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Abstract	<p>This chapter examines a redevelopment project in Guangzhou, China, discussing the extent to which the local state has actively sought to bring about the commodification of a historic inner-city residential neighbourhood. It is argued that while local residents attempted to raise issues in various “sanctioned” spaces organised by the government, their voices to influence the fate of their own neighbourhoods were overshadowed by the local leaders’ ambition to tap into the developmental potential of local places. Nevertheless, it is also shown from the residents’ efforts that what may be necessary for local residents is perhaps an instance of collective mobilisation on the basis of their own vision of neighbourhood and city development, garnering support from the wider society. This becomes all the more important as Guangzhou matures and is expected to inevitably give more emphasis on the reuse of existing urban fabric.</p>	
Keywords (separated by “-”)	Enning Road - Three Olds Redevelopment - Old town redevelopment - Public participation - Limits of participation 	

Chapter 12 1
Elite Vision Before People: State 2
Entrepreneurialism and the Limits 3
of Participation 4

Hyun Bang Shin 5

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• Public participation • Limits of participation  19

12.1 Introduction 20

In urban China, enhancing the degree of local residents’ intervention in residential 21
redevelopment processes has been controversial. While there are calls for more pro- 22
tection of the housing rights of local residents who often face harsh measures upon 23
displacement, some experts also point out that what is problematic may not be the 24
absence of laws and regulations but the inadequate or instrumental application of 25
those legal measures (Diamant et al. 2005; Shin 2008). In other words, “rule by 26

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27 law” is more appropriate to explain the state practice of law in China, indicating that
28 governments are using laws in convenient ways to make sure they get things done
29 (Peerenboom 2002). Urban redevelopment is no exception to this. While the central
30 and local governments have been revising regulations on several occasions to clarify
31 measures related to relocation compensation and demolition procedures, it is ques-
32 tionable if these new measures address individual and social needs.

33 In Guangzhou, the municipal government has begun to pay heightened attention
34 to a new round of inner-city redevelopment since approximately 2006 (Ye 2011).
35 The focus on inner-city redevelopment could be understood as a spatial manifestation
36 of the municipality’s ambition to rebrand Guangzhou itself at the time of beautifying
37 the city before the hosting of the 2010 Summer Asian Games and the accumulation
38 needs that emerge out of land scarcity. Under these circumstances, it is expected that
39 there would be an inherent conflict between the government needs to assemble land
40 for development (which would incur residents’ displacement and building
41 demolition) and local residents’ desire to “stay put” or ask for “fair” compensation.
42 The expected surge of redevelopment projects suggests that local governments are
43 more likely to face a rising degree of confrontations by local residents. The ques-
44 tion is: To what extent is the municipality to make the redevelopment process more
45 inclusive, and how does this reconcile with the entrepreneurial orientation of urban
46 governance that increasingly characterises China’s cities?

47 In this chapter, I argue that the local state’s drive to fulfil its own version of urban
48 vision renders local residents’ participation efforts ineffectual. While residents
49 attempt to raise issues in various “sanctioned” spaces organised by the government,
50 their voices to influence the fate of their own neighbourhoods are overshadowed by
51 the local leaders’ ambition to tap into the developmental potential of local places.
52 I take the case study of a redevelopment project in Liwan District, an inner-city
53 district of Guangzhou in southern China as an example. I make use of a range of
54 municipal documents, media reports and my own field research observations and
55 encounters with local residents and government officials. Field visits were made on
56 a number of occasions between May 2009 and December 2011.¹

57 12.2 China’s New Urbanism and Public Participation

58 According to the strategic planning document produced by the municipal govern-
59 ment in 2000, Guangzhou’s development was to follow the path of “advancement in
60 the east, linkage in the west, optimisation in the north, expansion in the south”

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(Lu and McCarthy 2008:459). On this basis, Guangzhou has been pursuing outward expansion, investing heavily in dedicated development zones and, subsequently, in setting up new towns in suburban districts. The construction of new towns was also seen as a means to provide more dwellings to meet the growing needs of an increasingly affluent local population, as the city grew in both demographic and economic terms. This outward expansion, however, resulted in some neglect of the city's traditional centre such as the Liwan and Yuexiu districts.

From approximately 2006, Guangzhou has begun to emphasise investments in the old city centre to prevent the area from hollowing out. In order to address the financial pressure on local governments, real estate developers were encouraged to participate in redevelopment projects. However, the involvement of developers was to be under the supervision of the state, thus "state-led" to the extent that the state was to be responsible for building demolition, the displacement of local residents and the establishment of master plans for framing the nature of redevelopment (Shin 2009; Wang 2011; Wu 2007). Once the land assembly is completed, project sites are to be auctioned for developers' participation, which would help the local government to recover its initial costs by banking the land use premium. This "private-public partnership" was supported by the municipal leadership's commitment to inner-city redevelopment. As the then mayor of Guangzhou stated, "the government takes the responsibility of demolition and relocation. After completing relocation, social investments [that is, developers] will be invited for construction. The expenses for demolition and relocation will be paid by the municipal government in advance, while the district government is also to make contributions" (Nanfang Daily 2007).

