"Urban Village" In China – Case Study Of LUOHE City

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Abstract
With the rapid development of market economy and the accelerating process of urbanization in China, the villages in the rural-urban fringe zone have gradually been included in the central city and formed the "village within a city", which is called "urban village", unique in Mainland China and different from the Western slums. Like other urban villages in other cities, villagers in Luohe city can freely rent their own house to migrants or people in need due to the lack of unified planning management, and even the house additional reconstruction is very common in order to obtain more rental income, thus leading to the harsh living environment with dirty environment, mixed population, poor public order and imperfect infrastructure, and limiting the urban development. Based on the previous researches and illustrated by the example of a typical urban village in Luohe city, this paper analyzes its forming causes, observes the current living environment, and investigates the residential evaluation of villagers and renters. Learning the status of the urban village from these three aspects, in order to provide the necessary information for the future transformation of an urban village.

Keywords: urban village, architecture, living environment, transformation direction

1. Background of "Urban Village"

The urbanization process has been accelerated constantly due to the reform and opening up policy in 1978 and the state support for the real estate in recent years, especially the expansion of urban area and the inclusion of surrounding undeveloped rural areas into the territory further form the unique urban village in China. The urban village belongs to the category of the city from a geographical perspective, but it still retains the traditional rural factors from the perspective of social nature, therefore, the most fundamental...
reason for its formation is the separation of the original urban and rural land policy system, meaning the urban-rural dual land system.

The backward planning, mixed population, poor public order and imperfect infrastructure in urban villages due to the lack of urban management system have seriously limited the urban construction and development, however, it is much difficult to renovate the urban villages because of the limitations in the land system and ideological quality. Now the municipal government basically adopts the "one village one policy" and develops the appropriate program according to the actual situation and local customs. Therefore, it is very necessary to make the investigation and analysis of each city and the characteristics of the urban village.

2. Antecedent Research

Lan Yuyun(2001) had analyzed the origin, development and reform's research situation of Urban village on the perspective of system and ideology. Sun Li had compared each representative place in China and made a summary. Many scholars have researched many urban villages in different cities of China: Yi Hongyan(2006) had researched urban city in Xi An on the perspective of residential space and construction. Guo Aiqing(2007) had researched the reform ways as the example of Shi Jiazhuan. Kawasoe(2013) had researched the example of the rebirth of urban city in Hang Zhou. Li Shujing (2013) had researched urban city of Guang Zhou on the perspective of residential environment and reform direction. Lian Xingbin(2016) had researched the re-development of urban city in Shen Zhen. Those all are very important material in the future research of urban cities' exploitation and research. We find out that all he research spots are in big cities and ignore the small cities in the process of research. At present (2017), the reform of urban villages in big cities are almost done while the conditions of small cities are pessimistic. This paper chooses the small city on the middle of China, Luo He as the object of study. It's meaningful to provide research materials for the reform of urban villages in small cities.

3. Methods and Purpose of Research

This paper takes Luo He in He Bei province in the middle of China as the object and research the residential environment of villagers. Through analyzing the residential environment, the evaluation of villagers to environment and the discrepancy between villagers and tenants, we can know the conditions and expect to future's development directions of urban villages. In the research of the future's direction of environment reform and better research methods, collecting the necessary and effective materials is the purpose of research.

Research Method: 1, on the base of the analysis of antecedent research, we choose the Gou Zhang village as the research object. 2, we observed this village and took pictures of its environment around in six weeks of the mid of August and late September, 2017. 3, Questionnaire survey. At the same time, we make questionnaire survey of 67 villagers and tenants on the evaluation of residential environment and receive 41 villagers' questionnaires and 15 tenants' questionnaires. 4, According to the research results, analyze the condition and further reform direction of object.

4. Introduction to Luohe City and Gouzhang Village

Luohe city is in central China's Henan Province and originated at the intersection between Lake Shahe and Lake Lihe, and its urban area has also been expanding along with the rapid economic development after its establishment of a prefecture-level city in 1986. Luohe city has grid-shaped road system and large-scale blocks. Some rural areas in the block are left and become "urban villages" after completing the commercial development. Nowadays, the complex population, difficult management, and poor living environment in the
urban villages greatly limit the development of the city. (Fig.1)

"Three-year Implementation Plan of the Urban Village Reconstruction in Luohe City (2013)" issued by the Luohe city government pointed out that currently, 46 urban villages need to be transformed. Considering the location and area factors, the paper selects Gouzhang village as the research object from the 46 urban villages at present (in 2017), as it has high residence density, frequent housing renovation, and rent and locates in the downtown. (Fig.2 and Fig.3)

Gouzhang village is located in the northwest of a medium-sized block in the northern Luohe city and surrounded by the medium-high-level commercial facilities closely. The east side of the block is the Haihe Community completed in 2005, and the two residential areas are separated by the middle Gouzhang trade market; the outside of the block has large hospitals, primary and secondary schools and shopping centers, and it is very convenient.

