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“Becoming urban”

A study of post-relocation life and livelihood changes among
former peasants in Chenggong, China

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Abstract

This thesis presents an ethnographic study of post-relocation life and livelihood of the “land-lost peasants” in Chenggong, China. The wider context for my study is the ongoing process of urbanization in the country. Drastic urbanization all over China during the last two decades has produced “land-lost peasants” as a new group of subjects within the Chinese rural population, a group that saw their land appropriated in the name of development. The land has been taken by the state, referring to the reality of state land-tenure in China, while the peasants got cash compensation in return, as part of their relocation. Many studies of such urbanization processes have shown that the loss of land and the relocation often have caused poverty and the rupture of the village collective. Urbanization in China has therefore been interpreted as processes of state power and discipline in China and cases of popular resistance against such state power. My study is part of this Chinese story of urbanization, but my empirical findings modify the impression that all urbanization in China only leads to negative problems for the people involved.

Kunming’s urban expansion plans to include Chenggong, a well-known agricultural county, as its sixth district with its new municipal government complex and a college town. The villagers of this study come originally from three adjacent villages that lost their land for the construction of the college town and who were subsequently relocated to the same resettlement residential compound located among the college campuses. Villagers are supposed to live like urbanites in this urban residential compound, but my study shows that the standardized urban residential compound and urban settings do not urbanize people immediately. Instead, they manage to revive their village ways of life, and to continue to value their social network within it. Sponsored by the local state, some villagers continue as peasants in neighboring counties. These farming entrepreneurs lead a semi-rural and semi-urban life, yet they become used in state propaganda in the media as typical evidence of how urbanization actually benefits land-lost peasants. The remaining majority of villagers stay in Chenggong to exploit the local markets in various ways, for labor as well as for commercial activities. A close relationship emerges between land-lost peasants and the local urbanization in that villagers’ wealth (wage, property value, collective dividend) is closely related to the development of Chenggong. Based on the ethnographic study, I argue that the re-territorialization of land-lost peasants in Chenggong after relocation is not only a top-down process, defined by the state. Rather, it is achieved based on local dynamics, which include the locational advantage, the special nature of the college town, the intervention of local policies and, most importantly, the agency of the people themselves. In conclusion, I reflect on the way the ongoing urbanization process I have observed in Chenggong relates to broader processes of rural subject making in the history of socialist China. I conclude that my case shows that a new subjectivity may emerge among land-lost peasants in Chenggong, a subjectivity which may move people in directions not envisaged by the Chinese state. The key element here is *variation* - as the effects of such changes will vary between the sexes, across generations and with available economic assets.

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General introduction

Problem statement and key questions

This thesis is about rural people who used to live in three agricultural villages in Chenggong, in the suburbia of Kunming, China. Chenggong was an agricultural county with a long history. This history came to an end since 2003 when Kunming Municipal Government announced their intention to build the new municipal government complex and a college town there and integrate the entire Chenggong as a new district into Kunming City. This new district locating future political and educational center of Kunming would be built on local peasants' farmland and produce tens of thousands of land-lost peasants¹ [*shidi nonmin*].

As the provincial capital city of Yunnan, a frontier province in southwest China, Kunming is under the double pressure of being “late” and “backward” on economic development (Zhang 2006:462). Such a political discourse justifies the municipal government to speed up the process of urbanization (Zhang 2006:464). The slogans of the “one-step urbanization”² [*yibu chengshihua*] and “to construct the modernized new Kunming” well manifest the resolution of the local government. The urban expansion scheme was conceived by Kunming Municipal Government in 2003, in which Chenggong would be developed as a new district of Kunming. In 2011, Chenggong was officially redesignated to be the sixth district of Kunming by Chinese Central Government.

¹ Some authors also use “displaced peasants” (Hsing 2010:183), or “landless peasants/farmers” (Wu 2010:81). They all refer to peasants whose land was all or partly appropriated by the state for the urban expansion or the construction of modernization projects such as dams, airports, and college towns. I use “land-lost peasants” to stress that the landlessness of the group of my study is involuntary.

² The “one-step urbanization” is a guiding principle adopted by the district government of Chenggong in building the new city. It means that the villagers whose land is requisitioned in building the city should be resettled to live in urban department buildings rather than village-like residential areas with self-built houses which sooner or later would be resettled again. In the Annual Working Report of Chenggong District Government in 2013, it says “under the requirement of Kunming Municipal Government, the dislocated people should be resettled to concentrated, planned resettlement residential compounds so that they change directly from rural population to urban citizen with the principle of the ‘one-step urbanization’” (Chenggong Online, January 14th 2013).

According to the construction scheme, the new district involves the entire county of Chenggong with the area of 460 km², in which fourteen plots with 18,500 *mu*³ in total are reserved to build resettlement residential compounds [*anzhi xiaoqu*] for the relocated peasants. The construction of the new district appropriated land of 120,000 *mu* and 68,000 peasants lost all or part of their farmland and houses between 2003 and 2013 (Kunming Daily, July 9th 2013). There have been 10,000 villagers in ten villages relocated to the resettlement residential compounds by 2013 (Kunming Daily, July 9th 2013). It is estimated that the new city construction in Chenggong will produce 100,000 land-lost peasants in total.

My fieldwork⁴ was carried out in one of these resettlement residential compounds. The resettlement residential compound of my study was completed in 2009. Its 4,000 residents are from three different villages. They were dislocated for the construction of the college town which is regarded as a catalyst project for the new district. I name them North village, Middle village and South village based on their relative location in the resettlement residential compound. North village was first relocated in the compound in 2005 and the other two villages were moved in later in 2009. The resettlement residential compound was built on a piece of land originally with the ownership of South village and now neighbors the campuses of two colleges. Before relocation, the villagers made their living from growing vegetables, fruits and flowers which were sold all over the country. After the land appropriation, they become land-lost peasants and are relocated to apartments in the same resettlement residential compound with totally different contexts for their lives and are supposed to find their new livelihoods in the city.

My story then is one of urbanization. The “one-step urbanization” proposed by the district government of Chenggong expects two changes: the urbanization of the land and the direct rural-to-urban shift of land-lost peasants. The large rural area with fields and farming villages will be transformed to the urban core of “new Kunming” with its municipal government complex and a college town together with various modern property projects. This urban process does not evict the local dislocated villagers. Instead, dislocated villagers are schemed to be transformed into urban

³ Chinese square unit. One *mu* is 666.7 m².

⁴ See Table of figures.

residents and relocated in Chenggong to make them a resource for the development of the new city of Kunming. A Chinese buzzword *renqi*⁵ (which can be translated as “human vitality”, dynamisms or popularity) is always discursively associated with the new district construction. The construction of the college town in the new district is regarded as a good catalyst to help aggregating *renqi* for a virginally developed urban area like this. Nine universities with 100,000 students and teachers relocated in the college town from downtown Kunming. The college town in Chenggong alone equals what would be counted as a small city in Europe.

With many empty residential compounds, unoccupied luxury villas or megablock complexes, wide roads devoid of pedestrians and cars, and the continuous building of new high rises everywhere, Chenggong is titled a “ghost town” by foreign media (BBC News, August 14th 2012; Foreignpolicy, June 21st 2013). These phenomena can be summarized in one Chinese word “*renqi*” that is frequently mentioned in people’s daily conversation. My fieldwork reveals that the expected *renqi* in the area of the college town is quite seasonal and follows the time schedule of students in colleges. For example, the business center and shopping streets in the college town are bustling with people at times, but look very bleak in February, July and August when college students have their holidays. *Renqi* indicating the commercial prosperity is crucial to the reemployment and livelihood of local land-lost peasants.

My aim is to understand better the effects of this relocation. What does it mean to people whose knowledge and experience is only from agriculture, when they now are supposed to live like urbanites in Kunming. They received cash compensation from the government for land requisition, and it will be of interest to find out to what extent this compensates for the much higher urban living cost and their limited survival skills in a metropolitan city. Will they adapt to the urban environment, or will they try to find ways of continuing to be peasants? Obviously, this is not only dependent on the preference of the people themselves, but also depends on a number of dynamics that the relocated peasants have to deal with. As we shall see, farming is

⁵ *Renqi* literarily means the breath of energy of human beings in Chinese and is derived from the Daoist notion that “the ideal state of being is one in which human beings are harmoniously immersed in nature or physical surroundings” (see Zhang 2006:471).

indeed possible. Some peasants seem not willing to give up being peasants, and choose to rent land from other peasants in neighboring counties to continue their agricultural livelihood. This makes them into semi-peasants and semi-urbanites. However, the remaining people do not choose this way. They seek employment in the new urban settings. They either work as wage labors on the university campuses, or try their luck in commercial activities. Alternatively, some people try to live off the compensation money they got, at least temporarily experiencing some affluence.