Guangzhou's renewed urban redevelopment strategy reflects the rise of China's new urbanism and demonstrates the emergence of cities as sites of accumulation, characterised by land-based accumulation that makes an extensive use of land resources as a means to generate local state revenues and to help finance investments in fixed assets (Hsing 2010; Shin 2011). Local states have unfolded as key players in China's urbanisation, accompanied by their entrepreneurial push for urban redevelopment (Shin 2009) or "territorially based entrepreneurialism" propelled by China's integration with global capitalism (Wu 2003). In this process, strategic planning has become a major means to selectively target resources for economic development and state revenue maximisation (Wu 2007). While strategic planning allows greater room for integrating the views of domestic and international experts through various consultation meetings and design competitions, the participation of the general public in urban planning processes, however, is considered "as less efficient or ineffective in achieving economic targets and structural competitiveness" (ibid.:390).

In the changing relationship between the state and the market, the rise of place-based urban accumulation as a state project also suggests that urban development is going to be strongly influenced by "elitism shaped by the coalition of political, economic and intellectual elites working at the top levels of the state" (Ma 2009:ii). Local elites, especially political leaders, would endeavour to exploit the full development potential of local places in order to make both political and economic gains. Chien (2010) puts forward the perspective of "asymmetric decentralisation", which

106 refers to the simultaneous processes of (1) greater local autonomy through economic
107 decentralisation and (2) political centralisation to maintain the domination of the
108 party state. This creates local officials' "upward accountability", that is, their
109 endeavour to meet economic performance targets within their jurisdictions in order
110 to achieve career advancement and material benefits (ibid.). In other words, local
111 leaders are compelled by a "target-driven approach to implement policy" (Plummer
112 and Taylor 2004:7).

113 The entrepreneurial push by the local states in China and the upward account-
114 ability to meet performance targets by local leaders result in the production of a
115 relatively narrow space for local residents' efforts to challenge or change the course
116 of government schemes. Saich (2004) discusses two types of participation in
117 Chinese politics: sanctioned and non-sanctioned. While the former refers to the
118 people's participation in "sanctioned organizational structure of representation"
119 (ibid.:184) (e.g. authorised political parties, mass organisations such as Women's
120 Federation and grassroots community organisations), the latter refers to the **unsanc-**
121 **tioned** protests in particular. To some extent, the rising phenomenon of "nail-house
122 households" that refers to those refusing to vacate (Hess 2010) indicates the expand-
123 ing horizon of China's **unsanctioned** political landscape. Under these circumstances,
124 urban development is also going to be strongly associated with a particular urban
125 vision that the local elites hold, which leaves little room for public participation to
126 reflect those voices from grassroots organisations and local residents.

[AU1]

127 **12.3 Enning Road Redevelopment and the Elite Vision**

128 To understand the relationship between the urban vision of local leadership and resi-
129 dents' participation, this chapter examines the case of a redevelopment project in
130 Guangzhou. The Enning Road redevelopment site under investigation refers to an
131 old inner-city neighbourhood that accommodates a number of historic buildings and
132 cultural heritage known as Xiguan culture. The Enning Road redevelopment site
133 also enjoys advantages of location that would attract redevelopment efforts from the
134 government as well as interests from the real estate capital. The site's southeastern
135 corner also meets Dishipu Road, which constitutes the western section of
136 Guangzhou's famous shopping street known as Shangxiajiu. The Enning Road
137 redevelopment site is also located less than 1 km away from the north of Shamian
138 Island, which retains a number of colonial European buildings and has become one
139 of the tourist destinations.

140 The total amount of planned areas for redevelopment reached 11.37 ha (Liwan
141 District Government 2009). At the time of its first project inception in mid-2007, the
142 total building floor space in the redevelopment district turned out to be 20.71 ha. Of
143 these, 14.14 ha were subject to local residents' permanent displacement and there-
144 fore subject to demolition, apart from the possible preservation of 2.45 ha that
145 showed unique characteristics (Guangzhou Daily 2007b). The area is located in the
146 south-western part of Liwan District, and the name Enning Road refers to the main



Fig. 12.1 Enning Road with qilou buildings (Author's own picture dated 18 Sept 2009)

[AU2]

avenue along the southern boundary of the redevelopment site. It is known as one of 147
the best-preserved historic avenues that are sidelined with qilou buildings (Fig. 12.1). 148
Qilou buildings refer to buildings from the early twentieth century, having shop 149
fronts on the ground floor and residential places on upper floors: the protruded sections 150
on the upper floors are supported by pillars, thus creating shades from the sun 151
and protection from rain showers for pedestrians. 152

Rumours about the Enning Road redevelopment date back to the 1990s, but the 153
present-day redevelopment was first announced in late 2006 when the city came to 154
re-emphasise inner-city redevelopment. As for Liwan District, it proposed to carry 155
out five redevelopment projects as part of addressing the municipal government's 156
emphasis on inner-city redevelopment: the Enning Road project came to be the first 157
project to be implemented and also the largest project in Guangzhou at the time. By 158
the beginning of March 2007, a government task force was set up in the Street 159
Office² in order to carry out all the preliminary work involving contacts with local 160
residents for their displacement and relocation. This task force was composed of all 161
the various political, legal and administrative entities as well as the police force 162
(Liwan District Government 2007a) so that all aspects of neighbourhood affairs 163

²The urban administrative hierarchy in Chinese cities has municipal government at the top, then district government and then street offices. Residents' committees under each street office form the grassroots organs that take care of day-to-day affairs that involve direct contact with local residents.

