyond outcome-oriented analysis to provide a more dynamic and multidimensional way of understanding. Smith examines socio-spatial transformation as an always continuing process of production, where neither the process nor the outcome of this transformation can be predetermined—it is always changing, constantly producing particular socio-spatial patterns. By focusing on temporality and process, this dimension emphasizes that socio-spatial formation and transformation are ongoing processes, not just static or predetermined outcomes, thus challenging the traditional approach of treating urban and rural areas as fixed, static categories and emphasizing instead that they are always changing and evolving as spaces in the process.

2.3. *An Integrated TPSNT Framework*

Based on the above, the core of the place dimension in the TPSN framework is to emphasize the shaping and exploitation of particular places by social relations and their impact on sociocracy relations. This dimension helps to reveal the locational identities and social practices involved in the transformation of urban villages and their role in the reorganization of urban–rural relations and social space. However, if temporality is ignored, the place dimension may favor a static understanding that fails to adequately capture the temporal dynamics of the process of spatial transformation. Smith highlights the temporal dimension in his theoretical framework of urban village transformation by focusing on the importance of the socio-spatial impacts of time, particularly the

importance of historical processes and future expectations in spatial transformation. This perspective complements the understanding of the dynamics of the transformation process. However, the exclusion of the local dimension from Smith's framework may overlook the far-reaching impact of local social relations and their social practices shaped in specific geographical locations on the transformation process. Therefore, to optimize the analysis of the transformation and development process of urban villages, we need to fuse these two theoretical perspectives together, retaining the temporality dimension to focus on the dynamics of time, reintroducing the place dimension to capture how the local, as a vehicle of self-organized governance in Chinese urban villages, can leverage scales and networks to spatially reshape the process of rural transformation as well as its response to top-down territorialization.

Therefore, this study comprehensively draws on the multidimensional analysis framework of territory, scale, network, and temporality proposed by Smith, and combines it with the traditional TPSN (territory–place–scale–network) model to construct a model that includes territory, network, time, and place. The socio-spatial multidimensional model with five dimensions of scale and place is specifically used to explore the development and transformation of urban villages in the context of China's urbanization in order to avoid falling into a simplified binary oppositional analysis model (Figure 1). At the same time, this model emphasizes the conceptualization of each dimension from a geographical perspective in order to make better use of this model. The first phase of the analysis focuses on the territorial dimension. It is necessary to describe the spatial and boundary changes of urban villages in the process of urbanization. At the same time, it is necessary to analyze how the village space is occupied or integrated into urban expansion by methods or power subjects and how the urban villages undergo a new "territorialization" in this process. The continuous loss of urban village territory during this stage reflects the ongoing urbanization process, which has led to the development of rural self-organization networks and rural revitalization. It is necessary to study the traditional grassroots social relations in villages from the local dimension and how these grassroots social relations form bottom-up "territorialization" through spatial strategies and reconstruct the locality of the countryside. At the same time, from the network dimension, it is necessary to explore how local social networks can use mobile resources and transcend physical space to build new networks to support local negotiation and interaction with the government in the territorialization process. Furthermore, it is also crucial to examine the scale levels involved in the outward expansion of local social networks from the three geographical scale dimensions of scale up, scale down, and scale translation and how the expansion of village social networks is completed by crossing scale levels. Finally, the temporality dimension runs through the previous four analytical processes, highlighting the uncertainty and dynamic changes in the transformation of urban villages. Temporality analysis helps track the spatial changes of urban villages at different stages of development and reveals how continuity and discontinuity in the time dimension work together to affect the evolution of maneuver spaces. Combining the analysis of the above five dimensions, we can see the potential contribution of the development of rural self-organization to promoting the organic cycle of urban and rural areas, showing its role in rural revitalization, and how to objectively reshape the network structure of rural social governance and fill the power vacuum in the urbanization process. Rural revitalization and the urbanization process in surrounding areas can complement each other and jointly promote the sustainable development of society.

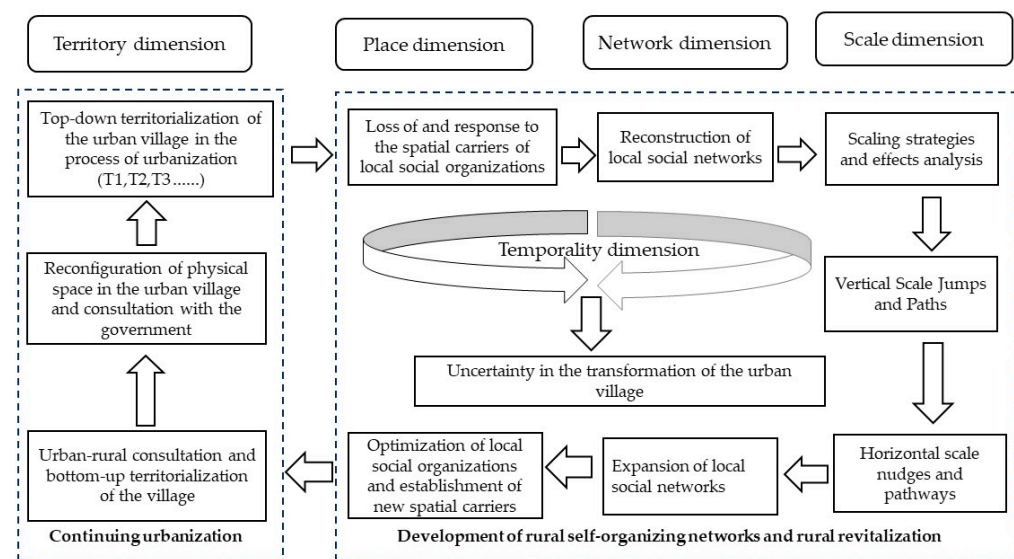


Figure 1. The research framework.