My overall questions are: How do the processes of urbanization influence the life and livelihood of land-lost peasants? How do villagers react to the processes and adapt to the urban context? Considering the local relocation policy of the “one-step urbanization” aims to relocate a village as a whole, I am also interested in how the processes influence the village community. To what extent are they operating in ways reminiscent of their former village life? Do we still see tendencies towards many collective practices that characterize their former village life, or does urbanization also mean processes of individualization (see Yan 2009; Kipnis 2012)? To answer such questions we need to look closer at the social and cultural context of the relocated peasants in their new urban environment. And we need to know more about some important contexts with relevance to the new life-situation of my study group.

China’s urbanization

A basic context is the one of urbanization. Urbanization is an economy-motivated and institutionalized process in China. In September 1997, Jiang Zemin, China’s President at the time, delivered his report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, pointing out:

China should gradually change the current status of underdevelopment to basically realize socialist modernization, changing from an agricultural country with a majority labor to an industrialized country with a majority of non-agricultural population and focusing on modern agriculture and modern service industries, progressing from the stage focusing on natural and semi-natural economies to a historical stage with relatively high degree of economic marketization. (Gu 2012:123)

Shaped by this discourse, the urban population in the mainland of the People’s Republic of China reached 691,000,000 by the end of 2011 or 51.2% of the nation’s

total population. Between 1990 and 2002, an estimated 50,000,000-66,000,000 peasants lost all or part of their farmland and homes to local government land grabs and development projects (Hsing 2010:17). State land-tenure facilitates the land appropriation. According to People's Republic of China (PRC) Constitution and Land Management Law, all urban land belongs to the state; land in the countryside and in suburban areas is collectively owned by villages and cannot be leased out for profit. Legal provisions, and the socialist propaganda and pedagogy construct the common imagination that the planning power of urban governments to rezone and appropriate land is legitimate, which makes the massive and drastic appropriation and demolition possible.

The English word "urbanization" corresponds to two words in Chinese language: townization [*chengzhenhua*] and citization [*chengshihua*]. Guldin (2001) specifically differentiates these two different words as well as distinct processes in China's urbanization. He argues that urbanization as a conceptual frame is too broad to describe the urbanization process in contemporary China. Conceptually, Guldin divides the urbanization process into three different dimensions: deagriculturization, townization, and citization (2001:13). In his PRC 1990 Urbanization Continuum Model, based on the level of urbanization, from rural to urban, he defines the society of China as village, market town [*nongcun jizhen*], *xiang* town, county town, county-level city, small city, medium-sized city, large city and metropolis. De-agriculturization of the countryside is the first aspect of the rural transformation whereby many people give up farming but remain in the villages and the rural area. The second dimension is this rural population's engagement with town enterprises and activities leading to a general townization of the persons and their villages, and decreasing the difference between village, market town, and *xiang* town. Lastly, citization ("city-ization") affects the county towns toward cities as influences flow from that end of the continuum. "China's urbanization is thus proceeding along a continuum of townization and citization, where the rates of urbanization may differ between north and south, coast and interior, and prosperous and less developed areas" (Guldin 2001:19). As far as this conceptual model is concerned, the case of Chenggong spans both ends of Guldin's rural-urban continuum. The urbanization

process in Chenggong de-agriculturizes the countryside and meanwhile city-izes it to the new urban core, which the “one-step urbanization” implies.

Based on a similar conceptual continuum model, Hsing (2010:10) identifies China’s current urbanization in three salient trajectories at three types of “places” using a model of cultural geography. The first is an inward contraction of the urban core. Through the redevelopment project, the former urban residents are relocated to tall apartment buildings in new residential compounds perhaps with better living conditions yet often located in the outskirts of the city, while the inner-city area is sold to real-estate developers constructing new shopping plazas to improve its commercial value. The second is an outward expansion into villages at the urban fringe of the metropolitan region where the property value has potential to increase greatly. The urbanization happening in this type of place often causes the generation of a new group of rural subjects: land-lost peasants who later are reduced to “urban villagers”. Peasants lose either their farmland or their housing land or both during the process. The third trajectory happens at the rural fringe of the metropolitan region, where townships and villages convert and lease out farmland for scattered industrial and commercial projects. Applying Hsing’s conceptual model to the practice in Chenggong shows that the urbanization follows the second type of trajectory, yet happens at a place as described in the third trajectory. With its distinctiveness, the case in Chenggong can enrich the ethnographic research on China’s urbanization.

Both Guldin and Hsing conceptualize China’s urbanization as a spatial continuum from rural to urban, yet it brings about different dynamics which indicate the complexity and unevenness of China’s urbanization. Moreover, the boundaries between different types overlap, since “dynamics within one place often trigger changes in others” (Hsing 2010:23). Different urbanization processes engender various impacts on the rural population in China. Significantly, they have produced three salient groups from the rural population, which composes the second context of my analysis.

Three rural subjects produced by urbanization

Contemporary urbanization in China produces three types of subjects: rural migrants, “urban villagers” and land-lost peasants. In a way, each of them is problematic for both the modernization of China and the construction of a “harmonious socialist country”, two central elements in official jargons in China.

Rural migrants, known in China as the “floating population” [*liudong renkou*], are those who have left their villages for big cities to look for work and business opportunities (Zhang 2001:179). The word “floating” in Chinese concept implies that these people are not and will not become a permanently settled group in cities due to the restriction of the *hukou*⁶ system (Solinger 1999:15). Without an urban *hukou*, rural migrants are excluded from accessing public welfare such as schooling and medical care in an urban setting. They have to face much stricter loan terms for buying urban housing as well. In order to cope with the high living cost in cities and save more to remit back to their rural families, most of rural migrants consciously reduce their quality of life (Wu 2010:82). The cost-saving method makes them easily give up children’s education, avoid seeing a doctor when ill and reside in cheap and poorly-conditioned neighborhoods, such as the so-called “urban villages”. There are 100,000,000 rural transients in China and managing the mobile, fluid and culturally diverse migrant population and the migrant enclaves has been regarded as the most difficult task for the past-Mao political regime (Zhang 2001:179,195). Noticeably, with many rural adults leaving their hometowns for large cities, a lot of rural villages have become “empty villages” with only the elderly and children. Accordingly, their village collectives are nearly disintegrated.

“Urban villagers” are defined according to the place they reside, well-known by the term “urban villages” (*chengzhongcun*, which literally means “villages within

⁶ The household registration system, known as the *hukou* system in China, identifies a person of the population either rural (agricultural) or urban (non-agricultural) as well as a place of belonging. At the higher point of this mechanism of social control between its establishment in 1950s and the era before the reform and opening up at the end of 1980s, mobility was difficult, goods such as grain, cooking oil and cotton clothes were rationed, and only urban dwellers with appropriate *hukou* were issued with coupons for these goods (Stockman 2000:54). *Hukou* does not strictly confine mobility anymore since 1990s, but still differentiates a person’s access to social welfare and public services.

the city”) in Chinese. Within the breakneck urbanization, the expansion of Chinese cities has been encroaching into surrounding villages since the 1990s (Liu and He 2010:177). In many cases, villagers maintain their houses and their housing plots [*zhaijidi*] within the village settlement while losing their farmland for the urban expansion. Partially or entirely losing farming as their livelihood renders rents important income that urban villagers can readily obtain in cities. Villagers manage to expand their rental income in their limited space, by, for example, increasing the number of floors of their housing. “Urban villages” are characterized overall by narrow roads, face-to-face buildings with different heights and add-on temporary rooms on the top, and the inner streets packed with shops, grocery stores and service outlets. Terms such as the “shake-hands buildings” [*woshoulou*] or the “kissing buildings” [*jiewenlou*] are coined by Chinese media to delineate its chaos [*luan*]. In addition, the low living cost and low rent attract the “floating population” to reside and hence become their enclaves in a sense. Portrayed by the media, the government and even the academia as crowded, chaotic, unhealthy and unsafe, urban villages are often targets of the municipal redevelopment projects and residents inside are faced with eviction, demolition and relocation. In expectation of demolition by government, many urban villagers “prepare” themselves by adding more floors and rooms to their housing while using cheap construction materials, hoping to acquire more cash compensation and free floor area in the coming relocation, which makes the situation in urban villages closer to the public rhetoric. While “urban villages” are demonized as barriers for further development of cities, its residents, the “urban villagers”, are forgotten having been stricken by previous rounds of urbanization.

