

Suburban Resettlement: Housing Farmers in Chongqing and Kunming

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*The acute need for urban expansion has escalated the speed and scale of land expropriation. As a result, many farmers were, voluntarily or involuntarily, resettled to storied buildings. This paper deals with what happens after the physical and status change of such forced resettlement and argues that the housing arrangements facing relocated farmers are one of the keys influencing their relocated experiences. Three types of housing in suburban Chongqing and Kunming were compared, i.e. a) farmers being pushed further to the margin but keeping the traditional types of housing and community; b) farmers negotiating a deal with property developer to build a collective housing compound, neighbouring other commercial apartment-clusters; and c) farmers being relocated by an Economical Comfortable Housing Project. Supported by materials obtained through 6 months of participant observation and in-depth interviews with local residents, as part of the EU funded *UrbaChina* project, this paper will discuss in details the various kinds of benefits and challenges each housing type has presented in offering comfortable/convenient living conditions, in forming a community, in addressing disputes and conflicts between ex-farmers and local residents as well as in developing a sustainable model for rural-to-urban transition.*

Keywords: urbanization; resettlement; farmers; housing

Resettlement projects in China generated great international interest during the implementation of the Three Gorges Projects in the 1990s. It is argued that the most striking features of such resettlements are the forced and permanent nature and the massive size of population being relocated (Croll, 1999; Jing, 1997). Resettlements resulting from the current urbanization projects in China seem to be less dramatic—homes weren't submerged under water— but the scale and coerciveness is no less radical. In 2010, the urbanization rate in China was 49.7%. During the first stage of urbanization from 1980 to 1995, the rate rose from 19.4% to 29% and for the second stage of greatly accelerated urbanization, the rate rose from 30.5% in 1996 to 49.7% in 2010 (Research Group of China Population and Development Centre, 2012)¹. The speed for urbanization continues at a high pace and it is estimated that

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about 300 million rural residents of China will become city dwellers by 2020, raising China's urbanization rate to 60%, according to a report by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences². Urbanization in China, as Chen Yingfang argued, is not only a national blueprint that is advocated, drafted and implemented by the government; it has also become an ideology internalized by the state governments at all levels and its social members (Chen, 2012; see also Kam, 2010).

Admittedly, the rate of urbanization³ does not necessarily correspond to the number of people to be relocated. Urbanizing farmers not only involves the requisition of farmland, the change of household registration (i.e. hukou), it also implies a number of subsequent transformations. As Gu Chaolin and Wu Fulong have pointed out, "urbanization is a complex and multifaceted process involving population migration from rural to urban areas, rural and urban land conversions, spatial re-configuration of settlements, and changing governance and management" (Gu and Wu, 2010: 1-2). Unlike Reservoir resettlement that is propelled solely by the government, the resettlements projects in the name of urbanization were often bonded by the economic interests of both government and property developers. As Tan and Ding mentioned, "physical urbanization is closely linked to economic urbanization and... administrative urbanization and economic urbanization are crucial in urban development in China and they, in turn, influence sociocultural urbanization" (Tan and Ding, 2008:216-218). The decision to requisition of land often comes through an Administrative order, i.e. the order for certain land to be used for infrastructure, industry or commercial development. As Chen Yingfang has indicated, the requisition of rural land- collective land under the Chinese land system is mostly coercive and farmers hardly have the power to defy such a decision (Chen, 2012).

Besides its coerciveness in nature and its massive scale, the key characteristic of resettlement resulting from urbanization is its multifaceted forms (e.g. suburban resettlements, urban villages, renovated old towns, as shown in other papers of this volume) and its hybridity. For suburban urbanization, as Lu Fuying pointed out, it often includes erasing agriculture in the village economy; removing the rural status and occupation of farmers; urbanizing rural space and landscape; urbanizing the rural pattern of social governance; urbanizing the welfare system of its social members; urbanizing ways of life and cultural ideas (Lu, 2014). While the hybridity and complexity of suburban resettlement has been highlighted by many studies, most research has approached the issue through analysing the unemployment rate for relocated farmers (e.g. Wu et al., 2012), land and registration policies (e.g. Deng, 2011), turning farmers into citizens (*nongmin shiminhua*) (e.g. Chen, 2012); few studies have paid enough attention to the housing options facing relocated farmers and the problems such as livelihood, changing life styles, social aggregation and community management associated with each housing arrangements. Resettlements often start with land requisition⁴, followed by compensation for the farmers, building up of relocated housing and the last stage, farmers moving to the relocated community. In most cases, both property developers and governments are present for all or part