3. Case Study and Methods

3.1. Case Study

Hongren village is located in Guandu District, Kunming, Yunnan Province, China, on the east bank of Dianchi Lake at the intersection of Guangfu Road and Caiyun North Road (Figure 2). The former is one of the widest and longest urban roads extending southward in Kunming's urbanization and is the main channel for Kunming's southward expansion; the latter is the largest and highest-level urban road project in Kunming, connecting the main city of Kunming to Chenggong New Town. Hongren village is one of the 335 urban villages in Kunming and is the most affected by the urbanization process related to combined urban and rural areas. In 2003, the Yunnan Provincial Party Committee and Provincial Government held a meeting at the Kunming City Urban Planning and Construction Office in Kunming and decided to build a modern new Kunming with "one lake and four rings" and "one lake and four pieces". As part of the new modern Kunming strategic decision, Hongren village and the surrounding area were included in the center of Kunming City. Hongren village was also located in the "navel" position of Kunming City. The whole process began in 1998. It was first confiscated by the government with the construction of Guangfu Road in 2001, and, in 2003, the government's "Greater Kunming" master plan further placed Hongren village in a key area for urban development. In 2005, in anticipation of a major national sporting event, a new Asian Athletic City was built in the area, and a series of highways were constructed to link the area to the main city, further depriving Hongren village of farmland. To protect its interests, the village applied to the government for a piece of "reserved land" that it could use for its own purposes. In the following three years, the villagers constructed homes on the reserved land and established a new village. In 2010, Kunming launched the urban village renovation project. It was included in the scope of demolition and renovation, and Hongren new village and the old village were included in the scope of demolition and renovation at the same time. From this period onward, preserving the old village and the new village became the main collective activity of the villagers, and, in 2012, the government announced that the collective new part of the new village was to be removed from demolition and relocation so that Hongren new village could be preserved. Since then, preserving the old village has become a major issue for the villagers. During this period, the demolition of the old village stalled for several years due to the slow progress of government development projects. In September 2020, Kunming city restarted the "Kunming City Urban Renewal and Reconstruction Action Plan" and continued to promote the demolition and relocation of urban villages, and Hongren old village was demolished one after another in addition to numerous historical and cultural

relict buildings. At present, the space occupied by the Hongren village has mainly been replaced by a new village, and the historical heritage buildings of the old village and their surroundings have been planned as parks, which have become the public space of the city. Hongren village is also one of the few villages that survived the urbanization process in Kunming.

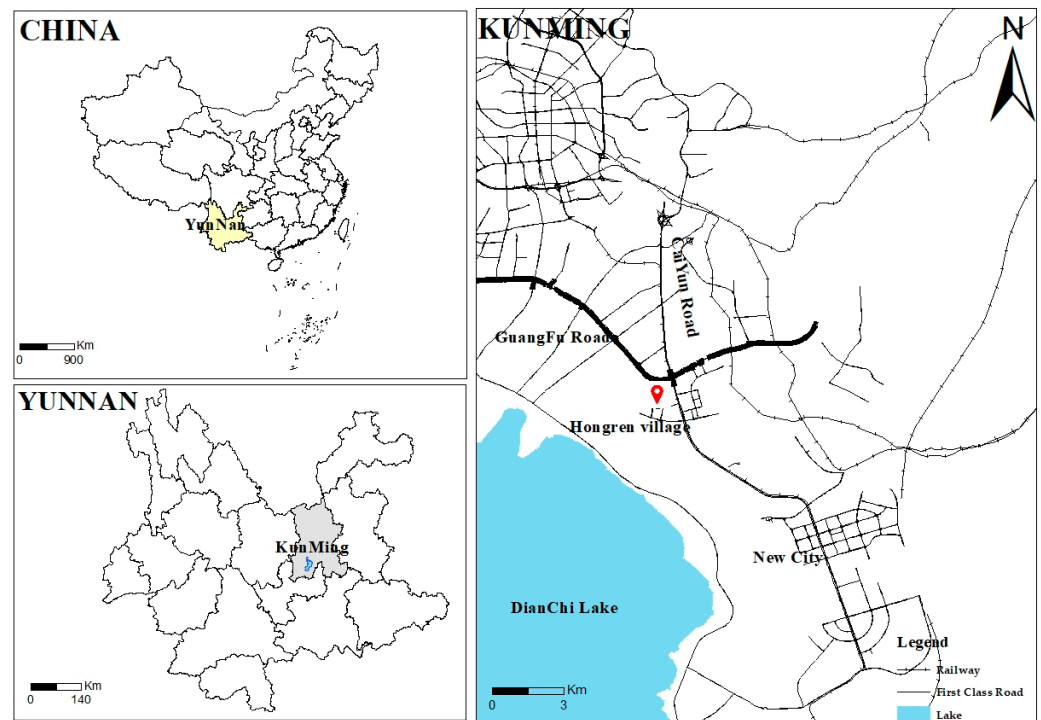


Figure 2. The location of Hongren village.

3.2. Methods

We adopted a qualitative case study approach because it is refined, focused, and well suited for studying the dynamic evolution of institutions and relationships in a particular empirical context [26]. Since we investigated the collective strategies of villages to create a “maneuver space” during the urbanization process, a village that has undergone administrative, economic, and agrarian reconfigurations in the capital region of a western province in China was chosen as the case study.

This study obtains empirical information through archival and news reports, as well as personal interviews and participant observation. In the case of the former, this study mainly draws on four types of primary documentary sources, including policy and legislative documents related to rural administrative and economic reforms, statistical yearbooks and almanacs published by urban governments, ethnographies and local histories, and relevant news reports. In addition to the above primary sources, the research team also conducted fieldwork, including interviews and home visits to understand further the community dynamics of Hongren village and the relationship between different social groups. Between September 2022 and May 2024, our semi-structured interviews with key individuals involved in Hongren village’s redevelopment varied from 45 to 90 min and were conducted in settings conducive to open discussions (Table 1). To protect the privacy of the interviewees, their names have been anonymized. The key interviewees included the head of the village, the party secretary, the local government leader, and five-person group members. The code for the respondents is composed of the first letter of their name and a number in the order of respondents. The interview data were collected directly from participants, meticulously documented, and tagged with identifiers for later analysis. We also conducted four site visits to Hongren village to observe its architectural environment, including its buildings, streets, squares, and public space activities.

Table 1. Basic information of the key interviewees.

Respondents	Age	Main Event
G01	40	Deputy director of the government leader, directly responsible for the demolition work of Hongren village.
P02	32	Elected in April 2010 as the head of village.
Z03	50	He has a good relationship with P01's family. In 2010, he became the party secretary of village.
L04	38	Elected as village group party secretary in 2010.
P05	56	Elected as the head of the village in 2004 and started building a new village during his term of office. Re-elected in 2007 and stepped down from his post in 2010.
M06	70	One member of the five-person group and a core figure in the Hongren village demolition protest.
L07	65	One member of the five-person group whose the eldest daughter is an important figure in the pre-demolition protests.
L08	58	One member of the five-person group who has been running a pesticide business outside the village for years.
L09	56	One member of the five-person group.
L10	50	One member of the five-person group.
M11	80	Owner of a historic building in Hongren village, actively involved in its preservation.

The interviewees provide key perspectives on the urbanization of Hongren village. P02 and P05 offered viewpoints on the governmental strategies and policies implemented during the demolition and redevelopment processes, while Z03 and L04 provided perspectives on the political dynamics and community leadership. G01, a local government leader, offered insights into the administrative and economic changes within the village. The narratives from M06, L07, L08, L09, and L10, members of the five-person group, highlighted the social resistance and community activism in response to the redevelopment efforts. M11, the owner of a historic building who was actively involved in its preservation, was interviewed to understand the challenges and strategies involved in the preservation efforts. Their accounts shed light on the collective strategies employed by villagers to navigate and negotiate the urbanization process. The inclusion of diverse participants ensures a holistic view of the demolition and redevelopment process, capturing the experiences and roles of various stakeholders.