Land-lost peasants [*shidi nongmin*], literally means peasants who have lost their land, are the third group of rural subjects produced by the nation-wide urbanization. As a result of urban expansion, an estimated 50,000,000 to 66,000,000 Chinese peasants lost all or part of their farmland and houses between 1990 and 2003. Although we do not find many references about it in the English language literature, the study on land-lost peasants in China does receive significant attention in Chinese academia. When using the key word “*shidi nongming*” as the title word to search the database of CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure), more than 6,000 results are displayed including news reports and academic papers. The research result

also displays that the term has been used discursively since 2002. Many Chinese scholars link this subject to illegal land grabs, forced evictions, peasants' protests and social instability. *The Annual Report on Urban Development of China, no. 5*, released by China Social Academic Press in 2012, lists the top ten challenges confronting urban China, and on this list the issue of land-lost peasants is ranked as the fifth. There are more than 40,000,000 peasants implicated in the appropriation of land in China and the report points out that this would easily cause social instability if issues such as cash compensation, allocation of collective assets, reemployment and pension are not properly dealt with (Chinanews August 14th 2012). Many domestic Chinese scholars write papers to suggest the government be serious about the dislocation and relocation policy, compensation scheme and reemployment of the group (see, for example, Yu and Cao 2004; Zhai and Xiang 2012; Li 2004). However, in spite of the prevalent attention, few trace the outcome and impact of urbanization on land-lost peasants through detailed ethnographies, which is the concern of my thesis.

First step towards theorization: space and territoriality

There are many ways of bringing together the macro contexts indicated above with the data of my micro-oriented fieldwork, but here I want to highlight a focus on space and territoriality as a thematic framework of importance to my discussion. Drawing on theorists of cultural geography who argue that social space⁷ (as opposed to merely a passive locus or “container” of human activities and social relations) is implicated in all social processes, Zhang (2001:7) contends that space is constituted through practices and power relations, and that social relationships and political domination are spatially constituted and transformed. From this perspective, the unmaking and making of space must implicate transitions of social relations. Zhang classifies social space at three levels: “the micro level, which includes architecture, neighborhood, housing, and street; the middle level, which involves town, city, and rural-urban asymmetry; and the macro level, which encompasses national and global organizations and strategies” (2001:202). My ethnography focuses on the social space of a resettlement residential compound at the micro level, but is inevitably embedded

⁷ See also Lefebvre (1991).

in the middle level context with Chenggong's geographical, economic, political and social specifics and the macro urbanization process in China.

Based on the realities that the Chinese government owns the land, wields planning power and dominates land tenure, it can control the urban-rural mobility and supersede the market to dictate the direction and pace of urban growth. Some label Chinese urban process "state-led urbanization" in the frame of the state-market dichotomy. Hsing (2010:7) criticizes that this argument ignores the urban process as an integral part of the local state. She stresses the roles played at the middle level by arguing that the local state plays a more active role than merely being an agent of the central state and urban construction has become the key mechanism of local state building. Hsing defines territoriality as spatial strategies to consolidate power in a given place and time and is a tool of dominance as well as means of resistance. On the one hand, territoriality is the most important aspect of the local state's power strategy and local state improves its territoriality via urbanization. This means: firstly, the land planning and zoning are important authority practices of the local state. Secondly, large-scale and prestigious development projects such as airports, highways, industrial zones and new cities and value created through skyrocketing prices in their wake become the manifestation of the local state's governing capacity. Thirdly, land rents are one of the major local revenue sources. On the other hand, social actors, including village collectives, displaced villagers or residents consciously struggle to define and defend the occupation and control of a place and develop territorial strategies contradicting the state's territorial logic as a tool of resistance for self-protection. Hsing define social actors' conscious cultivation and struggle to form their own territoriality at both physical and discursive levels as "civic territoriality" (2010:15). Hsing (2010:16) writes further that "civic territoriality involves processes of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization, as well as the possibilities of building society's own territorial logic and autonomy". As urbanism largely took over industrialism as the basis for political legitimacy and policy discourse by the mid-2000s, the notion of civic territoriality "brings society to the center of territorial politics, and places it at the root of social actions" (Hsing 2010:15).

When analyzing the interwoven politics of the urbanization of the local state and the civic territoriality, Hsing chooses to follow the administrative boundary of

large municipalities to define the “metropolitan region”. Within the metropolitan jurisdictional region, she categorizes urbanization into three types: the urban core, the urban fringe, and the rural fringe. Each type of cases stresses different but salient urbanization process proceeding in China. Her urban core type focuses on the redevelopment of inner-city in Beijing. Her urban fringe type illustrates the metropolitan expansion into the neighboring villages in southeast coastal cities such as Guangzhou and Shenzhen and how the land-owning village collectives in the form of a share-holding company (see Hsing 2010; Po 2008) skillfully bargained with the urban government to fulfill a successful case of territorialization. Her rural fringe type examines the deterritorialization of villagers in the remote rural fringe areas and the fragmentation and localization of their protests.

In my case, based on Hsing’s model, the metropolitan region of Kunming covers six districts, seven counties and one city, just as large as its municipal jurisdiction. The urban core of Kunming used to cover five districts. Chenggong was recently designated as the sixth and the one with the new municipal government complex and the college town. The urbanization process in Chenggong can be categorized as Hsing’s urban fringe type, since Chenggong used to be a county adjacent to Kunming and under its jurisdiction. The specifics of the case lie in: administratively the whole old Chenggong County is “one-step” urbanized to be an important new district of Kunming where its new administrative center and cultural center are constructed. The local state exerts the “one-step urbanization” in Chenggong to make land-lost peasants urban residents while avoiding appearance of “urban villages”.

The “one-step urbanization” applied in Chenggong is specialized to differentiate the former demolition and relocation policy widely applied in the urbanization process in China. In some similar new city projects (see Hsing 2010; Zhu 2011), the compensation package offered by the local state often reserves a plot of the dislocated village’s original collective land for relocation, where the dislocated village can reconstruct the whole village. However, the recent official discourse argues that to let villagers build their housing will cause the emergence of new “urban villages”. Informed by this discourse, the local state of Chenggong proposes the scheme of “one-step urbanization”, which stresses that the construction of the resettlement

residential compound should be planned and built entirely by local government. Besides the building of the urban residential area, the “one-step urbanization” also signifies “the direct shift from rural to urban”.

Second step towards theorization: governmentality and capital

Urbanization in China thus produces new challenges to people. The drastic change forces people to choose different livelihoods through various adaptation rationalities in urban settings, and this is also the case in Chenggong. However, the case does not show a complete change in which old ways are left behind, and in which new, urbanized and individualized ways take over. Certainly, people have to find new ways of earning money, either through employment and business activities in urban settings, or as farming entrepreneurs in districts where land for cultivation is still available. Such new economic strategies thus affect processes of differentiation among people and affect their own views of themselves as urban citizens of China. However, I observed clear processes that indicate a willingness to maintain earlier ways of socio-cultural life and to embrace a village identity based on the old villages that now are no more. An important aim of my thesis is to show the various dynamics behind individual livelihood choices and the reproduction of collective identities and social networks, thus problematizing and showing the ways the land-lost peasants in Chenggong make and re-make themselves as new urban settlers, with subjectivities formed and constructed by the ongoing political, economic, and social dynamics within which they find themselves. I argue that both livelihood choice and territoriality are central to villagers’ subject-making in Chinese urbanization. In a way my case illustrates the conclusions drawn by Hsing:

Location is a key element affecting the scope and scale of resources upon which villagers may draw for self-protection and establishing territorial autonomy. Yet, locational advantage does not guarantee success. Conversely, relocation almost always brings loss of control over land, disintegration of village organization, and rupture of peasants’ collective identity. Location matters, but relocation matters more. (Hsing 2010:188).

Certainly, my case implies the resettlement in a new urban environment, as a consequence of the loss of land. Both processes are driven and defined by the Chinese authorities in their efforts to modernize and develop China. Thus, it is a case showing

one example of what Foucault labelled “discipline” and “governmentality”, the first indicating a forced process through which authorities define and build the new urban environment in order to make sure the new environment will not end up looking as the old village, the second indicating a process through which people are supposed to embrace a new urban way of life, adapted to the ways in which the Chinese authorities define a cultured and developed population. However, my case shows that in spite of the discourse imposed from above, the new urban adaptation among my informants does not show a total disintegration of rural society and earlier ways of life. Rather, my fieldwork indicates that people actively engage in activities and practices that lead to a reproduction of village-based life forms and solidarities, irrespective of what the authorities want them to do.