164 could be dealt with. A statement from the Party Secretary of Liwan District sums up
165 the early thinking behind the Enning Road redevelopment (Xinhua News 2006):

166 (The) Enning redevelopment plan is to follow the municipal leadership's intention. It
167 should go through a series of measures for the transformation of the old city to balance the
168 inputs and outputs, and mobilise social strengths to undertake the construction. The com-
169 prehensive design is for us [the government] to carry out. The government is to decide the
170 overall framework, where to rebuild, where to demolish and where to do new construction.
171 These are for the government to decide. Detailed design regarding how to construct each
172 building is to go through bid processes.

173 Therefore, upon completing the land assembly under the responsibility of the local
174 district government, the Enning Road redevelopment project was to choose real estate
175 developers who would pay the land use premium to secure the site and produce final
176 products by bringing in their own financial contributions and expertise. Accordingly, the
177 compensation measures were also arranged by the district government. As rehousing on
178 site was not possible due to the transformation of the neighbourhood into a tourism and
179 cultural district that utilised the historic characteristics of the neighbourhood, local resi-
180 dents were to be permanently displaced, taking either in-kind or cash-based compensa-
181 tions. While public rental tenants were presented with relocation rental dwellings
182 elsewhere, house owners were encouraged to take cash compensation, using the money
183 to purchase an alternative new or second-hand dwelling. As of mid-2008, the average
184 level of cash compensation turned out to be around 9,000 yuan/m², which included any
185 applicable housing subsidies and incentive payments (Nanfang Dushibao 2008).

186 In essence, the Enning Road project is another model of promoting "private-
187 public partnership-based" urban development through the use of land resources, while
188 the local state, comprised of the municipal and district governments in particular,
189 dictates the type of redevelopment and business model. The cash compensation
190 and relocation expenses were to be paid out by the Guangzhou Land Use and
191 Development Center, while the Guangzhou Municipal Land Resources and Housing
192 Administrative Bureau was to arrange relocation dwellings. This meant that the
193 project site was to be under the control of the Guangzhou Land Use and Development
194 Center after the completion of residents' displacement and building demolition in
195 order for the land auction to take place (Yangcheng Wanbao 2008).

196 In this regard, the district government was very eager to look for potential devel-
197 opers (especially those from Hong Kong), who would be keen to partake in the
198 redevelopment of Enning Road. For some years, the Liwan District Government has
199 been hosting a "Guangzhou Liwan Spring Investment Forum" every year in Hong
200 Kong, and one of the major areas of investment identified by the government has
201 been urban redevelopment projects. As early as in March 2007, the Enning Road
202 redevelopment project reportedly attracted the attention of more than ten compa-
203 nies, including the Hong Kong developer that carried out the Xintiandi project in
204 Shanghai (Xinhua News 2007). The Enning Road redevelopment project continued
205 to appear in this investment forum in subsequent years.

206 The Enning Road redevelopment project has received a great degree of attention
207 from the municipal leaders who often highlighted the need of achieving both envi-
208 ronmental improvement and heritage conservation. Over the years, while various
209 draft versions of the Enning Road redevelopment plan were produced by the district

government, one of the underlying themes from the early days had been the importance of historic and cultural heritage and turning it into a means to promote development. As early as in March 2007, an emphasis was made on maximising the retention of historic architecture (shop fronts on Enning Road in particular), as well as cultural relics in the redevelopment district (Guangzhou Daily 2007a). In April 2008, the Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau approved the “Plan for Protecting and Utilising Historic Architecture in Enning Road Dilapidated Housing Redevelopment District”, which also highlighted the importance of heritage and culture (Yangcheng Wanbao 2008). The planning principle was to create a tourism and cultural district after redevelopment. A senior planner at the Liwan branch of the Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau states³:

Basically, this [Enning Road redevelopment] district’s plan is to decrease density and improve the environment, and produce facilities for public services. For instance, tourist hotels, tourism and culture facilities, also conservation of historic buildings, and the creation of green space as well as leisure facilities. Therefore, most (residents are) to be given compensation and relocated.

Consolidating these perspectives, the revised draft plan that the district government announced for a month-long public consultation in December 2009 was entitled the “Plan for the Protection and Development of Enning Road Historic and Cultural District” (hereafter December 2009 Plan), emphasising the cultural and recreational dimensions and calling for the creation of a “historic old city with cultural characteristics” (Liwan District Government 2009). The change also coincided with the municipality’s highlighting of its “Three Olds urban redevelopment policy”.⁴

Key emphases were placed on the demolition of most buildings for their commercial redevelopment through the creation of antique-style buildings and the reopening of the streams that flew through the centre of neighbourhoods in order to integrate the riverside development with new commercial, cultural projects (News Express 2010a). Accordingly, the Guangzhou Liwan Spring Investment Forum in Hong Kong in 2010 also packaged the Enning Road project as a project to create an “old Xiguan Town” that would become a tourism and cultural district (Guangzhou Daily 2010).⁵ In summary, the December 2009 Plan made it clear that the government’s aim was to transform the Enning Road site into a Xintiandi-style leisure and cultural place (Nandu Weekly 2010), which would host “facilities [whose quality would reach that] of six-star rating”, as the mayor of Guangzhou explicitly expressed in August 2010 (Nanfang Dushibao 2010).