4. Paths and Mechanisms of Collective Strategy Formation in Villages in the TPSNT Framework

4.1. Territorialization of the City and the Reconfiguration of Rural Space

The transformation process of Hongren village is embodied in the territorial dimension of land expropriation and village spatial reconfiguration, a process that involves not only physical changes to the land but also profound shifts in community identity, governance structure, and residents' lifestyles. The interaction between the villagers and the local government during the transformation process of Hongren village involved complex negotiations and resistance. Despite facing an unfavorable compensation situation, based on their deep trust in the state, the villagers accepted the reality of land acquisition. Furthermore, they fought for more just compensation and security through collective action and legal channels. This dynamic demonstrates villagers' negotiating power and confrontational strategies for the challenges of urbanization.

4.1.1. Territorialization Processes through Land Acquisition

The rapid urbanization of Kunming's center has led to dense development within the city, and the search for new development spaces has become the focus of urban planning. Due to the topography of the city from east to west and from north to south, the city was only able to acquire space for development to the south of the city. To rapidly develop the city southward, the government built a highway called Guangfu Road in 1998 to extend southward. Since this road passed north of Hongren village, the government acquired 61 mu (1 acre = 6.07 Chinese mu) of land from Hongren village in 2001. In 2005, Guangfu Road expanded, and another 113 mu of land was acquired. Subsequently, the government allocated another 686 mu of farmland from Hongren village to build the New Asia Sports

City residential area and Caiyun North Road. In the autumn of 2008, near the intersection of Guangfu Road and Caiyun Road in Kunming, this site was chosen for its unique location for the construction of the “Luosiwan International Trade City”, a top international trade center that is expected to lead the way in the next 50 years and is designed to boost Kunming’s economy. As a result, the last 600 mu of arable land in Hongren village was expropriated to make way for this ambitious project. At this point, Hongren village completely ceased being an agricultural village that relied on farming for its livelihood.

In this process, although the compensation offered by the government for the expropriation of land in Hongren village was much lower than the market price, the dichotomous perspective of “exploitation and resistance” was not observed. The fieldwork revealed the complexity of the farmers’ abandonment of their land. First, the construction of the two highways cut off irrigation and drainage routes between villages, causing it to be more expensive to farm the remaining fields. Second, villagers in China have always viewed land as “state-owned”, a perception rooted in the trust in the state that developed during the land reform and collectivization process of the early 1950s. This trust also includes the belief that the state will provide the necessary support and security for landless peasants, who, therefore, tend to accept the state’s decision to expropriate land when it is included in urban construction plans. Finally, despite the apparent low compensation, farmers believed that the state would compensate them in “other” ways. In other words, the interactions between the villagers and the government in the expropriation process were based on deep-seated trust in the state that goes beyond the level of the specific local government and involves trust in and expectations for the state [52]. Although farmers may face unfavorable compensation during the implementation of specific policies, their fundamental trust in the state prompts them to accept this reality and to expect better guarantees and compensation in the future.

4.1.2. The Production of “Maneuver Space” and the Reconfiguration of Village Space

Based on their trust that the state would provide protection for landless farmers, the villagers claimed compensation from the government in “other ways” during the process of land expropriation. In 2008, during the government’s last land expropriation, the government promised the villagers a piece of “reserved land” (space to maneuver) that they could use at their own discretion [53]. With the construction of the Caiyun North Road and Guangfu Road, the location advantage of the two roads came to the forefront. Moreover, small businessmen and wage earners came to the urban village to rent houses. To protect the long-term livelihood of the villagers, the village decided to build a new village on the “reserved land”. Approximately 500 villagers were granted new residential land to build buildings. By the fall of 2009, the new village was completed. By 2010, there were more than 800 houses in Hongren village, approximately 503 houses in the new village, and more than 300 houses in the old village (Figure 3). Since then, the spatial structure of Hongren village has fundamentally changed, forming a spatial pattern in which the old village and the new village coexist.

The new village features a layout typical of modern urban communities. Its planning and design clearly demonstrate the villagers’ active efforts to integrate into the urban fabric, consistently meeting urban building standards (Figure 4). The new village consists of six-and-a-half-story residential buildings, the top floor of which is designed as a green vegetation-covered sky courtyard, demonstrating the consideration of environmental beautification and the residents’ need for leisure space. The buildings are arranged linearly in a north–south direction, presenting a rigorous planning order, and the facades, through the clever use of uniform square tiles and orange tiles, not only maintain visual consistency but also add to the aesthetic details of the building. The ground floors of all the houses are planned as commercial spaces, while the residential units are separated from them through independent entrances and access control systems, ensuring privacy and security for the residents. This design reflects not only the modern concept of dividing the functions of

residential and commercial spaces but also the comprehensive consideration of residents' convenience and community safety management.

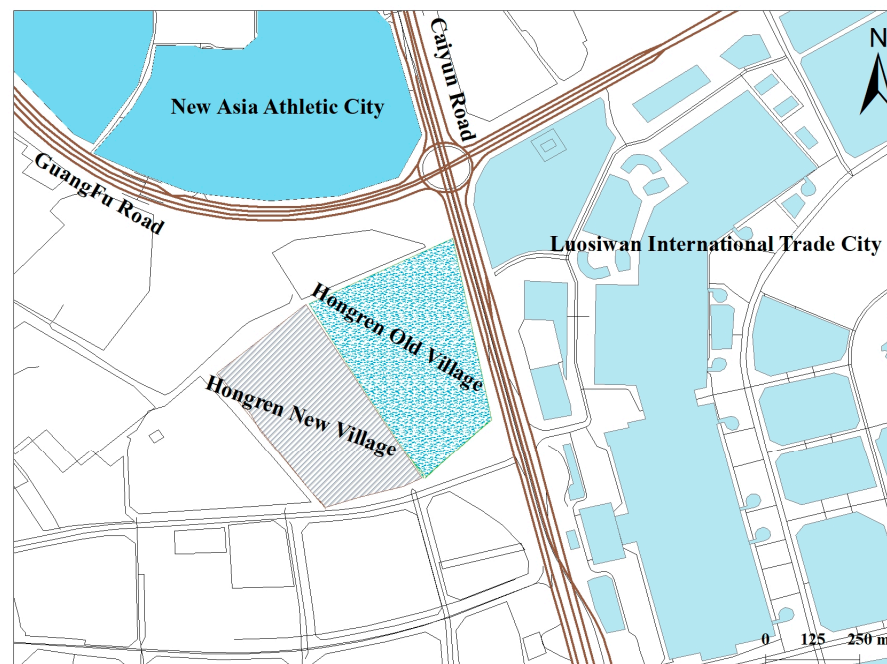


Figure 3. The location of Hongren new village and Hongren old village.



Figure 4. The clean and orderly new urban village.