To understand such processes I find both the Foucauldian concepts of discipline and governmentality useful, as well as Bourdieu’s concepts of capital. For Foucault’s two concepts, I draw on Dean’s definition:

Government is any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes. (Dean 1999:11)

Empirically, in my case, the socialist disciplining and governmentality inform the ongoing urbanization in contemporary China in several ways. First, the long history of land reforms in socialist China constitute the common imagination that the land belongs to the socialist state, which leaves little room for peasants’ resistance to land appropriation and makes the rapid urbanization possible (Zhu 2011:14). Second, the socialist regime justifies its disciplining and governance and facilitates the implementation of its policies in different historical periods by creating national narratives in which the peasantry discursively is a key part of a Marxist teleology stating “in which human societies follow a historical trajectory from feudalism to capitalism to socialism to communism” (Kipnis 1997:167). Based on the same ideology, the duty of the authorities is to orient the backward and uncivilized rural subjects and rural society to urban living, in that it is an “inevitable historical trend”. Therefore, urbanization represents a progress towards better life and land-loss is

presented as an unavoidable “labor pain” that both the socialist government and her people must conquer together, yet to negotiate. In this ideological landscape, the benevolent patriarchal government (Yang 2010:550) should exert to “help” her land-lost peasant subjects to resolve their problems such as relocation and reemployment since they are the “contributors” to urbanization. Looking at the official discourses in Chenggong shows that seen from the point of view of the government, the policies, the planning and construction of the new urban space has followed the broad ideological thinking as mentioned above. Nevertheless, seen from the point of view of the former peasants we see that they do not totally buy into the government’s thinking, nor do they adopt in ways expected by the authorities. Third, policy discourses and rationalities of government behind them are changing, with old ones and new ones are intertwined and contesting. Current urbanization in China is shaped by both Deng Xiaoping’s “development is the absolute principle” and Hu Jintao’s “building a harmonious society”. Therefore, “competition over land among various state actors affects and is affected by social responses to land grabs” (Hsing 2010:18). Fourth, territoriality in urbanization as an important aspect of the local state’s power strategy invokes the basis of how the state of China is perceived. Here I agree with Lin and Ho when they argue that: “state in China is a dynamic, complex, heterogeneous and self-conflicting institutional ensemble, in and through which power and interests of different levels of the state are contested, negotiated and mediated” (Lin and Ho in Yang and Wang 2008:1039).

However, the relocation to the city inevitably brings changes. Whatever the starting point, the resettlement implies new livelihoods and new environment for carrying out socio-cultural activities, and thus, ultimately affect basic identities and relationships among the former peasants. Here we find a dynamic that can be understood as “agency” or “resistance”. People certainly do unexpected things, and it is of interest to understand the creation and maintenance of such new adaptive strategies. To explore such dynamics I relate to Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of forms of capital.

Capital, in Bourdieu’s term, as accumulated labor, is objectified and embodied, and takes time to accumulate (1986:241). He contends to reintroduce capital in all its forms and not solely in the form recognized by economic theory to account for the

structure and functioning of the social world. Bourdieu (1986:243) builds up a general science of the economy of practices and proposes four basic forms of capital. These are: economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights; social capital, which is made up of social obligations; cultural capital, which may be in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body or institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications; symbolic capital, which is in the form of prestige and renown attached to a family and name (Bourdieu in Smart 1993:391).

Bourdieu argues that different forms of capital are convertible to one another under certain conditions. Bourdieu's conceptualization of capital is related to the specific field in which a form of capital is utilized (Smart 1993:390), which leaves space for the proliferation of new types of capital or define new terms as variants of Bourdieu's four basic forms. Let me illustrate. In my case here, I define political capital as capital that is brought by the possessor's position, namely, decided by positional power which locates people in organized social relationships of command and obedience (Stockman 2000:178). It can, for instance, stem from a professional position in the workplace. Specifically, in my research context, political capital is the capital a person obtains from holding position as a village cadre. This position of village cadres is different from the position of formal government officials since a village/*community*⁸ [*shequ*] in China is defined as a self-governing organization, with leadership chosen through elections instead of appointment. The political capital entitles the village cadre the authority to operate collective assets and be the representative of the village in dealings between villagers and outsiders. The political position as leader and cadre thus means that an individual had the right kinds of capital to obtain the position, and holding the position means that the person can accumulate further social and symbolic capital, which may convert to economic capital. The political capital can also easily convert into economic capital directly through corruption (Gu 2004:25) as well.

⁸ *Community* [*shequ*] as a term in Chinese is a basic unit of urban governance in China (see Bray 2006:530; Tomba 2009). After the urbanization, villagers are "residents" and villages are *communities* under the jurisdiction of a "sub-district" [*jiedao*]. Sub-districts/towns are the smallest administrative units in China, while *communities*/villages are instituted as self-governing organizations of residents/villagers.

In the same way as economic and political capital, we can look at other forms of capital and see how they provide a basis for a person's identity, occupation as well as general strategic position in the adaptational game in the new urban context. A big sum of cash compensation given by government for the involuntary resettlement greatly increased villagers' economic capital, and it is of interest to see in what ways people make use of this, as an economic strategy or as a way to invest in and improve other forms of capital. A second aspect of this is to see how the labor market in the city opens up for employment opportunities in the new urban space, or how the availability of land not yet urbanized opens up for continuous and increased engagement in cultivation by some of the former peasants. Since the conversion between forms of capital always needs certain conditions, it is of importance to this study to show empirically in what ways one type of capital can be transformed into other types of capital. The conditions of convertibility are socially regulated and structured. Through the socialization, these conditions make and remake the social subjects. A famous way such dynamics operate in China is through the concept of *guanxi* (see, for example, Yan 2009; Yang 1994; Kipnis 1997), "the cementing of mutually beneficial relationships through the strategic application of gifts, favours and banquets" (Unger 1995:317), by which the social relationships implied in the term provides a necessary informal bridge that brings transformation of capital about.

The chapters

Based on the above empirical and conceptual contexts I shall organize my discussion in this thesis in the following manner. In Chapter 1 "From the old village to the new city: meeting an urban space defined by the authorities", my focus is on various forms of backgrounds, presenting a historical picture of the old villages and a background description of the new urban environment. Here we see both the background of the peasants who are my key informants and who make up the key focus of my study, as well as the ways the process of urban relocation is defined and pushed forward by the authorities. In Chapter 2 "Engaging a new spatial universe: reviving 'the village'", my focus is more one of "bottom-up" analysis. In spite of all the structural and spatial order provided by the authorities, illustrating how the same authorities see a well-ordered, urban universe, the local people do not adapt to these new contexts in any

easily predictable way. Rather than engaging in a total change they engage in a revitalization of their old ways, under new circumstances. In the chapter, I discuss the various processes by which such a revitalization take place. One focus is on how the position as local cadre, the political and administrative leader, has become important in new ways. While few were interested in being a cadre back in the village, the new resources available after the relocation in the city, has made this position attractive to people with resources, or different sorts of capital, as it can become the basis for further strategies that might bring both economic and political capital in the future. To become elected, and to stay in the position, the leader now plays an active role in keeping people together around collective activities, activities generated by the compensations received for the loss of land and village, and the collective ways some of this compensation has been organized. Collectivities based on kinship and marriages are also found, and in order to maintain collective activities linked to these, the new townspeople need spaces for marriages, funerals and so on. Also on the religious side, we see the need for temples, as the people are Buddhists. Thus, I describe how the guest hall and the village temple play a role in keeping people focused towards collective aims. As the people no longer are farmers, there is also a lot of spare time available, time they spend on chatting and visiting, but also engaging workout, such as square dancing for women. Again, the chapter documents the activities, and makes an argument about how they contribute to maintaining a collective solidarity based on the negotiation between their earlier village custom and adaptation for urban life. In Chapter 3 “Employment in the city: exploiting the urban labor market”, I describe and analyze the ways the newly settled peasants are able to exploit the various possibilities for employment found in their new environment. The new university campuses make up an important part of the newly established labor in Chenggong. People work there as cleaners and gardeners which are gendered in a sense. Drivers of different sorts are also found. The elderly enjoy their relaxing retirement time which was not possible before in rural settings. The situation is therefore mixed, with dynamics moving towards further economic diversification. A few land-lost peasants with abundant accumulated economic capital and necessary social capital have become “bosses”. They not only work for themselves but also provide job opportunities for others. Some of them do business locally, such as traders; others are farming entrepreneurs renting land in other counties and hire local