³Interview on 17 Sept 2009.

⁴The policy is a brand name which has been attributed to the municipality’s renewed and heightened redevelopment strategy since the end of 2009. “Three Olds” refer to (1) “old” inner-city areas that see the concentration of dilapidated dwellings, (2) “old” factory areas that see abandonment and poor maintenance, and (3) “old” villages that have given rise to “villages-in-the-city” which accommodate informal extensions and building construction. Please see Chaps. 5 and 6 in this volume for more details on this policy.

⁵In total, 11 out of 53 projects that the district government showcased belonged to “Three Olds Redevelopment” projects, whose total planned area reached 0.87 million square kilometres.

245 **12.4 Permanent Displacement of Local Residents**

246 The emphasis on transforming the Enning Road redevelopment site into a touristic
247 and cultural district came with the permanent displacement of local residents. To
248 some extent, this was an expected outcome, given the ways in which the Xintiandi
249 redevelopment in Shanghai also involved local residents' displacement to make way
250 for the commercialisation of urban heritage (Ren 2008). The displacement of local
251 residents under the name of heritage conservation was also being replicated in the
252 Enning Road redevelopment project.

253 The actual commencement of residents' displacement started in May 2007, even
254 though the official notice of demolition including the finalisation of demolition
255 boundaries was publicly announced in late September 2007. It is interesting to high-
256 light the fact that local officials recognised the local residents' reluctance to move
257 out of the neighbourhood but still emphasised the government's decision to displace
258 them as part of the redevelopment project. For instance, the Liwan District's Party
259 Secretary said that "based on the previous survey [of residents], many neighbours
260 do not want to leave Enning Road. Therefore, based on the relocatees' wishes [sic],
261 their relocation housing should be provided somewhere within Liwan District"
262 (Information Times 2007).

263 The relocation and demolition progressed slowly. The initial demolition plan
264 produced in September 2007 subjected 1,950 households (based on property rights
265 associated with buildings within the demolition boundary) to relocation. This
266 included 702 households who lived in public rental units managed by the municipa-
267 lity and 1,248 households who were house owners (Guangzhou Daily 2007b).
268 The official commencement of demolition works started in November 2008, by
269 which time a little less than 50 % (954 households) had signed compensation agree-
270 ments (Guangzhou Daily 2008). The next year saw a much slower progress of resi-
271 dents' signing of the compensation agreements. By the end of July 2009, the total
272 number of households who had signed the agreements reached 1,188 households
273 (61 % of the total number of households) (Information Times 2009), 234 house-
274 holds more than what had been achieved by November 2008. Of these, 614 house-
275 holds were house owners and 574 public rental tenants, which meant that about
276 49 % of house owners and 82 % of public rental tenants had signed the compensa-
277 tion agreements, and that the displacement of house owners faced a much slower
278 progress (ibid.).

279 Another big push came from the municipal and district governments to see the
280 end of the displacement of residents before the commencement of the 2010
281 Guangzhou Summer Asian Games, but the completion turned out to be difficult. By
282 August 2010, 3 years after the commencement of residents' displacement and about
283 8 months after the Three Olds policy's official implementation, 444 households
284 (23 %) still resisted signing the compensation agreements (Nanfang Dushibao
285 2010). During the course of the municipality's implementation of inner-city rede-
286 velopment as part of pursuing its new policy of "Three Olds Redevelopment", resi-
287 dents' displacement continued. By mid-July 2012, 38 households were refusing to
288 sign the compensation agreements (Guangzhou Daily 2012b).



Fig. 12.2 Demolition in progress (near Yuanhe Street) (Author's own picture dated 9 Sept 2010)

As in many other redevelopment project sites, intensifying disputes over the level of compensation hindered the government's relocation programmes, and the situation was further complicated by the complex property rights arrangements associated with some of the private dwellings, which resulted from the fact that these properties had gone through historical turmoils during the planned-economy period. Particularly affected would have been those owner-occupiers whose dwellings were inherited from their ancestors but did not have formal title deeds to prove their ownership or those whose title deeds did not record the informally added spaces to address the needs of family members (Fig. 12.2).

[AU3]

12.5 Residents' Challenge to the Local Government Plans

The overview of residents' displacement shows that the local government's drive to nearly complete the assembly of the site and the removal of residents took more than 5 years. One of the major reasons for the much-delayed progress owed to the resistance by local residents who were frustrated about being kept in the dark regarding what would happen to their neighbourhood after displacement and demolition. While the news of general direction of neighbourhood redevelopment was delivered occasionally by the mainstream media and sometimes by government notices, the precise post-demolition redevelopment plan for redevelopment was still in the making when local residents were pressured to sign their compensation agreements.