of the four stages. The arrangements they made for such resettlements have tremendous impact on relocated farmers after relocation, especially for posing different challenges in the farmer-to-resident transition, which is the major concern of this paper.

THE URBAN HOUSING REFORM

The urban-rural divide in China has been distinct ever since the economic reform in 1978. Urban areas and rural areas have been operating contrasting policies in terms of registration benefits, land ownership as well as housing arrangements. As stated in Deng, Shen and Wang's paper, "In the rural sector, for example, land is collectively owned by individual villages. Each village allocates land among its member households according to household size and local land supply, subject to the approval from local governments" (Deng et al., 2011: 169). Moreover, "since each household can only get one free lot for residential construction, most of the rural households have built housing for their own uses and there is no active rural housing market" (Deng et al., 2011: 169). The housing market in the urban sectors, on the other hand, has been regenerated by the housing reform (see for example Chen, Guo and Wu, 2011), which was promulgated in June 1980 when the Party's Central Committee and the State Council approved the Outline of National Meeting on Basic Construction. In this document, "approving private construction, private housing purchase and private ownership of housing" were officially stated. And in January 1991, the first meeting of National Housing Reform was held during which transition from allocating welfare housing to a monetary distribution system was proposed. In July 1998, the State Council issued a notice to deepen urban housing reform and further speed up housing construction and from then on, each province followed with detailed policies to propel housing reform. This marked the establishment of a comprehensive housing provision system in the urban areas: commercial housing for high-income groups, affordable housing for middle-low income groups and cheap rental provision for groups with lowest income (Yang, 2009).

The housing reform in the urban sectors remains incomplete, in the sense that the property rights for urban housing have not been fully privatized and the property rights for rural housings are still in dispute (normally referred to as *xiaochanquan*, incomplete or illegal property rights).⁵ As a result, housing arrangements in the cities are a wide mixture of varying kinds. Guo Yuhua and Shen Yuan, based on their research in Beijing, have categorized urban housing arrangements into nine different types: 1) Traditional Streets/housing blocks, constituted by traditional Chinese courtyards, hutongs and street markets. Property rights are often complicated in this case, a combination of state ownership and private ownership; (2) Commercial Housing (*shangpinfang*, literally housing as commodities in the market); (3) Sold Danwei (work unit) Housing (*fanggaifang*)- public owned housing sold to their

employees at a lower price and the ownership has thus been changed to private; (4) Danwei Dormitory Compound (danwei sushequ)-built by danwei and is a walled community with schools, clinic, movie theatre, hairdresser and anything residents need; (5) Affordable Housing (jingji shiyongfang), as part of social-welfare projects, sold to lower income families; (6) House with two limits (liang xianfang), i.e. price limit and size limit (normally restricted to lower income households and only apartments with smaller size are available); (7) Cheap Rentals (Lianzufang)- government offers subsidies for rental costs and the housing can be either newly developed apartments or old housing; (8) Relocated Housing (chaiqian anzhifang), in-situ relocation (huiqianfang) or ex-situ relocation; (9) Urban villages (chengzhongcun), the housing nature is again determined by the land right, either all or part of the land is collective ownership or in the process of changing collective ownership to state ownership, farmers converting to urban residents (Guo and Shen, 2012).