farmworkers to work on their greenhouse farms. I classify them as one category in the sense that they generally earn more than other villagers, and they are concerned with increasing their savings. In fact, they are rich and capable people in the eyes of their fellow villagers, and their business stories are talked about among villagers. Moreover, the local government uses them as successful models in public discourses in terms of their economic success. In order to defend the merits of urbanization, their specific “cultural capital” is recognized and their socio-cultural status presented as “cultured” with high “skills”. As such, they help challenge the historical discourses about “uncivilized” rural subjects in China. A particular part of the entrepreneurial story, that of agricultural entrepreneurs, is particularly important, and I single that one out as a separate chapter, namely Chapter 4 “Becoming farming entrepreneurs”. I do this because we are now closing a circle, with the former peasants re-engaging in agriculture, but under very different circumstances than what we saw in the old and traditional village. What they do today is intensive greenhouse production of vegetables for the developed markets in east China. This is a strategy engaged in by some individuals, and their economic success brings them into the category of “bosses”. They rent land, they hire workers, and they are organized together with other farmers in marketing chains. However, they are active to demonstrate that they still belong to the collective community we described in Chapter 2. They return to the city when social events are going on, and they contribute to all kinds of community-based activities. The chapter shows how land is obtained, and how their new business is organized. Moreover, the chapter also discusses in greater detail the ways they maintain links back to their fellow villagers in the relocated part of Chenggong. In the final Chapter 5 “Conclusion: towards new Chinese subjectivities”, I locate my study in the broader context of the rural subjects made in the discourse as well as institution of the state in the history of socialist China. By combining the reflection of the historical subject-making with the current dynamics, I intend to explore how urbanization processes influence people’s subjectivity. From the historical perspective, my case in Chenggong is the continuation of subject-making of the regime in current time, the era when modernity is defined by urbanization and with more complexity brought about by both various levels of state and by social actors competing for the territoriality. The processes of urbanization reestablish the new territorial order, and influence people’s subjectivity in a multiple way in the process.

Methodology

The thesis is based on six months fieldwork carried out from July to December in 2013 in Chenggong, Yunnan province, China. I had worked in a college in Kunming prior to starting the M.Phil. study. Parts of the college campus started to be relocated to Chenggong in 2008. It was easy for students to move and settle down on a new campus (that is why college towns are often strategically used as pioneering projects for urban expansion), while it was nearly a nightmare for teachers who could not move their family immediately to Chenggong. They had to take the school bus leaving at seven o'clock in the morning from the campus in Kunming, travel more than one hour to Chenggong campus, give lectures and take the bus back to Kunming in the afternoon or in the evening, completely exhausted. If they encountered a traffic jam in Kunming, which was quite frequent, it could make the time on the way doubled. I began to join this long commuting work style in 2010, two years before I started my M.Phil. program in Bergen and got some preliminary impression and experience about the college town and Chenggong. In retrospect, these experiences and impressions are far from the local villagers' life world. With life based back in Kunming, teachers saw Chenggong as merely a place of work; a place someone would like to escape after work immediately. At the end of my six-month fieldwork, I could fully compare these two different experiences and drew the following conclusion: the commuters are still outsiders, while local villagers have more emotional attachment with this place although for them the landscape has been totally changed.

Considering that my previous experience as a rushed commuter in Chenggong would not give me any substantial help for my fieldwork, I decided to take one month to do some preliminary research in the whole region to find out which village could answer my research questions and whether I could get better access to it. I visited different villages in and around the college town. Since the urbanization plan of Chenggong was formulated in 2003, these villages are "urbanized" to various degrees. In some cases, villages' collective land is partially expropriated but does not cause substantial change in villagers' livelihood. In one case, some of the villagers moved to temporary resettlement residential housing and others still live in their own housing.

The construction of their new resettlement residential compound is about to be finished, so this split situation will come to an end soon. In another case, most villagers' farming land is expropriated, but not their village, so they still live in their rural village without internal spatial change. At last, I focused on two resettlement residential compounds in the college town. One encompasses residents from one entire village, while the other holds people from three entire villages. In both cases, villagers have been relocated to their resettlement residential compounds for several years and both residential compounds are located in the college town. As far as time and location are concerned, both are eligible to my research interest in how the relocated villagers choose new livelihoods to adapt themselves to the urban settings and whether the college town project has affected the land-lost peasants in some specific ways. Considering that the three-village case may introduce more interesting dynamics, such as the interaction between villagers from different villages, I finally decided to choose the three-village resettlement residential compound as my field focus.

Of course, my fieldwork is not just limited within the resettlement residential compound for following reasons. First, the materials collected in other villages constantly enrich my knowledge on the general situation in Chenggong and deepen my understanding of the situation in my case. Second, since most villagers have their new livelihood outside the residential compound, following their social network, I got to know more people and their life stories, some of which are included in my research data. Third, some villagers migrate to other counties to rent land and to continue farming, which is a special livelihood since it produces a salient group of subjects among land-lost peasants. In order to get to know their life and livelihood there, I also followed my informants to one of the counties where many land-lost peasants migrate as farming entrepreneurs. In that case, my field is not limited to Chenggong, either.

I started my interviews from various scattered public spaces where people are likely to have more time to talk. The interviews were semi-structured, and sometimes they were unavoidably carried out in the form of a focus group. The good aspect of this is that I got to know more people and efficiently received many responses to my questions. At the same time, I became familiar to them and made my presence in a "face-to-face society" (Fei 1992:53) less strange. I found that the public space was

also gendered in a sense. Villagers with same gender tend to gather in the same corner. As a female researcher, I have no problem talking with female villagers. Meanwhile, my identity as an outsider allows me to transgress this unwritten rule and to sit in the male corner and talk to male villagers as well. By joining their discussion and watching their interaction, I learnt what interested them, which then affected my questions and the way I asked them. The disadvantage of this form is that the information that I acquired through this way was fragmented. People did not talk about their familiar persons and things in context, so I could easily get lost. In addition, when a person was talking, others could easily chip in. The “talking together at once” often left me confused in the end. Lastly, such an informal focus group could quickly lose focus for any distraction.

I was thinking how I could get involved in the community as an actor instead of just an interviewer when I realized that the square dance was open to outsiders. Thus, by joining the square dance, I got to know some people whom I could frequently meet and get updated information from. They became my main interlocutors. I was very glad that I was introduced to participate in their life and livelihood, so I could participate in and observe lived life and connect all those fragmented pieces of information together to understand the logic behind them. I asked to participate in and experience their livelihood if it was allowed. In that case, I tried jobs as cleaner on campus, businessman selling fruits, village idler and migrant farmer. I was introduced to their family members, colleagues and relatives and attended family banquets. Based on the local principle of reciprocity in courtesy, my family and I also hosted banquets at my place and invited my villager friends. I felt lucky that I could actually also live with a farming entrepreneurial family on their farm, being treated as a family guest, and later as a family member. I participated in the farming and learned how to manage greenhouses. I helped cooking meals in the busy season and I fed dogs. I attended the farming business negotiations and observed how people interacted and how conflicts were solved. I was invited to participate in weddings, funerals and temple events, sometimes as a guest in banquets, other times, more importantly, as a “helper” in the kitchen. In this way I could participate in the social interaction in the village and understand why this particular custom is important

in maintaining villagers' social network. Attending these village events thus became quite helpful to experience the village as a community.

When in the field, I also collected some useful secondary data from village collective announcements, official reports, statistics and county annuals.

CHAPTER 1 From the old village to the new city: meeting an urban space defined by the authorities

Chenggong as an agricultural county

Yunnan is a southwestern frontier province of China, bordering on Tibet and Burma to the west, Laos and Vietnam to the south. As a mountainous and inland province, the economy of Yunnan is not as developed as coastal provinces such as Zhejiang and Guangdong in the east of China. The composition of population with abundant minority groups makes Yunnan exotic but also carries it a sense of distance as well as “backwardness” and “primitiveness” in the Chinese ideology.

Chenggong, with an area of 461 km², locates in the South of Kunming, the provincial capital. It is 12 kilometers away from downtown Kunming. Historically, Chenggong was bureaucratically defined as a county. Its history being a county can be traced back to 1275AD. Chenggong is officially redesignated as the sixth district of Kunming municipality by the central government of China in 2011. The name “Chenggong” is transliterated from Yi⁹ language, meaning “a piece of plain land near the gulf and with abundance of rice” [*shengchan daogu de haiwan bazi*] (Wu 2006:364). A lot of archeological excavations have proved that there existed an ancient kingdom called *Dian* in Chenggong about 2,000 years ago. The sudden vanishing of this ancient kingdom is still mysterious to archeologists. After redesignation, Chenggong is comprised of 10 sub-districts [*jiedao*], including 65 *communities* with population of 350,000 (Chenggong Online, March 9th 2012).