308 As one of the residents stated in her interview with a journalist in December
309 2007, “I only know demolition will happen. Apart from this piece of [demolition]
310 notice, they have not explained anything, and have not asked us if we’d like to move
311 out or not” (News Express 2007). Such responses indicate that the government
312 attempts to organise concerted efforts among various administrative organs in rela-
313 tion to the Enning Road redevelopment were far from providing residents with
314 detailed information. Three years later, the lack of information still persisted, as
315 pointed out by another house-owning resident: “The purpose of demolishing this
316 place should first be known to us...At present, [we] do not know which developer is
317 going to develop [this area]”.⁶

318 Other major reasons for the delay included the appropriateness of demolition and
319 the level of compensation. When the Enning Road redevelopment was announced in
320 2007, it was originally packaged as an urban redevelopment project to address build-
321 ing dilapidation in the neighbourhood. Reports suggested that out of about 20 ha of
322 building floor space subject to residents’ displacement, only about 18 % (2.5 ha) were
323 known to be classified as dilapidated (Nanfang Dushibao 2008). This created frustra-
324 tions among those displacees who stayed in dwellings of reasonable condition.

325 As a resident representative complained in a meeting with the director of the
326 Urban Redevelopment Office at the Liwan District Government, “at the time of
327 announcing the demolition notice in 2007, it was said that this was a project to rede-
328 velop dilapidated housing, but my house is not dilapidated, so why is it needed to
329 redevelop and demolish it?” (News Express 2010a). However, when the December
330 2009 Plan was made public for consultation, it was reported that 82 % of the build-
331 ing floor space experienced dilapidation and were deemed dangerous for habitation
332 (Xinhua News 2009). Obviously, this was a highly controversial turnaround that
333 would have fuelled residents’ distrust.

334 Government-organised consultation meetings were not unheard of, but consult-
335 ing local residents appeared to have been tokenistic, involving only a selected num-
336 ber of resident representatives. For instance, when the Street Office task force was
337 organised in the early 2007, one of the first things that they carried out was meeting
338 with local residents. This took place on 14 March 2007, shortly before the com-
339 mencement of the government’s relocation programme, and involved the attendance
340 of about ten resident representatives to hear their opinions and suggestions about the
341 neighbourhood redevelopment (Liwan District Government 2007b).

342 Another consultation meeting took place about 2 weeks later on 30 March 2007,
343 this time organised by the Municipal People’s Political Consultative Conference.
344 The meeting also saw the presence of the deputy mayor of the Liwan District
345 Government as well as the head of the Street Office that administered Enning
346 Road. Again, about ten resident representatives were invited to attend the forum
347 (Liwan District Government 2007c). Pictures from the two government reports
348 indicate that at least four members of the representatives were present in both con-
349 sultation meetings, suggesting that the two meetings were more likely to have been

⁶Interview on 31 October 2010.

closed sessions with a hand-picked selection of local resident representatives. 350
 Various government meetings were subsequently held with the primary purpose of 351
 encouraging residents' signing of compensation agreements. 352

Other than these government-organised meetings, where residents produced bot- 353
 tom-up initiatives to collectively respond to government announcements or appeal 354
 against government decisions, their voices were met with poor responses. For 355
 instance, when the local government made public the December 2009 Plan for a 356
 month-long consultation, a group of six resident representatives from Enning Road 357
 met the deputy director of the Liwan branch of the Guangzhou Municipal Planning 358
 Bureau on 7 January 2010, presenting a petition letter signed by more than 100 359
 households (News Express 2010a). They demanded a public forum to be held to 360
 improve the draft plan, and this forum to involve "experts, academics, leaders, resi- 361
 dents and other related people, collecting various opinions and suggestions" (ibid.). 362
 It was also requested that the outcome of such a forum would feed into the process 363
 of revising the December 2009 Plan and, afterwards, host another public hearing. 364

To these requests, the deputy director simply retorted that they were too busy, would 365
 not be in a position to immediately respond to the request of holding a forum or public 366
 hearing and would first require communication with experts for their views. The repre- 367
 sentatives called the Liwan planning bureau on 13 January to find out the progress only 368
 to be told that the bureau was not prepared at the time to host the requested forum.⁷ 369

Not let down by the poor response, five resident representatives further submit- 370
 ted an opinion letter, signed by 183 households, to the director of the Urban 371
 Redevelopment Office at the Liwan District Government after having initially con- 372
 tacted the Petition Department. One of the representatives said, "Since 21 December 373
 2009 when the Liwan District Government announced the Plan for the Protection 374
 and Development of Enning Road Historic and Cultural District in response to the 375
 public pressure, we have sought the opinions of the Enning Road residents, and 376
 would require to send our views directly to the responsible leader at the Liwan 377
 branch of the Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau" (News Express 2010a). The 378
 residents' opinion letter criticised the fact that demolition was being carried out 379
 even though no redevelopment plan was formally approved by the government and 380
 demanded that the demolition work should come to an immediate halt. 381

Key criticisms included the following: (1) the draft plan aimed at demolishing 382
 most buildings and replace them with "antique-looking" buildings, which would 383
 be against the conservation of Xiguan-style tradition and its cultural roots; (2) the 384
 draft plan was to displace all residents and carry out commercial development to 385
 create Shanghai's Xintiandi, seriously damaging housing rights and going against 386
 public interests; (3) the draft plan also aimed at uncovering streams previously 387
 covered in the 1960s, but it was doubtful if adequate feasibility studies were 388
 carried out; (4) while explaining how splendid the future "new Xiguan" was 389
 going to be, the draft plan did not have explanations about relocation matters, 390
 hence was not people-oriented. 391

⁷Conversely, the restructuring of the institutional setting in response to the new "Three Olds" policy implementation at the end of 2009 might have also affected the lack of response.