However, with the launch of the Kunming Urban Village Renovation Campaign in 2010, the newly built villages were included in the scope of demolition and renovation of Kunming's urban villages. Still, the process of urban territorialization through "urban village renovation" was not successful, resulting in the new villages being left behind and the old villages being conditioned to be demolished with important village buildings left behind. This is because, in the past, "urban villages" were "transformed" into villages. This was made possible by the rise of previously "hidden" local social organizations in the process, which became a negotiating force with the government.

4.2. *The Rise of Place and Spatial Negotiation with the Government*

4.2.1. The Rise of Local Potential Energy

Places serve as spatial carriers of a specific set of social relations that are closely linked to a specific space and location. The government's land acquisition, village spatial reconfiguration, and village demolition programs have disturbed the social relations attached to the inherent space in the process of changing it, and the social relations that match the traditional space have inevitably changed and need to become more potent to maintain the existence of the place. In this process, village committees and village sages are critical in the reorganization of social relations. Not only do they represent the interests of villagers in land acquisition negotiations but they are also important in the spatial planning and construction of new villages. Consistent with all village governance models in China, Hongren village is also jointly managed by the Village Party Organization Committee and the Village People's Committee. The village cadres of the Village Party Organization Committee are appointed and paid by the village government and mainly represent the government's interests in managing the village. The village committee, as the grassroots organization of village self-government, manages village affairs for the villagers and safeguards their immediate interests. For a long time, the real power of the village committee was not manifested, and it had become an organization that exists in name only. However, after 2000, with the entry of government projects such as land acquisition and the demolition of urban villages, villagers' committees continued to rise to prominence in village governance. Especially after the government expropriated all of Hongren village's agricultural land in 2008, the spatial carrier that served as a vehicle for agricultural social relations was largely lost, and Hongren village's locality substantially changed. As a result, Hongren village needed a new space to carry out social relations, so the representatives of the villagers' committee continued negotiating with the government to obtain a new space that could be freely disposed of and finally succeeded in obtaining a piece of land from the government, which was not used for farming but for building houses. The underlying psychology of the villagers behind this act was that since the land could no longer be cultivated, "planting a house" on the newly acquired land would secure their livelihoods and allow space to carry out their traditional social relationships.

By 2010, in the face of urban village redevelopment requiring that both the new and old villages be demolished, local momentum increased further. During this period, the Village Party Organization Committee, representing the government's interest, set up a demolition office, with all members withdrawing from the village to facilitate the demolition. With the withdrawal of the Party Committee from the village, the village committee, led by five village sages, led the village to use the old houses of the old village as a spatial strategy to protect the village from demolition between 2010 and 2012. They utilized the village's former public spaces (Figure 5)—"bridgehead" (Qiaotou, where goods were traded and information was exchanged) and "new guest hall" (Ketang, where villagers' major collective activities were held)—to conduct the "Household Heads' Meeting" and "Villagers' Representatives' Meeting", which were convened by the village team leader. The "Head of Household Meeting" and "Villagers' Representative Meeting" are convened by the head of the village group to discuss the village's self-governance. As a result, new villages, old houses, and public spaces represented by "Bridgehead" and "Parlor" have become places with potential in the government's territorialization and have the energy to reshape subsequent urban and rural spaces.

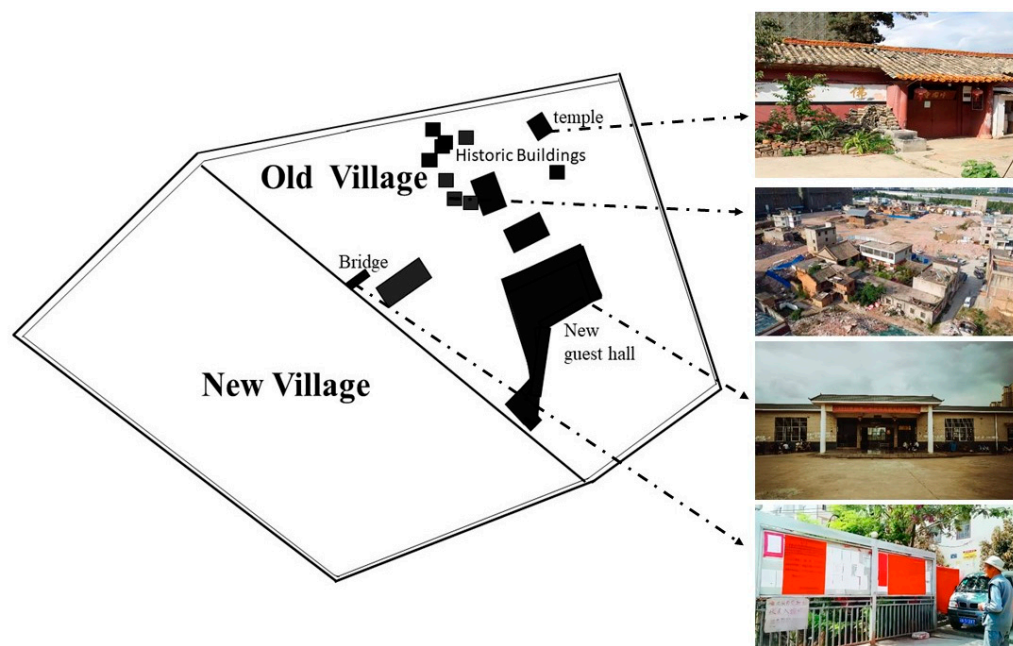


Figure 5. The location of the bridgehead and new guest hall.

4.2.2. Spatial Negotiations between Urban Village and the Government

Typically, urban villagers may identify themselves in opposition to social groups outside of their village. The concept of resistance could be defined as political and cultural struggles carried out by social actors to challenge or undermine dominant power structures or the production of space. In response to these issues, local identities are formed, which create spaces of resistance [54]. At the beginning of the urban village renovation campaign, the village party organization committee and the demolition office were withdrawn from the village and moved to the outskirts of the village, handing over their houses to the demolition office for demolition, which made room for the rise of local power. The villagers could hold regular gatherings in the “guest hall” (a public place) every Wednesday evening, organized by elites outside the system. M11, a highly respected village representative, explained central government policies at each meeting and educated the villagers about the law to make them aware of their rights. With the constant appeals of the village’s extra-institutional elites and village sages, the villagers began a sustained campaign to defend their new village. With the help of influential figures and the media, they publicized that the spatial planning of the new village was in line with urban planning standards to argue for the rationality of retaining the new village and gaining the government’s promise. In addition, the villagers also sought to preserve the old village by applying to the government to list it as a traditional village in Kunming, but the idea of listing the old village as a traditional village did not materialize.