Chenggong was regarded as a traditional agricultural county and 80 per cent of its people were peasants with 0.75 *mu* land *per capita* before the large scale land appropriation in 2000s (Li 2012:227). Agriculture had been the main source of subsistence in the county. Under the collective economy before 1980s, peasants in Chenggong had been engaged in traditional agriculture, growing maize and rice. After

⁹ Yi is one of the ethnic minority groups in Yunnan.

China's decollectivization¹⁰ in 1980s, with their own contracted land and the legitimacy to sell the agricultural products in market, peasants in Chenggong attempted to grow vegetables for sale. Due to favorable climate, fertile soil and locational advantage, fresh vegetables, especially greenhouse vegetables from Chenggong were marketed in Kunming and out of Yunnan. Advanced agricultural technologies such as greenhouse cultivation were widely used to grow greenhouse vegetables. The expansion of the market constantly stimulated the formation of an industrial chain, which involves the provisions of transportation, fertilizers, pesticides and cold storages. These businesses were invested in both by local peasants with more capital and outside businessmen. The flourishing agricultural business attracted local peasants to make sufficient income from their land to quell any intention to migrate to far-away big cities to make a living. Most local peasants were not only the experts of greenhouse cultivation, but also familiar with the marketing rules.

Growing flowers was introduced as an economic activity in Chenggong in 1983. Soon its fresh cut flower production topped the list nationwide, seeing a ten-year top ranking anniversary by 2011. The county government invested 3,840,000 *yuan*¹¹ to build the first flower trade fair in 1995. Now "Kunming International Flower Auction Trade Center" in Chenggong with the joint investment of 125,000,000 *yuan* from both the government and enterprises is one of the biggest flower trade fairs in China. A mature fresh cut flower production and sales industrial chain has formed in Chenggong.

¹⁰ Decollectivization refers to the collapse of People's Communes established in 1958 when the administrative, organizational and socioeconomic structures in rural China were merged into communes. The decollectivization began in 1978, when the household responsibility system was instituted in rural China. Under the household responsibility system each household (farming family) contracts with the village collective to farm a certain amount of land and to deliver a certain quality of crops as a fee for using the land and as tax, beyond which output could be sold on the market (Stockman 2000:137). Households has the autonomy of land use, crops, sideline production and investment, although the village collective has the ownership of the land. See also Yan (1996:31). In Chapter 5, I will mention the decollectivization again as the third land reform in the history of socialist China.

¹¹ *Yuan*, is the unit of Chinese currency. The exchange ratio of *yuan* to U.S. dollar was approximately 6 to 1 in 2013.

In addition to vegetables and flowers, fruit cultivation has always been Chenggong's tradition. Local peasants grew vegetables and flowers in their plain fields and made use of their forestland to cultivate fruit trees. Chenggong abounds with fruits, such as peaches, pears, plums, grapes and apricots. Of them, “*Baozhuli*” (*baozhu* pears) is nationally well-known with a long history.

With the well-known vegetables, flowers and fruits, Chenggong was honored with the title of “town of flowers, fruits and vegetables” [*Huaxiang, guoxiang, caixiang*]. The blossoming agricultural industry was influenced by the disappearance of rural land and the agricultural production began shrinking after Chenggong was schemed to be a new district of Kunming in 2003. Surveys show that the plantation areas for vegetables, flowers and fruits were respectively 155,700 *mu*, 31,000 *mu* and 80,000 *mu* in 2005, while the figures became 53 *mu*, 5.3 *mu* and 17 *mu* in 2011 after the drastic urbanization in Chenggong (Li 2012:227).

Although Chenggong was a typical agricultural county both from the perspective of *hukou* and from the main livelihood activities of its people, its location near the provincial capital city set it apart from other rural counties that are situated in mountainous areas in Yunnan and hence isolated from the outside world due to the poor transport links. Villagers in Chenggong were wealthier and had easier access to the market. The developed industrial chain facilitated local peasants to produce vegetables, fruits and flowers for national market, which guaranteed a steady and considerable income.

On May 20th 2011, the State Council approved Chenggong to be the sixth district of Kunming Municipality. Thus, Chenggong's 736-year history being a county came to an end. By the end of 2011, the construction of the new district appropriated land of 110,360 *mu* and seven villages were displaced, which made Chenggong's urbanization rate increase from 49.5% in 2006 to 54.2% in 2011 (Kunming Daily May 18th 2011). According to Kunming's the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2001-2005), the urbanization rate of Chenggong should reach more than 75% by the end of 2015 (Kunming Daily May 18th 2011), which means urbanization in Chenggong will expand.

The three villages in the past

Before the construction of the college town, the three villages in my fieldwork were adjacent to one another with North village in the north, Middle village in the East and South village in the west. It took about 10 to 15 minutes to walk from one to another. Although adjacent, there were few close associations among the three villages. Of course, the villagers did not expect that they would live much closer in future. North village has 998 villagers, while Middle village has 2,330 villagers and South village has 1,584 villagers. The three villages are all multi-surname villages. Village land, including the arable land in the flat area and the forestland on hills, were contracted equally to each villager after the establishment of household responsibility system [*baochan daohu*] in 1980s. Generally, one household was entitled to several scattered plots of various quality. The average size for each household was around five to six *mu*. Like most other peasants in Chenggong, villagers cultivated vegetables, flowers and fruits to sell. They accumulated both capital and experience in the market. Some with abundant capital also attempted to rent more land from neighboring villages to earn more money, but limited by the capital and local land supply, the scale was confined to a great degree. Mutual help between relatives and close friends in the village provided needed labor in busy season, therefore farmworkers were rarely hired.

In the village, there were two distinctive styles of houses. The old style was made of wood and earth with a sloping tile roof and was one or two-storied. There was not necessarily a yard inside. Houses built after 1990s were called “new style”: multi-story buildings made of concrete and bricks with colored ceramic tiles pasted outside. The roof was flat and designed as a terrace. Some villagers designed their buildings hollow with an inner courtyard so as to get more light from the top. Others gave up the inner courtyard design for more rooms, so the extra rooms could be rented out for income. The number of stories was determined by the household’s economic status. Some families built a two-storied buildings first and built two or three more stories several years later when they saved enough money. The flat roof style left the opportunities for the family to add more stories in the future. The first floor of the building was strictly confined within the housing plot allocated by the village committee while the upper floors were extended in the air in order to get more floor

area. The illegal occupation of the collective land was not allowed, but to occupy the public space in the air seemed acceptable. This has been a popular design among rural villages in Chenggong. Some villagers rented out some of their spare rooms to outsiders who came to do small businesses in the village or to migrant workers who worked in nearby construction sites. The ground outside the gate was often used to park farm vehicles. These descriptions come from villagers. Only one family could provide me some photos of their old house and their old village. When asked, some regretted that they did not think of taking a picture as memory. My understanding about their old villages and past life was also intensified after I visited some other villages not yet expropriated in Chenggong.

Each village used to have several public locales for villagers' daily activities. For example, the "little street" [*xiaojie*] was one of the important locales in a village. It was basically a crowded village market in the morning, but still a place for villagers to gather at other times. Both the vendors from outside and local villagers could simply set a stand and sell their goods. The goods were often local farm products and living supplies, including vegetables, meat, seasonings, clothes, sheets and kitchen utensils. Villagers became vendors when they had something to sell. This conversion seemed quite natural for peasants in Chenggong. When the early market finished after noon, the area would function as a playground for young people to play billiards and for old people to drink tea, smoke and enjoy sunshine. While the "little street" was tightly related to local villagers' life and livelihood, other places scattered in the village, such as street corners, wells, chess and cards house, primary schools, pond, and grain-sunning ground, were spontaneously formed as gathering points for villagers to chat and exchange information.

Villagers from the three villages became dislocated peasants between 2006 and 2009 due to the land appropriation for constructing the college town. Their former land and former villages became new campuses and they were all resettled in one resettlement residential compound newly built on an original plot belonging to South village. South village was the last one dislocated among the three and so far, some of its villagers still do farming on some of their unappropriated land, while villagers of the other two villages did not have any land left.