392 Upon completion of the public consultation, when residents asked the Liwan
393 branch of the Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau about the treatment of their
394 opinion letter, they were met with a dry response that “everyone’s suggestion is
395 being compiled, and as for its announcement, please ask the Public Relations
396 Bureau, and there was no indication of when the Public Relations Bureau would
397 release any information” (News Express 2010a).

398 Not having had satisfying responses from the district government, a larger
399 number of residents took further actions. In April 2010, 220 households from the
400 Enning Road redevelopment site sent an open letter to the Guangzhou People’s
401 Congress and the Political Consultative Conference when their annual gatherings
402 were held (News Express 2010b). The open letter raised concerns about the
403 absence of any concrete post-displacement redevelopment plan, lack of attention
404 to heritage conservation and unreasonable compensation terms. Asking for
405 supervisory attention from the People’s Congress and the Political Consultative
406 Conference, the residents also demanded for the hosting of public hearing and
407 council meetings (ibid.).

408 Another major round of local residents’ collective action was made when the
409 municipal government announced its draft heritage conservation plan entitled
410 the “Guangzhou Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan” at the beginning of
411 January 2012 (Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau 2012). Seventy-eight
412 residents from Enning Road signed a paper to put forward their opinions, which
413 included their strong desire to keep the area as a Canton Opera culture district.
414 It was stated that “Enning Road is where the Canton Opera flourished. Does
415 Guangzhou have any other district that surpasses this area?” (Guangzhou Daily
416 2012a). Their concern was especially with regard to the area between Enning
417 Road and the (currently covered) stream which was designated as an “environ-
418 mental coordination area”, meaning that the area did not qualify to be part of the
419 core conservation areas.

420 The local residents’ concern for heritage conservation and the preservation of
421 historic buildings was not unfounded. Even though a number of top government and
422 party officials had been explicitly speaking out in favour of heritage conservation,
423 the official demolition notices still listed most buildings in the Enning Road rede-
424 velopment district. For instance, a number of residential buildings that heritage
425 experts defined as having historic and cultural value (e.g. Nos. 9, 11, 11–1, 13, 15
426 and 17 in the alley named Jixiangfang) fell to the ground against people’s expecta-
427 tion. Moreover, a large number of *qilou* buildings on Enning Road (Fig. 12.1)
428 were also subject to demolition according to the demolition notices despite the fact
429 that they were highlighted as one of the key conservation sites for protecting the
430 architectural heritage in the district government’s newly revised redevelopment
431 plan in mid-2011. These *qilou* buildings, together with a number of other historic
432 buildings, were finally dropped from the demolition list in March 2012 when a
433 revised demolition notice was issued.

434 To some extent, local residents’ continuous challenge to the district govern-
435 ment’s redevelopment plans did not go without any fruits. In June 2011, a revised

redevelopment plan was revealed to the general public after having been reviewed and passed by the Guangzhou Planning Committee.⁸ When this revised plan (hereafter June 2011 Plan) was known to the general public, the director of the Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau was reported to have made a reference to the example of Beijing's Nanluoguxiang as a successful case of neighbourhood transformation into a historic and cultural district (Nanfang Daily 2011a). This largely conforms to China's policy processes that depend on local experiments and extraction of successful "model experiences" before national-level dissemination (Heilmann 2008).

Nanluoguxiang gained its nationwide fame as one of the best practices that advocated heritage conservation without involving wholesale clearance and demolition (Shin 2010). The emphasis on the Nanluoguxiang model instead of the previously highlighted Xintiandi model implies that the future direction of the Enning Road redevelopment might emulate the Beijing experience rather than Shanghai's. In line with this reorientation, the June 2011 Plan made some adjustment to the list of buildings that were to see existing residents' displacement. This adjustment resulted in the preservation of an additional construction space of 23,000 m², thus raising the share of preserved building space in the total construction space to 55 % (Nanfang Daily 2011a).

In terms of residents' displacement, instead of 1,950 households, 1,823 households were to be finally displaced (Guangzhou Daily 2012b). Naturally, there were many buildings that already experienced residents' displacement but would survive demolition due to this adjustment, and the government was resolute that these displaced residents were not to return. The June 2011 Plan also divided the redevelopment district into several zones, identifying what functions each zone would serve and highlighting those areas where demolition would be prioritised (Fig. 12.3). In particular, the June 2011 Plan made it clear that key interventions would be made along the streams that were to be uncovered as part of the redevelopment, producing spaces that would give rise to the combination of recreational, leisure and cultural activities. These proposed uses were nevertheless what was previously envisaged at the outset, with the government emphasis on learning from Shanghai's Xintiandi.