These categorises visibly manifest the transition in the urban areas from public, state ownership to a private one; danwei housing to commercial housing; housing arrangements from traditional bungalows to storied, commercial housings. And to finalize the housing reform for all income groups in the urban areas as mentioned before, apart from commercial housing offered at a full market price, three major affordable housing programs were gradually introduced to assist lower-income urban residents, i.e. Economical and Comfortable Housing (ECH) program, the Housing Provident Fund (HPF) program, and the Cheap Rental Housing (CRH) (Deng et al., 2011). Guo and Shen's article has extended the concepts "housing arrangements" to "politics of housing" (juzhu de zhengzhi), indicating that varying residential arrangements have in effect facilitated the formation of diversified status groups and consolidated social stratification. Moreover, distinctive property ownerships are also shaping new relationships between the state and residents; the formation of new resident groups (e.g. the property owners' association) and resident movements on safeguarding their property rights helped promoting grassroots democracy, self-governance in communities, the realization of social justice and formation of civil society (Guo and Shen, 2012). In a way, as they argued, analysing the politics of living or residing is an important way to better understand the complicated interaction among state, market and society as well as the internal mechanics and logic to their complex interactions. Moreover, from a cultural perspective, the housing arrangements can also shape the mentality of urban residence and the sociality of a community.

The meaning of housing transition for urbanized farmers is to move from their self-constructed houses to urban housing. In theory, the urban housing market (including ECH and CRH) are also open to converted farmers, if they can afford commercial housing or succeed in applying for the welfare housing. Normally, for lost land farmers, they can choose either to take cash compensation (possibly to purchase an apartment anywhere else) or housing compensation, i.e. in-situ relocation or ex-situ relocation. Few studies have tackled the various housing arrange-

ments facing relocated farmers and it is often assumed that they would just remain in their self-constructed houses, moving to relocated housing (huiqianfang) or live in commercial housing⁶. But in reality, the types of housing arrangements differ from one single construction of relocated housing and the housing arrangements have a broader impact on farmers' livelihood, residents' segregation and community management.

THREE TYPES OF HOUSING IN SUBURBAN RESETTLEMENT

As Elizabeth Croll has described, the term resettlement “is deployed to cover a range of states including the loss of housing and land (twofold resettlement); the loss of land but not housing (one-fold resettlement); in-situ relocation based on local movement and local solutions; ex-situ development based on individual labour mobility to township or county enterprises; and ex-situ relocation involving the removal of households to new but distant sites” (Croll, 1999: 469). In the case of suburban relocation, all of the categories can be seen in the three cases presented in this paper; even within one case, some farmers might have lost all of their housing and land, some lost their land but not housing or housing but a small piece of farm land. In general, in-situ relocation is much preferred for the farmers but ex-situ relocation is often the norm depending on the economic potential of requisitioned land.

The three cases presented here, HY- renovated traditional housing, SF- relocated storied building and DY- commercial housing, are by no means a complete set of choices available for relocated farmers. But the three cases have covered a spectrum of such choices from “traditional” to “modern”, village/rural-half rural to urban housing and a transition from village committee to residents' committee (See table 1). As Chen Yingfang has criticized, the validity of urbanization movement in China has rarely been challenged and the essence of such urbanization often equals to an ideology of development and modernization, an internalized social evolutionism, without much reflection on the damage from such single directional and progressive ideology (Chen, 2012). While the transition from “traditional” to “modern” housing, that is rural to urban management, is clearly intended in the urbanization process, this paper nonetheless wants to provide a more holistic perspective of this transition, without simple judgements of good or bad, right or wrong.

Case 1: Renovated Traditional Housing (in the area referred to as HY)

HY community, located in the city margins of Kunming, was relocated to the current site when the third ring road was constructed. New housing was unanimously designed by the local planning bureau into 3-4 storeyed units, with first floor as storage place and bedrooms from second floor upwards. Most of the families rent out 5-6 bedrooms to migrant workers and only save the bedrooms on the top floor for themselves. After farming land was expropriated, renting has become the

major source of income for many HY farmers. Computer training programs were offered freely to lost-land farmers in HY but their unemployment rate is still high. Migrants who work or run small businesses rent rooms in HY, from 200-500 Yuan per month depending on decoration or facilities. HY is also well known for its weekly market- one of the biggest in Kunming, with local products, fresh vegetables, handicrafts, clothes and visitors coming from all over the city. The market is rented out through the village committee and part of the rental charge is divided equally among the households by the end of each year.