Since the old village could not be protected without it becoming a traditional village, to preserve the old village as much as possible, the village committee attempted to declare some of the historical buildings in the old village as historical relics of Kunming city to avoid them being demolished and relocated. In addition, the representatives of the village committee approached some scholars who supported heritage conservation, and together with these scholars, they jointly suggested that the Kunming Urban Planning Bureau adjust the demolition plan of the old village. In the end, the Kunming Urban Planning Bureau adjusted the demolition plan of the old village, adjusting the two ancient temples of Hongren Temple and Zhuguo Temple out of the scope of the demolition of the old village. However, the villagers of Hongren village demanded that not only these two temples be protected but also that the hundreds-of-years-old houses in the village be listed as cultural relics to be protected. However, since most of these dwellings were unoccupied and their ownership was not clear, most were not listed as historical relics by

the Cultural Relics Bureau, with the exception of 10 old dwellings. However, this process put an end to the demolition of the old village for the construction of the city's commercial district. Two ancient temples and ten century-old residences were able to survive, and the spatial planning around these artifacts was repositioned from a commercial site to a park site. The survival of these historical relics has become an important spatial stronghold for the preservation of Hongren village's locality, which supports the village's traditional social relations. Furthermore, the city has an additional park and tangible cultural heritage, adding to its cultural heritage.

4.3. Cohesion of Internal Networks and Construction of External Networks

The above analysis revealed that the top-down territorialization process of the state acts on a place with a self-organized governance system and that the territorialization process does not lead to the disappearance of the place but to its maintenance through spatial remodeling. How the enhancement of local potential is realized through network construction is a further question that needs to be clarified. Typically, cyberspace is constituted through relationships, space is not independent of relationships but is a collection of open, interconnected nodes composed of many entities. As such, cyberspace is characterized by interconnectivity and dependency, and networks can be understood in terms of differences in node connectivity and social relationships. In the case of Hongren village, before urbanization, the village had a self-governing social network structure hidden under the modern governance system. Urbanization, as an external driving force, brought this hidden self-governing social network to the surface. In the subsequent response to the government's urbanization, the network was dynamically constructed with the help of various mobile transdisciplinary spaces, which supported the retention of the locality. In this process, the network characteristics of Hongren village are characterized by internal cohesion while constructing a network that transcends the village entity.

4.3.1. Cohesion of Internal Networks

In the majority of villages across China, grassroots autonomous networks operate predominantly at the level of natural villages or production teams. Central figures within these networks often possess substantial social capital, enabling them to mobilize resources, disseminate information, and initiate actions. In Hongren village, the internal organizational network is rooted in familial and kinship ties across a diverse range of surnames. Of the twenty surnames in Hongren village, six are particularly predominant. Although minimal focus is placed on unity within extended family clans, significant emphasis is given to the connections among nuclear families. Intermarriages between individuals of different surnames are widely accepted, facilitating the establishment of interconnected relationships among most families across various surnames, thus forming cohesive 'family' groups. The social fabric of the village is intricately woven from several nuclear families and the extensive 'family' groups that orbit them. In situations involving conflicts of interest or legal disputes, or when support is needed, these 'family' groups serve as a dependable source of support and alliance. In the traditional governance structure of Chinese villages, local administration was predominantly autonomous, guided by the esteemed gentry class. This prominence of the gentry made them the most sought-after families for establishing connections, given their significant influence within the village. With the onset of urbanization in Hongren village, a pivotal transformation occurred. A "Group of Five", centered around a descendant of a rural noble and complemented by four village sages, emerged as a vital component in the village's social fabric [52]. This collective assumed leadership, forming a village council dedicated to addressing and negotiating with the government regarding the appropriation of village land. The "Group of Five" was distinguished by their noble character, deep cultural and scholarly knowledge, and strong community influence. The villagers' involvement and strategic organization of the villagers not only enhanced governance cohesion within the village but also enabled successful negotiations with the government. This led to securing land for the construction of a new

village. Furthermore, their efforts significantly contributed to the expansion of the village's external network, laying a robust foundation for future engagements.

4.3.2. Construction of External Networks

Unlike the period when the government occupied the village's arable land, the inclusion of the village as a target for demolition and reconstruction was a life-and-death turning point for the village. If the village was demolished in its entirety, it means that the village would disappear permanently. In the face of such an enormous turnaround, the internal network organization of the village chief was unable to cope with the situation, and it became inevitable to strengthen the external network. At the beginning of the notification of the village's demolition and renovation, a highly respected representative of the village sages explained the central government's policies and popularized the law to the villagers at every meeting so that the villagers could build up their rights and try to find a way to legally defend them. In May 2010, a five-person group and the village chief utilized media outlets to continuously publish reports on the demolition of Hongren new village, successfully capturing the attention of an intellectual who had once lived in Hongren village under the national policy of "sending intellectuals to the countryside". This individual harbors a deep affection for the village and currently holds a position as an influential professor at Peking University. He articulated his objections to the demolition plans through a blog post. Subsequently, the issue escalated to national attention when the demolition of this village was featured on CCTV. The report titled "Why Should the New Village Be Demolished?" highlights that Hongren new village is a newly built rural residential community with some infrastructure and facilities that even surpass those found in commercial housing developments. Arguing that demolishing such a new development would represent a significant waste, the narrative drew considerable attention. By August 2010, the demolition office officially postponed the demolition of the newly constructed buildings. In November 2011, the local street office issued a statement that parts of the newly constructed areas in Hongren village were excluded from the demolition scope, thereby officially recognizing and preserving Hongren new village. In the face of the demolition of the old village and in the context of the successful preservation of the new village. The Peking University professor called upon a group of historians and architects to join forces with the villagers to make recommendations to the Kunming City Planning Bureau and the relevant cultural preservation departments to adjust the demolition plan to preserve some of the cultural relics in Hongren old village. These efforts included formal applications to the Yunnan Provincial Department of Culture and the relevant departments in Kunming, emphasizing the historical value of specific residences in Hongren village and recommending that they be listed as "immovable cultural relics". As conservation actions progressed, a series of heritage protection and management measures were proposed and implemented, including salvage and consolidation measures for immovable cultural relics. Through these measures, the old village has been preserved to a certain extent while protecting historical relics. It has been proven that this outward network construction has had a substantial effect. Although the old village was demolished, the historical relics and the surrounding environment have been preserved and optimized.

4.4. Scale Reconstruction and Scale Effects

Scale reconstruction includes relationships and processes that jump scales or move diagonally or horizontally across territorial and administrative boundaries. The former refers to disaffected citizens who often "jump scales", appealing to the power of the central state in order to contest local abuses. The latter refers to the parallel structures of party and state engendering intra-state competition between administrative units with mismatched incentives and supervision at multiple scales [13]. Rural resilience has a multiscale correlation mechanism, in which external perturbations from higher scales accumulate and intensify as the scales move downward, while resilience is more reflected in the responses of actors at the micro-scale and their aggregated effects at the meso-macro

scale. From this, it can be seen that the influencing factors of rural resilience are multiscale, including individual or household factors at the micro-scale; the natural resource base of rural communities at the county (village) scale; and human, physical, and financial capital and their structural characteristics, as well as the mode and degree of urban–rural linkage, regional characteristics, and structure, at the regional scale [55].