The resettlement residential compound

When peasants build their own houses, if it is not well planned, it is hard to avoid the problem of “urban villages”. This is particularly important for Chenggong in the critical period of its rapid construction of the new city. For that matter, through the elaborate planning, [...], according to the construction goal of “high standard, high starting-point, high taste”, [...], Chenggong County put an end to “urban villages” from the beginning. Therefore, they adopt the idea of “construction before dislocation”. The government first designates the construction plot and then builds the resettlement residential compound according to the standard and request of urban new *community*. [...] It proves that this new *community* construction mode is undoubtedly an important method to eradicate “urban village” phenomenon. (Spring City Evening News, January 8th, 2009)

The resettlement residential compound is designed and built all together by the government, as it is advocated in the “one-step urbanization”. Allegedly this is lesson learned from earlier failure elsewhere in China where the compensation package provided each household a housing plot on a newly appointed village housing land and let villagers build by themselves. The result is that they “built another urban village” which will become a target of demolition in a city redevelopment project sooner or later. A resettlement residential compound developed exclusively by the government through “one-step urbanization” should meet the standard of an urban residential area and avoid “having to be urbanized for the second time”. Here we see the “discipline” force of the authorities.

The resettlement residential compound is in a rectangular shape. There are about twenty rows of six-storied buildings from north to south. Each building is composed of two to five blocks. Each block has one staircase and there are two apartments at either side of the staircase on each floor. The grounds between two rows of buildings are green belts with grass, bushes and trees planted. Several mini parks are spotted among buildings with small pavilions, climbing plants covered long corridors, stone tables surrounded by short stone stools, or some outdoor exercising facilities stationed on the ground. There are three main streets inside the compound and each end leads to a main road outside. Two of them are parallel from north to south, while the third one is from west to east and across the other two in the middle. The entire residential compound is outlined by “straight lines and visible order” (Scott 1998:55). As far as the layout, it is identical with other urban residential compounds

in the city of Kunming: buildings of uniform design, size and color, streets laid out in straight lines intersecting at right angles and “the whole built according to a single, overarching plan” (1998:55). However, as Scott argues, the geometric order in human settlement is most evident from above and from outside, but not at the street level (1998:57). This uniform and symmetry is not for the convenience of villagers or to fit their habit. For example, some elder villagers avoid going out alone, for they may have problems finding their way back or are afraid of climbing the stairs. An old villager in his seventies told me that he often got confused and could not find the right block and the right floor of his home, so that he ended up “picking other’s lock” with his key. The victim neighbors complained this to his son and he had to tie a red cloth to his apartment door, so at least his confused father would not disturb their neighbors.

The buildings in the resettlement residential compound are given two different colors. About twenty buildings with yellow color standing in the far north and northeast are firstly built to deal with the relocation of North village in 2006. The rest of the buildings are in blue and built later as the second phase of the whole residential compound. Villagers of Middle village and South village were moved into the blue buildings in 2009. There is a vacant plot on the west of the compound that is reserved for the third phase where more apartment buildings are supposed to be built.

According to the compensation principle for the land appropriation in Chenggong entitle each villager 80 m² in the new resettlement residential compound. Each couple with only one child can obtain an extra 40 m². The principle regulates that the total floor area that one household can get should be materialized in two apartments, which allows each household to have a spare apartment for rental income. Now the reality is that only households of the Northern village, living in the yellow buildings, have two apartments. Rumors among villagers of Middle village indicated that the dislocation in 2009 should have only involved Middle village. In that case, they would have enough apartment resource to guarantee that each household in Middle village had two apartments. However, somehow South village claimed that they would like to dislocate together with Middle village. “The government was definitely happy with that,” a villager from Middle village commented. However, that meant that apartments were not sufficient to fulfill the relocation. Villagers in Middle village refused to move. Then the government promised villagers in their relocation

contract that more buildings would be constructed within 18 months after their relocation and then each household would get their second apartment for rental income soon. “But the government deceived us. It has been three years since our relocation. The vacant plot is still there without any change,” my informants told me. I wondered how this delay could be allowed. “The government also has no money,” one villager explained: “The construction of the new city cost too much money. The government is under a big burden. Plus, you see there are too many corrupted officials in government everywhere. How can the government have money left?” Besides the understanding or even some sympathy towards the local state that allows the delay, my further fieldwork finds that the local state gives money yearly to those households that only have one apartment. This money is a compensation for their rental income. A female villager commented: “The compensation might be better than the rental income of an apartment with bad location. With the compensation, you don’t have to worry that you can’t find tenants for your apartment.”

Many spare apartments are rented by hostel runners. A hostel runner often rents several apartments from different villages to run the hostel. The tenure is often five years or longer. The rent is just around 1,000 to 1,200 *yuan* for one apartment, but the hostel runner needs to invest some money to decorate the apartment and to buy furniture so that each room in it can be rented out to different customers. The daily rent for a room ranges from 30 to 50 *yuan*. These hostel runners are mostly from the same region in northeast Yunnan, such as Xuanwei and Huize. They have the reputation of being smart and good at such businesses. Being migrants, they may occupy one room or two in one of the apartments that they rent as their own family shelters, as well as the office or reception area for the hostel business.

The main consumers of these hostel rooms are students from nearby colleges. Since a student has to share a dorm room with other four or six students, young college students have no private space to date. This near residential compound offers them private rooms to spend a night with their date for a low price that they can afford. The hostel rooms are almost all rented out on weekends. The universities also ban students to drink alcohol on campus. No shops on campus are allowed to sell drinks with alcohol. Getting caught drunk on campus can be regarded as a serious transgression of school discipline. In that case, the resettlement residential compound

provides a handy and safe place where they can enjoy themselves without being punished. The local police station demands hostel owners to register every customer's name and identity number when they check in. This regulation influences the hostel business a lot. Students would not like their names registered since what they do is somewhat a moral violation against the traditional moral orthodoxy in China. "Some students would just leave, if you persisted in asking them to register. They may turn to other hostels run by local people. Those local hostel runners dare to violate the regulation. They are not afraid of the local authorities. They may be friends or know each other," a hostel runner, Sister Chen told me. I got to know her at the village square dance. She and her husband are from Huize. They had run a hostel in Kunming for more than ten years, when they heard that there would be good business opportunities in Chenggong since many students would move to the college town. They started their business in the resettlement residential compound in 2009, but the business was not as good as they had expected. Until two years later, with more students moving to the college town, their business became better. The influx of students made the business blossom, but also brought the rise of rents, which make her probably reconsider her business here in future when the tenure is due. "It is safer to do business here. Most customers are college students. They have high *suzhi*¹² (quality of people), which differentiate them from our former customers in Kunming who would even steal the pillowcase in the room," she said. "Students are lovely," she tried to give an example: "Once, several students with one of them very drunk came. We would not like to let them check in since we worried the drunk one would mess the room. They said they would like to pay extra deposit to guarantee the tidiness of the room. Ordinary people would never be considerate like that."

Some local state's statistics in 2012 shows that there were more than 80 hostels run in the area of North village. Hostels seldom have storefronts facing streets.

¹² See Kipnis (2006). *Suzhi*, usually glossed as quality, has become central to China's governance, culture and society. The CCP claims its legitimacy in terms of producing a strong nation by individually and collectively raising the quality of its citizens (Kipnis 2006:296). The Chinese education reform, all manner of human resource decisions, various development projects can be justified in terms of quality. In addition to its prevalence in public discourse, the word "*suzhi*" is also widely used in people's daily conversation in Chinese society. Based on the urban-rural dichotomy, rural people are seen of lower *suzhi* than urban people.

In order to attract customers, the hostel runners have to hang their tablets outside of the façade of buildings here and there, which makes the yellow buildings full of various hostel tablets and light boxes. Coupled with little shops run on the first floor of these buildings, the entire yellow building area appears bustling and full of commercial elements. These little shops are found in what used to be tool rooms allocated to villagers of North village. These tool rooms at the first floor are originally designed to let the peasants place their farming tools. Since few villagers farm near home, villagers from North village just rent them out to businessmen as stores and restaurants. All kinds of small shops, such as hairdressers, various service outlets and grocery stores, are run in these tool rooms. There are many small restaurants specializing in all kinds of flavors all over the country. Without enough space indoor, they often occupy the public space between two rows of buildings to set their tables. With catering downstairs and accommodation upstairs, the yellow building area truly is a commercial center inside the community. Villagers of North village have increased the commercial value of their apartment, but at the same time sacrificed their quietness of their own living area.

In fact, the resettlement residential compound is one of the two economic hot zones in the college town due to its geographic location with the campus of one college to its north and the other on its western side. Along these two sides, the periphery of the compound, a commercial street has formed in this area with storefronts on the first floor of buildings selling clothes, stationaries, gifts on the one side and many red bunkhouses built on the other side rented out for all kinds of snack food stands selling barbecues, pancakes and fruits. The east and south sides of the compound are not commercial at all. The south side is faced with a newly built yet not used road. Further is a wasteland which used to be the old village site of South village, but now is full of thorns. Their village temple is still there, yet among weeds and thorns, only with a hidden shortcut leading to the temple from the major road. The east side faces a major road with much traffic but few people, since there are many infrastructure construction sites mapped on the other side of the road. The temporary village guest hall for the three villages is hidden among these construction sites.