Case 2: Collective Housing/Relocated Housing (in the area referred to as SF)

SF was also located in the city margins of Kunming, next to HY community. Whilst the standard practice for lost-land farmers is to be relocated to commercial compounds— either to be kept together in the same building or mix with other residents in the community, what is exceptional about SF is that the village committee of SF has negotiated a deal with property developers to house them in a closed and separate compound in 7-11 storeyed buildings. By doing so, the old sense of neighbourhood is well maintained. The function and influence of the village committee are also kept in place. Unemployment rate is similarly high here, especially for middle-aged women. Not many of them had the experience of migrating out for work therefore they lack capabilities for a job. Some might use the compensation money to run small businesses but do not have much experience for that either. Residents in SF envy those in HY because the latter enjoys a much bigger living space (in SF, it's mostly just 3-4 bedroom flats) but compared with residents in commercial buildings, they are content with living close to relatives, neighbours and friends.

Case 3: Commercial Housing (in the area referred to as DY)

DY in suburban Chongqing is an Economic Comfortable Housing project⁷ with mainly rural to urban converted farmers as its residents. The community consisted of three types of housing, 17-storey towers ECH, 2 for relocated farmers in the village from which the land of DY was requisitioned and 1 flat housing for cheap rentals. Different from HY and SF (around 100 households each), there are over 1,300 households living in DY. Residents are predominately relocated farmers, not only from the local village but also from other nearby villagers where their land/housing have been partly or fully requisitioned. Residents also include employees at factories, office workers, college graduates, and parents staying with their grown-up children. DY is conveniently located in the centre of the district, close to food markets and with excellent amenities, one basketball court, ping pong table, roofed seating areas, exercising equipment and so on. A property management company runs the community, with security guards, cleaning and greening services.

Table 1: Three cases

| | Housing type | Residents | Administration | Property Management |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| HY (Rural) | Self-built houses | Villagers/ Renters | Village Committee | No |
| SF (Half-rural) | Multi-storied buildings (allo- cated) | Villagers | Residents' Committee | No (but basic cleaning/security staff are hired) |
| DY (Urban) | Multi-storied buildings (pur- chased at subsi- dized price) | Highly mixed | Residents' Committee | Yes |

CHANGING LIFESTYLE AND SENSES OF INSECURITY

The most distinct difference between farmers and other residents is that farmers are used to farm. After moving to apartment buildings, as we found in both HY and DY, farmers still do try to till pieces of land, either on the rooftop of the building, or on public spaces before construction, or in greening areas. In SF, farmers do less farming but they were unaccustomed to the much smaller spaces they now share. And they do lay out vegetables in public spaces to dry them out for making pickles but unlike in commercial building where strangers fight for public spaces, in SF, it has caused much fewer grievances; instead, neighbours offer their help. In general, farmers-turned-residents all complain about the much smaller living space they now have but they appreciate the well-equipped utilities, efficient water, electricity and gas supplies, flushing toilet and fully functioning kitchen.

In both HY and SF, people still live close to their family, relatives and neighbours, but only in HY do they still organise festivity celebration, for example offering sacrifices to ancestors in the Zhongyuan festival. Farmers can still use the public halls that belong to the village committee to prepare for the offerings and gather around the local temple that the village committee is still managing. For people in SF, festivity organisations have been restricted to individual households or close kin. Like DY, the group activities enjoyed by former farmers in SF are the various dancing groups in public squares near their community, along with other residents in the neighbourhood. In DY, nonetheless, the protocols of how to use public places have caused more dissatisfaction or even public disputes. Residents often complain about “uncivilised” or “low quality” behaviour of former farmers for being unhygienic, loud and inconsiderate of others. On the other hand, as commented by a party secretary of a village committee, relocating farmers to the same community wouldn't

help them to assimilate to urban life. If they were kept in the same community they would often gather together to play majiang or “make trouble”.