4.4.1. Jump Scale Strategies and Effects

The scale strategy of Hongren village is mainly manifested in how the villagers collectively express their demands upward through the limitations of the local scale by means of a scale upward push. The scale-up strategy of Hongren village is mainly manifested in the stage of urban village renovation: in 2010, Hongren village faced the threat of demolition and relocation of urban villages, and the villagers questioned the demolition and relocation, arguing that the demolition and renovation project lacked official land acquisition approval from the government at the provincial level or above and that the demolition and relocation plans were carried out only on the basis of a special planning guideline issued by the Kunming City Planning Bureau, which was a violation of the legal procedures for formulating the compensation standards and issuing the acquisition notices according to the law. Thus, this practice did not comply with the legal procedures of formulating compensation standards and issuing expropriation notices in accordance with the law and was a violation of the law. Between May and June 2010, the villagers exploited the comments made by the provincial media, Yunnan Legal News, and Professor Z01 of Peking University to bring the issue of Hongren village's demolition and relocation to a larger social level. Then, in July and August 2010, CCTV's Focus Interview brought the issue of Hongren village's demolition and relocation to national attention, prompting adjustments to the urban village renovation policy and program and ultimately resulting in the exclusion of the entire village from the renovation plan. Until 2012, less than half of the villagers in Hongren village signed a demolition and relocation compensation agreement, and the demolition and relocation of Hongren's old village was thus forced to a standstill. In 2016, the Guandu District Government signed a contract with the chairman of Hunan's Gangsheng Group to carry out a renovation of the old village, and the villagers learned of this and petitioned the Kunming Bureau of Natural Resources and Planning and the office of the Kunming Municipal Committee of Political and Legal Affairs but did not obtain a definitive answer. Subsequently, representatives of the village collective went directly to the Provincial Bureau of Land and Resources Supervision Office to react to the situation and learnt that the Guandu District Government had shelved the demolition project in the new village due to the lack of procedures to open a hearing as well as after the villagers agreed to sign a false number of signatures.

4.4.2. Scale Translation Strategies and Effects

In the case of Hongren village, the misalignment of incentives and oversight responsibilities among the various government departments at multiple levels precipitated internal competition among parallel governmental entities. This situation contributed to the deceleration of the demolition process of the new village and necessitated multiple adjustments to the demolition strategy. Since initiating the urban village reconstruction project in Kunming city in 2010, the Guandu District Government has been tasked with fulfilling the municipal government's objectives regarding land acquisition, consolidation, and transfer. Concurrently, the Kunming Municipal Planning Bureau issued the "Special Planning Guidance for the 'Village in the City' Transformation of Hongren Village", promoting the land acquisition, consolidation, and transfer project within the area. In 2010, Yunnan ZhongHao Real Estate Co., Ltd. (Kunming, China) undertook the urban village transformation project in Hongren village, aspiring to integrate it into the development of Luosiwan International Trade City. However, by 2014, the company had exited the project. Subsequently, XinHaiHui Investment Co., Ltd. (Kunming, China) assumed responsibility for the initial land development and arrangements. Yet, disagreements with the govern-

ment regarding project plot design and planning, land use methods, and the advance payment of funds remaining from demolition compensation led to the project's return. In 2016, an agreement was reached with Hunan Bangsheng Group, and its subsidiary, Yunnan Bangsheng Industrial Co., Ltd. (Kunming, China), became engaged as a primary land development and consolidation entity in Hongren village. By 2019, Guandu District State-owned Assets Investment Co., Ltd. (Kunming, China) took on the development and construction of resettlement housing, marking the commencement of gradual demolition in Hongren old village. In this process, we see cross-regional enterprises and state-owned enterprises competing with the government to control land resources. But at the same time, the villagers employed a strategy focused on preserving the village's historical and architectural heritage, actively collaborating with academics to advocate for the protection of Hongren village's historical relics and buildings. Their efforts led to detailed submissions and applications to the Kunming Urban Planning Bureau and the Guandu District Cultural Relics Bureau, aiming to revise the initial demolition plan. These actions prompted a reevaluation by the Guandu District Cultural Relics Bureau, including a secondary survey of Hongren village. Consequently, two temples, previously identified during the third national cultural relics census in Guandu District, were designated for in situ preservation. In 2019, the Guandu District Natural Resources and Planning Bureau announced the on-site protection of Hongren village's historical and cultural relics through the "Response to the Investigation on Issues Related to the Controlled Detailed Planning Adjustment of the Urban Village Renovation Project of Hongren village in Guandu District". Furthermore, in 2020, the "Pre-approval Announcement of the Modification of the Controlled Detailed Plan for Cultural Relics and Traditional Residential Relevant Areas of Hongren Old Village in Guandu District" was issued, extending in situ reinforcement and protection measures to include certain residential buildings of historical significance.

4.5. *Different Modes of Transformation in Temporality*

Temporality is an important, albeit often neglected, addition to the discussion of socio-spatiality. It is essential in preventing the rigidity of territories, networks, places, and scales. The transformation of socio-spatiality is an ongoing process of production in which the formation of any socio-spatial entity cannot be seen in isolation as a static fragment of time. Temporality emphasizes the indeterminacy of the transformation of urban villages, which is always in flux and constantly produces specific socio-spatial patterns.

Hongren villagers have been engaged in farming for generations. The village lacks the motivation to achieve local industrialization and urbanization based on local enterprises, and the villagers will only humbly say to people that "people in our village only grow some food and vegetables for sale". It is undeniable that the process of urbanization and the government's transformation of urban villages can increase the attractiveness of the location, attract more developers and outsiders to the village, promote the development of Hongren village, and increase the income of the villagers. Therefore, the initial land acquisition and development by the government made the villagers anxious and hopeful at the same time. On the one hand, they feared that predatory governments and exploitative developers would make them lose everything, while on the other hand, they were envious of those who had received considerable compensation for land acquisition. In fact, this shows that the villagers did not want to simply resist and reject development opportunities but were willing to seek cooperative development solutions that could address their economic interests. This shows that in the face of urban expansion, in addition to facing the despair of losing their land, villagers also desire to maximize their own benefits from it. Supported by collective rights, grassroots self-development projects have empowered local villagers economically, provided villages with the capacity for self-determination, endeavored to narrow the social and spatial gap with the city, and created two patterns of transformation with very different effects in temporality.