12.6 Concluding Discussion 466

The huge delay with the relocation progress in the Enning Road redevelopment project indicated that the local residents' constant exertion of pressure on local and municipal governments and their resistance to signing compensation agreements produced a contested field of urban redevelopment. The review of redevelopment processes from the date of the Enning Road project implementation shows that

⁸This consisted of a selection of government officials, civilian experts and representatives from the general public. The committee was first established in November 2006 and reviews various draft plans in order to assist the municipal planning activities.

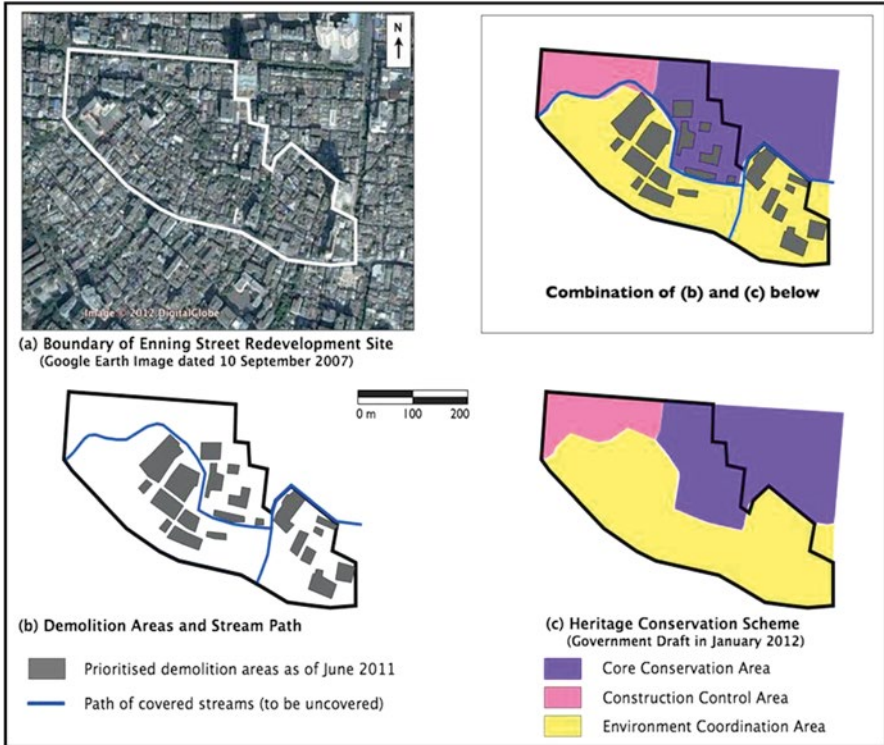


Fig. 12.3 Enning Road redevelopment district (Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau [2012] for the heritage conservation scheme and Nanfang Daily [2011b] for the prioritised demolition areas as of June 2011; Original satellite image from Google Earth. Image (c) 2012 Google (c) 2012 DigitalGlobe)

472 whenever possible, local residents were vocal about three major issues: (1) the
 473 absence of concrete post-displacement redevelopment plans, (2) the lack of attention
 474 to heritage conservation, and (3) unreasonable compensation measures that did
 475 not take into account the rising housing prices in adjacent areas.

476 Here, it needs to be acknowledged that while this chapter has not focused on the
 477 issue of fair compensation, the compensation issue had been one of major concerns
 478 for local residents, especially due to the rapidly rising housing prices in Guangzhou
 479 during the last few years. Nevertheless, the issue of fair compensation was very much
 480 influenced by the residents' concern about the first two points. Local residents were
 481 dissatisfied with the absence of concrete post-displacement redevelopment plans
 482 because of the uncertainty about whether or not the redevelopment project was going
 483 to be more about heritage conservation and environmental improvement to produce
 484 public benefits or to realise commercial interests. From the house owners' perspec-
 485 tives in particular, commercial redevelopment was something that should remunerate
 486 displacement with a higher level of cash compensation, thus becoming the source of
 487 their discontent with the government's standardised compensation schemes.

From the viewpoint of the local governments, the Enning Road redevelopment was a state-led project to improve urban environment (thus meeting the government targets of reducing dilapidated dwellings) and to exploit the developmental potential the historic neighbourhood offered. Creating a “Xintiandi” in Guangzhou was the urban vision held by the local leadership when promoting the Enning Road redevelopment project as a flagship project. This strategic vision was clear from the very beginning and had been fairly consistent throughout the years.

While local residents used various means and channels to voice their concerns about the state-led redevelopment in their neighbourhood, their voices did little to change the course of government action and were overridden by the government imperatives to fulfil the core spirit of the aforementioned elite vision ~~which was a modified version keeping the essence of what would be provided after redevelopment.~~ One of the few measures the local government conceded in response to the local residents’ complaints was the retention of a few more historic buildings on the site by making a small adjustment to the redevelopment plan in mid-2011.

However, this did not change the core nature of the Enning Road redevelopment project. Being persistent and pursuing residents’ displacement over a prolonged period of time despite some residents’ organised resistance, the Liwan District Government managed to displace most of the original residents they targeted at the outset of the Enning Road project, making way for the promotion of the Enning Road site as a touristic and cultural district.

While the mayor of Guangzhou was highlighting the importance of “preserving the history, preserving the culture, and preserving the historic memory” in order to simultaneously “improve people’s livelihood and cultural heritage” (Nanfang Dushibao 2010), the persistent permanent displacement of original residents who were part of the local historic and cultural heritage makes us question what the real benefits of the heritage conservation are going to be and for whom.