The result for farmers of not being able to farm or grow their own food is the insecurity coming from the fact that they have to pay for literally everything now. Food sold at the market is pricey; bills for gas and electricity are much higher; even if paying no other fees, for residents in DY, they will have to pay for a property management fee at 0.8 Yuan per month per square meter. Without a stable income, it would be impossible to maintain a living in the apartment blocks. Farmers in HY can rent out additional rooms and for people in SF and DY, if because of a bigger apartment being torn down or having more people in the family, they have been compensated more than one apartment, and can possibly rent out one for extra income. But in general, without a job or steady income, the living expenses for urban settings can be worrying. This kind of insecurity, according to a staff member of DY’s residents’ committee, has motivated a number of fierce fights for more benefits in the compensation process and afterwards and for not paying property management fees. As she explained:

Farmers mostly do want their land to be requisitioned. Most of them are working in cities and their land is left uncultivated. So they do hope to get some money out of their land; but they want more security. No matter what compensation package they’ve got, they often felt being taken advantage of so when they came to the Residents’ Committee (RC) for help, they’re often very irritated (not by RC, but just in general and they treat RC as the extension of the government which it isn’t); they got money for their land and housing, then they want to have low-income subsistence allowances (dibao) and after that, they want to get cheap rental housing. Many may have jobs already but they just felt “the state has taken our land, so they should give us, the more the better”. Also, when they live in villages, they don’t have to pay property management fee, electricity/water are free, and no need to pay for gas or cleaning. So they’re unhappy with paying for everything and therefore want to get more subsidies from the government.

What is deemed fair, how to resettle lost-land farmers better, and whether to pay off farmers with cash or social welfare packages have gone through a lot of discussions, alternations and variations from place to place. What is certain, though, is that taking away farmers’ land has greatly disturbed farmers’ sense of security and their assured supply from their safety net. The first thing they must face in adapting to an urban life is whether they have enough money to sustain it in the long run.

COMMUNITY BUILDING AND THE SUZHI DISCOURSE

As mentioned before, in HY and SF, people are more or less kept in the same community as before and there is much less stigma or discrimination towards former farmers. In DY, however, farmers are living with residents from various kinds

of backgrounds and the protocols for using and maintaining public spaces or how to run the community differ greatly from farmers to property management who expects certain behaviours of urban residents. Such dissatisfaction has burst out in the process of nominating candidates for a Property Owners' Association, the autonomous group elected by residents in each community to reflect residents' opinion, to decide jointly on issues concerned the community and to supervise Property Management work. In the nomination process, the "low-quality" (*suzhi*) discourse was used to justify the immoral actions of all the parties involved. Basically, some residents believe the low quality management shows how incompetent the property management is; the property management company (hereafter PMC) retaliates by saying the low quality of residents has made the management impossible. For example, the failures reported by residents of the property management centred on: entry security system hasn't been put in use; wasted swimming pool; bad security - motorbikes being stolen; disordered car parking and management; insufficient maintenance of public facilities; no greening effort; paid a lot of property management fees but received very bad quality of service. As a result of such strong dissatisfactions, some residents had formed a group of activists lobbying for the formation of a Property Owners' Association to counterbalance the incompetence of property management - either force it to improve the service or to employ another company.

The PMC, on the other hand, blames the low quality of its residents, even the low quality of the activists' group for not having enough understanding or knowledge in properly managing a community- therefore many of the charges are not fair or are beyond the control of property management. As the director of the PMC detailed her reasons:

The farmers do not know their own responsibilities in assisting PMC's work, e.g. cleaning, security, parking and etc. They are the ones who report the problem and they are the ones who caused the problem. As property owners, apart from enjoying a service, they have certain roles to play. If they do not obey the regulations set by the PMC, how can the community compound be well managed? For example, within one hour after the cleaning staff finished cleaning the public area, it becomes a mess again. How can I keep up with it? In addition, the kind of service they require, such as a functioning swimming pool, or security patrolling to every tower or each household will require a much higher PMC service fee which none of the residents would be willing to pay. In practice, the policies set up for community management are self-contradictory too— a higher standard of service and a fee that is impossible to increase in accordance with inflation. In another words, the PMC is expected to meet up with a standard that is impossible to fulfil at its current price. But when it's failed with the expectation, the PMC is the only one to take the blame.