First, the period from 2001, when the government began to expropriate farmland in Hongren village, to 2009, when collective housing was built in Hongren new village,

reflects the first mode of transformation in which villagers collectively responded to the sudden process of urbanization. As mentioned above, Hongren village has experienced four land expropriations involving a total area of 1460 mu. The implementation of this series of land expropriation policies reflects the government's pressing needs in terms of infrastructure construction, urban expansion, and commercial development. Despite the villagers' dissatisfaction with the amount of compensation for land expropriation, the final compensation arrangements, including the conversion of a certain percentage of the expropriated land area into a residence base and the provision of urban resident status, were the key factors contributing to the villagers' acceptance of the expropriation policy because the villagers of Hongren village relied heavily on growing vegetables for their income. However, the market's low vegetable prices meant that the annual income per mu (a traditional unit of area) was merely between two to three thousand yuan. In pursuit of higher economic returns, villagers have turned to growing flowers. Although growing flowers is relatively profitable, this agricultural activity comes with greater market risks. When there is a surplus of a particular flower variety on the market, these flowers are often difficult to sell and eventually have to be discarded. Moreover, due to urban construction and road construction, the agricultural water conservancy system around Hongren village has been destroyed, and it has taken more effort to plant a field, which is also something they criticize [56]. This process not only reflects the restructuring of land resources in rural areas and its far-reaching impact on changes in farmers' lifestyles during China's wave of urbanization but also highlights the significance of identity transformation for individual farmers.

Second, the period from 2010, when the government began the urban renewal of Hongren village, until the current demolition of the old village and the survival of the new village and important historical buildings reflects a second pattern of transformation that has developed as the village collectives have once again faced the government's territorialization. With all of the arable land in Hongren village having been expropriated by the government, the government's territorialization of Hongren village through direct expropriation of land that has continued since the start of the Urban Village Renovation Project in 2010 is no longer able to meet the requirements for the amount of land to be acquired, and the villagers have been unable to consolidate their local boundaries by lowering the amount of compensation they receive in order to secure the land reserved for the village. In the face of the imminent demolition of the old village, they can only make use of spatial nodes with "potential energy" to fight against the demolition of the old village. With the loss of land, the public space and faith space in the villages have become important spaces for the organization of local social relations, and with the rise of local social networks, these spaces have become more powerful and have become spatial strongholds for defending the old village. In addition, with the current national protection of historical relics, more than ten residential buildings in the old village, due to their long history and architectural characteristics, were also exempted from demolition and were protected and restored in situ, increasing the spatial stronghold of the old village in the fight against the demolition of the old village. In the end, although other buildings in the old village were demolished in order to protect these heritage spaces, the government was forced to adjust the land development path of the old village after the land resumption, changing the old village from the original urban commercial land to a historical heritage conservation site and urban park. Although other buildings in Hongren old village were demolished, as long as the core space that carried local social relations remains, it means that Hongren village will not disappear in the process of urbanization. (See Figure 6).

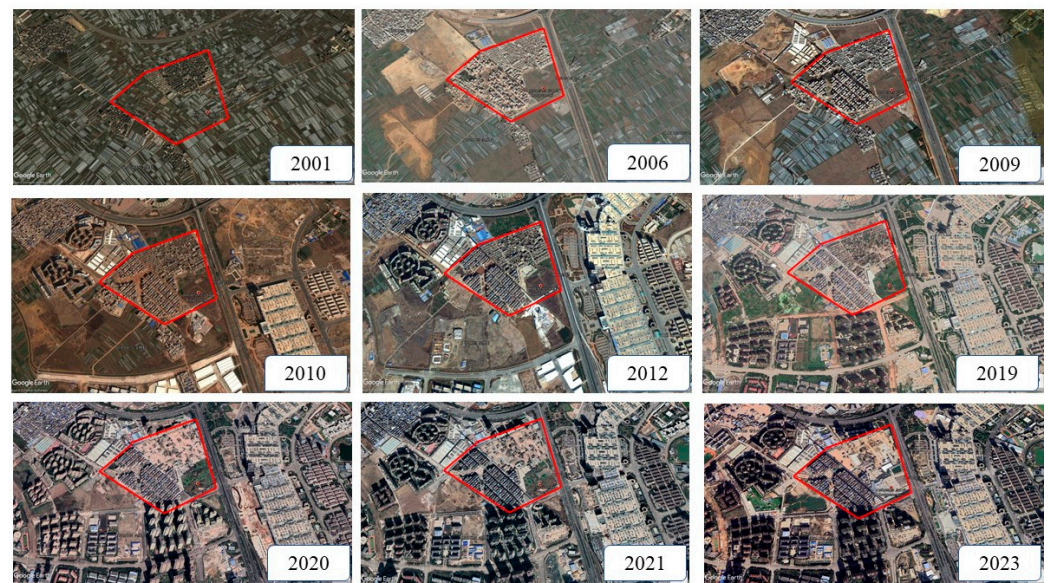


Figure 6. Changes in Hongren village under Google satellite images.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion

The study of rural development and transformation in Hongren village is validated through the conceptualization of territory, place, scale, network, and temporality to analyze the rural development and transformation of Hongren village. Studies of China's urban villages have focused on political, institutional, sociocultural, economic, and spatial dimensions, and investigations into the internal adaptations and spatial dynamics of urban villages have been relatively neglected [57]. We used the case of Hongren village to demonstrate the subjectivity and creativity of rural communities in the face of the pressures of urbanization, showing the complexity and dynamics of the process of rural transformation. This case challenges the traditional analytical framework that simply pits the state against the peasantry and the city against the countryside, revealing more complex patterns of interaction and interdependence. It emphasizes the need to adopt a more integrated and dynamic perspective when examining rural transformation in the process of urbanization to fully understand the internal dynamics and transformation paths of rural communities. As a collective strategy of Hongren village residents to resist urban expansion and safeguard their own interests and cultural identities, a “maneuver space” is not only a competition for physical space but also, more importantly, an active reconstruction of social space, economic practices, and cultural traditions. This creation and maintenance of space demonstrates the adaptability and resilience of rural communities in the context of urbanization [58] and has important implications for urbanization strategies and rural development policies. The success of Hongren village lies not only in resisting the pressure of urbanization but also in achieving sustainable community development through inherent strategies. This process shows that rural transformation is not a simple linear development trajectory but a dynamic process full of challenges and opportunities that require flexible adaptation and innovative responses. Therefore, research and policymaking on rural transformation should focus on exploring and supporting such nonlinear, diversified, and autonomous transformation paths.

The production of a “maneuver space” in the territorialization process in Hongren village reveals that farmers' perception of the “state” as the co-owner of land is rooted in the historical and legal framework of China's land system. This belief influences peasants' perceptions of land ownership and use rights, causing them to be more receptive when faced with the state's decision to expropriate land. This acceptance is not only a consideration of financial compensation but also respect and trust in the state's authority and land management system. Behind the ostensibly low compensation fees, local gov-

ernments provide additional benefits to farmers through other forms of compensation (e.g., enabling farmers to grant land for housing in new villages). This form of compensation may be overlooked in traditional analyses, but it is an important consideration for farmers because it relates to their future quality of life and the conditions of resettlement. Farmers' fundamental trust in the state and their expectation of its commitment are important psychological bases for their acceptance of land expropriation and compensation arrangements and provide preconditions for local and governmental negotiations. This trust and expectation are based on historical experience and an understanding of the role of the state that goes beyond specific local government behavior and involves trust in the state. This reflects a more macro-level social mentality in which there is a deep emotional connection and interdependence between the state and peasants, which is not explained by domination resistance.