4. Construction and Current Living Situation of Gouzhang Village

The original house in Gouzhang village has a small courtyard, the flat facade and three-story buildings with about 120 square meters, however, many villages have begun to live on the first floor and rent the second and third in recent years with the continuous increase in migrants. Some villagers began to increase the story and the highest even reached seven in order to increase housing and rental income, making the higher building density in urban villages almost without green area and public facilities, bad sunshine and ventilation and the worse living environment. (Fig.4)
In addition, it can be found that Gouzhang village may still retain the residential characteristics of original villages after the survey, there are mainly “Zhang”, “Zhao” and “Chen” three surnames and even the same surname has the distant or close blood relationship, for instance, it is very common that the opposite is your
grandmother’s home and the neighbor is your cousin. Some villagers also choose to settle in other villages or cities this year due to economic development, but the living form based on blood relationship is kept.

The plan of some rented houses was obtained according to their description in the survey of renters, which can reflect two main parts (Fig.5):

One is to rent part of the original villagers’ house, such as single rooms and single rooms with the kitchen and toilet, which are the room in the second or third floor and have certain randomness in orientation, area, and layout. Although the living environment is not satisfactory, its rent is very cheap and about one-tenth of the average urban housing rent, which is very popular among low-income migrant workers.

The other is the renovated house for increasing the rent, such as hotel-style single rooms and suites, which fully learn the arrangements of some urban hotels, residences and have a certain degree of rationality in the function and layout. Therefore, in a sense, the urban villages are also influenced by the urban development imperceptibly.

5. Survey Results of Residential Evaluation

![Fig.6, The residential evaluation results (map of percentage)](image)

The "ordinary", "not very good" and "bad" ratio on lighting, noise and greening are over 61% according to the residential evaluation results, reflecting the chaotic village construction, high building density and a large number of illegal construction seriously affect the living experience of people; and the ultra-high density construction poses a great threat to fire and disaster prevention, and security protection, all these have shown the poor village living environment. The unsatisfied evaluation on the greening is the highest and reaches 66%, showing that the public environment and greening are also worrying in urban villages in addition to the construction. While we also found that the greening area of Gouzhang village is almost zero through the site visit. 71% villagers have selected "very good" and "good" in the evaluation of comfort, indicating their relatively high psychological satisfaction through the residential evaluation is not high, and they mainly consider good interpersonal relationships and stable income.

The basic attitude of renters corresponds to the villagers according to the relevant evaluation results. Only 14% express "very good" and "good" on the green project and their satisfaction is less than 34% of villagers, showing renters have a higher requirement for the living environment than villagers; while the comfort evaluation above "good" accounts for 73%, showing their current satisfaction with residence and living environment. (Fig.6)
The survey results of the residential evaluation show both sides have the relative high psychological satisfaction and are discontent with the residential facilities and public environment, reflect the rationality and inevitability of urban villages, as well as the current lack of better housing situation. On the other side, This result indicate that they do not have a strong willingness to improve the living environment, made it much difficult to promote the further development. It is necessary to make an analysis of the communication between villagers and renters in urban villages considering that some villagers may still maintain a good village relationship, further study how to mobilize their enthusiasm and make them actively improve the village environment, and these are problems that should be resolved in the future research.

6. Conclusion

It can be found that the current development situation of the urban villages tends to be stable gradually in the survey of Gouzhang village in Luohe city: the surrounding urban development has been completed and the coexistence of villagers and renters has formed within the urban villages. However, the urban villages have developed towards the city influenced by urban development. Although there are high building density, poor living environment and other problems of urban villages in the current urban development process, they provide the necessary living income for the villagers and the shelter for low-income renters and indispensable for them.

The urban village is not only a simple reconstruction but the left history of urban development. Therefore, we should fully consider the living needs of villagers and renters to show the urban tolerance and humanistic care; maintain the village intimate relationships, cultivate their ideas to integrate into the city, provide employment opportunities to solve the economic problems; and provide affordable houses for low-income migrants. Considering the corresponding solution from the two perspectives and avoiding mandatory removing measures should be the direction for us to study the renovation on urban villages in the future.

References