The different agendas and expectations from residents and PMC have made communication and collaboration very difficult. The activists' group for forming a Property Owner's Association has substantial charges against the PMC's work and it was reported that in fear of losing their job, the PMC has employed their acquaint-

ances to sabotage property owners' meetings for nominating candidates. In the end, pro-PMC candidates were nominated and were doubted by others about whether they would ever fulfil their task as a member of the Property Owner's Association (POA). Residents in DY have diverging views too. Not many are familiar with how the Property Owners' Association should work and they fear that a POA might corruptly use money from their communal fund (otherwise why would they volunteer for unpaid work). They are not familiar with each other in the community either and the nomination would not reflect their own opinion or they might not find the people they can trust. Neither the PMC nor the activists' group have enough support in the election and there has been too wide a gap for compromising. The effort to set up a POA has been thus suspended and stuck in an impasse.

Suzhi discourse, as Anagnost pointed out, "had become a key term in the party state's policy statements and directives to cadres, even as it began to circulate more broadly as a general explanation for everything that held the Chinese nation back from achieving its rightful place in the world" (Anagnost 2004: 190). The term started in the 1980s and gained its popularity in the 1990s and now *suzhi* has lost its concrete meaning but become an easy summary for any unwelcome or inconvenient behaviour people encounter. In the case of DY, the varied levels of perceived *suzhi* and categorizations of backward (*luohou*) or civilised (*wenming*) have cultivated significant disagreements among residents, consequently greatly obstructed the formation of a community. High quality and low quality people cannot mingle and such a discourse has in effect set up an invisible boundary among its residents. HY and SF, on the other hand, do not have a PMC to manage them. People in HY complain about the dirt after the weekly market—the contractor of the market hires people to clean it but it may not be properly done. The village committee in SF does also hire a guard and cleaning staff to maintain the place but the village committee pays the fee and residents seem to be happy with the work. In a way, in HY and SF, the service and management are not "modern" but the community ties were also much less disconnected. The tensions among residents in HY and SF seem to be much less acute and *suzhi* discourse also has not become a social device to target blame for "wrongdoings".

SOCIAL MANAGEMENT AND SELF-ORGANISATIONS

Generally speaking, urban residents are under the management of Residents' Committees and rural (agricultural) residents by Village Committees. In practice, things are not clear-cut in such absolute terms. On the one hand, many farmers are in a transitional status and before their relocated housing is finished, which can take years, they don't have a proper Residents' Committee to administrate them. On the other hand, local management is in transition too. In areas that were predominantly rural, to cope with the newly developed community compounds, there will often

be a new Residents' Committee. But Residents' Committee and Village Committee may operate in the same district and their managing boundaries are not easily separated from one another. In addition, many converted rural residents still feel closer to their Village Committees since they were all from the same village and knew each other well; other farmers, even when they live in an urban community, because of their rural hukou, would still go back to their Village Committee for help. Overlapping and transitional roles of the Residents' Committee have both made its work difficult and alienated residents from its roles.

According to the legal definition, both Residents' Committee (hereafter RC) and Village Committee (hereafter VC) are self-governing groups. They are both elected by their members and should serve the needs of their members. In reality, they operate in quite different terms. Firstly, RC manages a much bigger population, which can range from 2,000 to 20,000 (VC, a few hundred). And as a *de facto* urban manager (providing the service without appropriate power) at the community level, they need to undertake tasks from all government departments at upper level, e.g. pension, social insurance, education, offering certificates, unemployment, migrants management and so on⁸. Also, due to its large number of residents, the election of RC members is often done through RC-nominated residents, not by residents (the election of VC, on the other hand is often through direct nomination by villagers). Secondly, as a self-organized group, RC often merely receives subsidies from the government, which is often very limited for organizing any activities. VC, on the other hand, often manages a significant amount of collective assets, especially in the period when collective land is expropriated by the government for development projects. Thirdly, both RC and VC have a role in mediating disputes. Due to the size of the population and complication with urban management, RC often has to handle all kinds of problems, bickering among residents, fixture of water pipe, plus the workload passed down by street office. As the saying puts it: "RC is a basket, anything can be thrown into it". As a result, they do not have as close a relationship with all of its members as the VC does.