The example of Hongren village also provides new perspectives for understanding urban–rural relations. In traditional conceptualizations, the urban–rural relationship is often viewed as a simple dichotomy or linear trajectory of development [59], and the existence and transformation of urban villages challenge this conceptualization by demonstrating more complex interactions and interactions between urban and rural areas. The transformation process of urban villages reveals that rural communities not only retain their own characteristics and values in the face of the challenges of urbanization but also contribute to the development of cities. This interaction involves not only spatial integration but also an intermingling of cultural, economic, and social practices, which is essential in breaking down the traditional urban–rural dichotomy and promoting integrated urban–rural development. The study was conducted over a defined period, and the dynamics of rural transformation can evolve significantly over time. This temporal boundary means that the findings may not fully capture the long-term outcomes and impacts of the redevelopment. The enhancement of research in this field is under consideration for the future.

Regarding development policies for special communities such as urban villages, it is recommended that policymakers respect and make use of community subjectivity and collective wisdom, recognizing the positive role of communities in urban–rural transformation and supporting their leading role in planning and development. Mexico's village experience demonstrates an organic and often unplanned expansion of communities from shantytowns to recognized urban areas through grassroots efforts and eventual government intervention [60]. This demonstrates the potential for community-driven solutions in areas where formal planning may not be immediately feasible, highlighting adaptability and innovation at the local level.

Through the lens of Hongren village's transformation, it is evident that the interplay between urbanization and rural identity is not merely a tale of subsumption under urban expansion but a vibrant dialog of adaptation and resistance. With local resistance, urban villagers are not mere receptors of global processes or national strategies of action [61]. They can alter, redirect, or prevent processes by articulated collective action, mainly based on conflict and protest. The villagers of Hongren, armed with a deep-seated sense of community and a rich tapestry of cultural heritage, have not passively accepted the changes imposed upon them. Instead, they have harnessed these changes as a platform to negotiate for better terms and to assert their place in the evolving urban landscape. This engagement highlights the critical role of the rural collective in an urban village facing urban pressures. It is not enough to consider these villagers as mere backdrops to urban development; they are active participants with the potential to influence and reshape the narrative of urbanization itself. By mobilizing collective strategies and engaging in legal and consultative processes, Hongren village exemplifies how rural areas can exert significant influence over the terms of their integration into the urban fabric [62]. The transformation of Hongren village serves as a crucial reminder that urban development should not erase rural legacies but should integrate them in a manner that respects and enhances their unique cultural and social values. This integration not only enriches the urban experience but also ensures

that rural communities retain their vitality and relevance in an increasingly urban-centric world [63,64].

5.2. Conclusions

Hongren village's experience of transformation in the process of urbanization reveals complex social dynamics and patterns of local development through in-depth analysis of five socio-spatial dimensions: territory, place, scale, temporality, and network. (a) The territorial changes triggered by land expropriation triggered community members to reassess their rights and interests, demonstrating the social attributes and conflicting nature of territorial space. (b) Social networks, which are crucial in the organization and implementation of resistance, strengthened the community's information exchange and strategic coordination through informal meetings and the interaction of external experts. (c) The scaled interaction of consultative action demonstrates multiple levels of influence, from the local to the national level, and the dynamic process by which communities attempt to influence broader social policies. (d) Cumulative effects and phase characteristics in the temporality dimension highlight the development and transformation of resistance, while the importance of local characteristics lies in the identity of community members, their logic of action, and their contribution to the dynamics of consultation.

The rural transformation of Hongren village is closely related to the process of urbanization, involving the physical remodeling of a specific area and its social practices, meanings, and identities. Defining the identities of regions or cities, such as neat and orderly new villages (differentiated from chaotic and disorderly urban villages) and immovable cultural relics, not only legitimizes the existence of Hongren new village and Hongren old village buildings at the discursive level but also reflects the importance of place preservation strategies. The close connection between places and territories, the demarcation of boundaries, the application of socio-spatial strategies, and political and power considerations in the process of village transformation emphasize the importance of governance structures and place-making activities. These activities aim to remedy the problems associated with the development of rural transformation and tap into its possibilities as a potential for regional economic development, thus revealing that the socio-spatial dimension is crucial for understanding the spatiality and dynamics of rural transformation [30]. There also seems to be a strong link between place and territory in rural transformation. The demarcation of the boundaries of urban village transformation and the construction of the boundaries of heritage conservation areas are closely related to local identity and local decision-making strategies, and the source of the conflict is always a contest between the territorialization of the government (e.g., the demarcation of the boundaries of urban village transformation) and the reconfiguration of the place (e.g., the restructuring of the social, organizational relations and their dependent spaces in Hongren village).

The integrated framework of multiple dimensions of social space (territory, place, scale, network, and temporality) helps us clearly analyze those "mobility spaces (new villages and historical building spaces)" under the application of Hongren villagers' collective strategies. In this study, through a comprehensive analysis of the transformation process of Hongren village, we demonstrate that urban villages not only are passive entities adapting to the process of urbanization but can also participate actively in and shape this process through endogenous collective strategies and external interactions and actively participate in and shape the process. This in-depth multidimensional understanding and analysis provides new perspectives and insights for future urban village research and practice, emphasizing the need to go beyond the traditional dichotomous framework and fully recognize the subjective dynamism and complexity of village communities when considering urbanization and village transformation. Furthermore, we found that the transformation process of Hongren village involves a significant change in the power hierarchy. The government reorganized its management and control of Hongren village through land acquisition compensation and urban village transformation, reflecting a leap in the power hierarchy from traditional village management to direct control by the

city government. The villagers' struggle for more just compensation through collective action and legal means demonstrates the reorganization of power relations within the community. This analytical framework applies to the specific context of China and avoids the misconception that studies of urban villages often view them as transitional entities under the urban–rural dichotomy model.

As urban villages still maintain the collective land system, they usually earn economic income from renting out property such as houses and factory buildings. In the 'center-periphery' land value sequence of urban space, urban villages are usually relegated to a land value depression so that their lower cost of living and convenient location attract migrant workers. Moving forward, policymakers and urban planners must adopt a more nuanced approach to urban–rural integration, one that acknowledges the complex dynamics at play and respects the autonomy and contributions of rural communities. This approach should strive for a harmonious balance between development and preservation and progress and tradition, ensuring that the voices of all stakeholders are heard and valued. The story of Hongren village is not just a local narrative but a global lesson on the potential for equitable and inclusive urbanization [65].

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