Local residents and experts raised concerns about the extent to which the municipal and district governments were committed to heritage conservation, and the discussions in this chapter shows that heritage and culture were the two keywords that the local leadership also advocated throughout the years. As exposed by the emphasis on Shanghai’s Xintiandi model, however, the urban vision for Enning Road held by the local leadership was devoid of original local residents and would not prevent the selective demolition of historic buildings. The Xintiandi model was not necessarily about preserving existing architecture but selectively demolishing historic buildings and converting surviving buildings into adaptive reuse (Wang 2011).

~~Beijing’s Qianmen area had also undergone the demolition of historic buildings, only to be reconstructed to resemble historic appearances, the process often referred to by local people as “fake over”. It is likely that this may also happen to those “preserved” buildings in the Enning Road redevelopment site.~~ The municipal government’s recent shift towards favouring Beijing’s Nanluoguxiang model may be regarded as a positive shift, given the lower emphasis on wholesale clearance and demolition. This may be regarded as the “maturing” of urban planning processes, influenced by the stubborn actions on the part of local residents.

533 **However**, the Nanluoguxiang model was a negotiated outcome between the local
534 state and a faction of real estate capital under mounting pressure for conserving
535 historic heritage adjacent to the Forbidden City (Shin 2010). The precondition was
536 the designation of 25 conservation districts by the municipal government. As for
537 Guangzhou, the Guangzhou Municipal Planning Bureau made a public announce-
538 ment in January 2012 for the designation of 48 historic cultural districts (Guangzhou
539 Municipal Planning Bureau 2012). Almost half of the Enning Road redevelopment
540 site was excluded from the designation, suggesting that demolition would take place
541 as originally planned by the district government.

542 **Some of** the key intervention areas identified in the June 2011 Plan (Fig. 12.3)
543 turned out to be in the core conservation areas but were still to experience major
544 demolition as confirmed by the revised demolition notice announced in March
545 2012. ~~Even if some historic buildings survive demolition, their refurbishment to~~
546 ~~accommodate tourism and cultural activities after redevelopment also indicates that~~
547 ~~any remaining privately owned residential dwellings would be under the pressure of~~
548 ~~commercialisation (Wang 2011).~~

549 Critical examination of the Enning Road redevelopment project shows us how the
550 combination of the developmental potential of places together with the local leader-
551 ship's urban vision would render local residents' voices and participation ineffective.
552 While other cities in the developing world see the emergence of various forms of
553 urban planning practices ranging from the appropriation of state power through the
554 privatisation of planning (Shatkin 2008) or the jump-scale of local grassroots organ-
555 isations to form horizontal networks transcending local boundaries (Appadurai 2002),
556 China's planning processes are more prone to being utilised as a means to legitimise
557 state-led urban projects that have strong entrepreneurial orientation (Wu 2007).

558 ~~The residents from the Enning Road project site resorted mostly to express-~~
559 ~~ing their voices in the government organised or sanctioned spaces (e.g. use of~~
560 ~~petition letters, responding to public consultation) (Saich 2004), rather than~~
561 ~~launching unsanctioned actions (e.g. street protests or exercising refusal to~~
562 ~~vacate as "nail houses").~~

563 Nevertheless, although the actions by house owners fell short of changing the
564 course of displacement and neighbourhood redevelopment, they have come together
565 to organise collective actions and resisted strongly enough to raise public awareness
566 in Guangzhou about the importance of heritage conservation, delaying the local
567 district government's flagship pilot project. To some extent, this can be comparable
568 with Guangzhou homeowners' recent attempts to form lateral networks of home-
569 owners' associations (Yip and Jiang 2011), indicating the potential strengths that
570 local communities could stage vis-à-vis strong states and business interests.

571 These actions also indicate some glimpse of hope for social mobilisation and
572 grassroots actions which would have the potential to influence the decision-making
573 and planning processes, as well as the direction of the production of urban space.
574 Residents' mobilisation becomes all the more important as cities like Guangzhou
575 inevitably face the reorientation of their urban development strategies to give
576 emphasis on the reuse of existing urban fabric, thus the emergence of "maturing
577 mega-cities" as this edited volume suggests.

Under these circumstances what may be necessary for local residents is perhaps an instance of collective mobilisation on the basis of their own vision of neighbourhood and city development that garners support not only from local neighbours but also from the wider society. The vision of China's urban elites as discussed in this chapter may need to be challenged by an equally powerful discourse of alternative urban vision that prioritises individual and social needs.

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Author Queries

Chapter No.: 12 0001988987

Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Both "non-sanctioned" and "unsanctioned" have been used in text. Please check if one form should be made consistent.	non-sanctioned chosen
AU2	Please check if all instances of "qilou" should be changed to "Qilou".	changed to Qilou
AU3	Please confirm the citation for Fig. 12.2.	Changed the location
AU4	Please check if "Liwan planning bureau" should be changed to "Planning Bureau of Liwan" or "Liwan Urban Planning Bureau".	Planning Bureau of Liwan
AU5	Please confirm the inserted journal title for "Wang (2011)".	Confirmed

Uncorrected Proof