These differences have made the transition from VC to RC not only intricate at the policy and practice level, it has also caused great confusion and alienation for converted farmers. Compared with a relatively close and participatory relationship with the VC, farmers often reported that they are not familiar at all with RC's work. Even when they do manage to seek help from a RC, they often feel maltreated and neglected. One staff member of a Village Committee explained that over the years they have come to know their villagers well so for illiterate ones for instance, they would even help to fill out forms for them, which might be unpractical for a RC. Property Owners' Association is supposed to be a good alternative for residents' self-governance. As the case of DY shows, it is often not very easy to reach consensus and form the association. The members in the preparatory groups also reported that they don't gain enough support from the government (legal guidance, practical assistance

in problem solving, supervision). The roles for RC, PMC and POA are also unclear and can be interpreted differently in different communities.

CONCLUSION

Resettlement in China is often compelled by the government and usually on a large scale. The land expropriation and subsequent resettlements of farmers as a result of an express urbanization has also taken various forms and impacted many. As we can see, forcedly urbanized farmers have been housed in new settings and they have undergone a number of significant changes in their way of living. They were evacuated from the familiarity of farming, neighbourhood, community and livelihood; in urban settings, their living spaces and public spaces are notably less than what they were accustomed to having and they have to deal with a more intimate relationship with “strangers” around them. To survive the expenses of living in a city after using up their compensation money, in a time when social security scheme (pension, education, health and so on) are still not yet fully in place, the growing sense of insecurity is what they must face. As we can see, the housing arrangements discussed in this paper epitomized the fluctuating practices for suburban resettlement at the local level and each might represent a broadly varied experience for relocated farmers.

In HY, farmers worry that a further round of expropriation might start and they will be removed from their own housing again; in SF, how to find jobs seems to be farmers’ major concern; and in DY, a good life and a well-managed community will depend on whether they can figure out a way to settle their discontent with their Property Management Company. For most parts, commercial housing is the aimed future for fully urbanized cities. Paid property owners’ services, setting up Property Owners Association to manage local affairs, and transforming the roles of Residents’ Committees in the long run also seem inevitable. Apart from making a living in the cities, the changing mind-set of how an urban society works and the formation of a community among strangers will also be the new challenges for converted farmers.

NOTES

1. For example, the Household Registration Reform Office in Chongqing estimated that from 2010 to 2011, there will be 3 million newly registered urban residents (mainly converted from migrants workers), which can bring the rate of non-agriculture residents in the total population of Chongqing from the current 29% to 37%. From 2012 to 2020, it aims to convert 800,000 - 900,000 farmers to urban *hukou* every year therefore by 2020, there will be another 7 million increase of registered urban residents, lifting the non-agricultural residents rate to 60% (Office, 2011).

2. Zheng (2013)
3. The rate is often calculated with people living in the urban areas, this includes farmers without urban registration and excludes those who live in the city but do not acquire temporary registration.
4. Apparently starting with building up the relocated housing would be a much easier and practical choice for relocated farmers but in practice it is often the other way around, most farmers need to either rent or stay with families or friends during the transitional period.
5. Property rights issued by township governments or village committee, e.g. many such housings were built during old-town renovation, urban village reconstruction, new village construction, see Cheng, 2009.
6. Certainly, both farmers and urban dwellers can rent all kinds of housing, therefore the living arrangements in reality are much more complex and mixed. Especially for relocated farmers, the relocated housing often takes years to complete and many have to rent places during the transitional period. Therefore, this paper is mainly concerned with the housing arrangements more confined to relocated farmers than covering all the possibilities available to each individual household.
7. For ECH, qualified candidates should possess no apartment in Chongqing's main district (i.e. in urban setting, houses in villages don't count). A converted farmer can enjoy exemption of registration tax (*qishui*) and favourable rates for mortgage. Monthly income cannot exceed a certain level. It cannot be sold on the market within five years of purchase but residents reported it could be done privately (a contract then transfer registration after 5 years).
8. These tasks are often separated by a workstation but normally the staff members for the workstation and residents' committee are the same.

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