Compared with the yellow building area of the community, the blue building area is quieter and less commercialized. Without spare apartments or tool rooms to

boost the businesses and being relatively further from the campuses, the blue building area is just like other urban residential compound in Kunming except for some discarded farm vehicles parked on the ground between buildings. There is an appointed parking lot set in the southeast of the compound, but most villagers would like to park downstairs near their own block just as what they used to do in their old village. Besides private cars, the lanes in the resettlement residential compound are full of lorries, watering carts and tractors, which remind us that its residents may not be like average urbanites. There are more farm vehicles parked among the blue buildings in the south area where South village locates, since some of its villagers still farm on their unappropriated land across the major road in the east.

Structural organization

The residential compound is not fenced by walls. The openings between each pair of buildings along the road make up many entrances into the residential area. There is also no clear physical boundary among the three villages resettled in the residential compound, but apartment buildings of the same village relatively aggregate in the residential compound. As far as people's daily life is concerned, the whole resettlement residential compound just looks like one community. Although many public resources necessary for their familiar rural life are reduced, or even missing in this urban residential area, villagers try to rebuild their former life order through sharing.

For instance, traditionally, local weddings and funerals must involve a three-day banquet in the village "guest hall" [*ketang*]. Every village had its own guest hall in the village. It is quite a rural custom, since people living in cities will treat their guests in a restaurant, treating only one dinner meal. Designed based on the urban standard, the resettlement residential compound does not contain such a locale for each village and there is no planned plot for that. Only South village got the chance to build a temporary one among some construction sites on the other side of the main road to the east of the compound, which the three villages share so that this important social interaction can continue. Meanwhile, the three-day banquet often requires the host family to accommodate their relatives coming from afar. When the allocated

apartment of the family cannot provide enough rooms, hostels run in North village area provide a cheap and convenient place to live.

Just as I mentioned before, the “little street” played a very important economic and social role in villagers’ daily life in their old villages. It functioned as both a handy village fair for transactions and a public place for socializing. In the resettlement residential compound, a so-called “standardized food market” is set on the second floor of a commercial building owned by Middle village. The commercial building is planned and built at one intersection of the two main streets in the compound. The entire second floor is designed for the “standardized food market”, while the first floor is partitioned as several storefronts rented out for a supermarket, a bank and a post office. The pedestrian areas in front of the building are wide, especially the area around the corner, which makes this area sometimes function as a public square. The scale of the market is not big, with clearly demarcated booths rented to full-time vendors annually. The market is managed with regulated opening and closing time and cleaned by specific personnel. The “standardization” means it is supposed to meet the requirements of the state’s sanctioned regulations involving site selection, inner settings, layout, hygiene, market management, etc. and is under the supervision of authorities, which implies the place is cultured or civilized. The three villages share the food market. It partially fulfill the function of the former “little street”, but it does not allow villagers’ constant conversion to vendors when they have things to sell, nor does it provide cozy public space for villagers to socialize.

Neither the commercial street in the northern periphery of the resettlement residential compound nor the “standardized” food market can substitute this spontaneous “little street”. One day, I was strolling in the “little street” and recognized that a young man who was selling fruits at his van was actually a fruit vendor with a fixed booth at the commercial street north of the residential compound. I asked him why he moved here to sell his fruits. He replied: “I have no choice. People in the residential compound never go out to our street to buy fruits. I have to ask my wife to watch the booth outside in the afternoon, while I sell fruits here.” Another villager I met from North village told me: “I never eat anything in that street. Sometimes I would like to make a detour to avoid passing by that street in the evening. It is always suffused by cooking smoke.”

A new “little street” has spontaneously formed at this intersection area in front of the commercial building of the standardized food market. Located at the middle area of the entire residential compound with these public infrastructures installed and close to the entrance to main streets, the intersection area is the center of the entire community. A police station and a well-equipped kindergarten are also located near here. In terms of its disposition, the intersection is the economic, educational and administrative center of the entire residential compound. In local expression, it is a place with thriving *renqi*. People gather here day and night. In the daytime, senior male villagers sit around stone tables enjoying sunshine, smoking, chatting and playing cards. In the afternoon, villagers who have agricultural products to sell would sell their products just like what they did on the “little street” in their old village. In the evening, the square dance team of Middle village will practice their square dance on the empty ground in front of the commercial building.

Interestingly, this intersection works as the “little street” in the villagers’ heart, but it is with an urban timing: morning is not the most bustling time for the “little street” anymore. Instead, the bustling time for this “little street” in the resettlement residential compound is in the late afternoon when most villagers working around get off work and go back home.

With shared resources such as the “guest hall” and the “little street”, villagers from the three villages live like residents in a same rural community. However, in fact, the resettlement residential compound contains three self-governing *communities* with their own offices, directors and party branches respectively and run independently. I shall elaborate it in Chapter 2 that how each *community* functions as a village collective and in what sense the village collective identity is revived after resettlement.

Concluding remarks

Instead of anxiously getting rid of the stigma for rural people as backwardness and uncivility and abandoning their rural way of life, villagers in my field choose to call themselves “villagers” and consciously practice their rural tradition. Based on my fieldwork, I argue that villagers’ wealth accumulated from their former successful agricultural economy before the large-scale urbanization in Chenggong had blurred

the rural and urban dichotomy to some extent. Thus, when the public discourses objectify rural population as uncivilized and uneducated subjects in terms of the urban-rural dichotomy, they still have their own understanding and rationality which is not totally accordance with the mainstream rhetoric. In practice, people did not regard themselves as poor, primitive and ignorant, nor did they see their rural customs as “backward” which should be abandoned in pursuit of modernity. So, when the local state’s “one-step urbanization” scheme tries to transform villagers into urbanites through the “uniformly planned and constructed modernized residential compound”, they challenge this imposed urban spatiality with their own spatial logic.

CHAPTER 2 Engaging a new urban universe: reviving “the village”

Relocation brings deterritorialization via three mechanisms. First, relocation prompts a process of economic deterioration, a downward movement that deprives those relocated of economic opportunities and income sources. Second, relocation creates and widens rifts within the village, accelerating the social and organizational disintegration of the collective; the disintegration is furthered by policies of selective conversion of villagers into urban residents. Third, relocation opens rifts among villagers, impeding their collective reterritorialization at the new relocation site. (Hsing 2010:191)

In many urbanization cases, the relocation may cause the rupture of the village collective identity (Hsing 2010, Chen 2007). However, in my case, my fieldwork suggests that the village collective identity is strengthened after the relocation.

In the 2000s, as many rural labors have joined the “floating population” and migrate to cities, many villages in rural areas have become “empty villages” with only elderly villagers and children left. The village collective is paralyzed while villagers resemble a “heap of loose sand” without community sense or concern over the development of their village (Chen 2007:164). Villagers in Chenggong seem to have had less interest to join the “floating population” and make a living in big cities. Local villagers do not appreciate jobs far away from home. Neither when they were peasants with land nor now. In case of Middle village, the village statistics shows that among 2,330 villagers, less than ten of them worked outside Yunnan Province between 2006 and 2010. I got to know an “older sister” from the village square dance. She is in her forties but unemployed due to illness. Her husband works in a campus gardening team. Their only son graduated from a private computer school in Kunming and just found a job in a big city in Sichuan, a neighboring province north to Yunnan. Each time we met, we talked about her son. She kept asking me whether it was good for her son to work outside the province and obviously expected a positive answer. I regarded it a showing-off from a proud mother, but later I realized that it was because she could not get the recognition from her fellow villagers. Villagers are skeptical about working out far away, which is against the usual case of most Chinese villages as many are practically emptied for everyone but seniors and children. The attitude in Chenggong is that capable men can earn money locally. Besides a few people continue farming in

neighboring counties, most villagers choose to make a living just in or near the college town. Most interviewees claimed that they would prefer jobs with more freedom, so they could have time to take care of their family. Their definition of “taking care of their family” has a broader meaning as my fieldwork reveals and is not just limited to the realm of household chores. In most cases, it is related to things like “help offering” (mutual assistance) within their social networks of trust and reciprocity, especially on important events such as funerals and weddings. “I hate to work for those private bosses. They supervise you in work and push you to keep working intensively through the working hours. Moreover, it is hard to ask for a leave when you have things to do,” a male villager from North village told me. People seem quite comfortable with jobs on the campuses as cleaners and gardeners, which do not involve a lot of intensive work and allow flexibility with time and management control. These types of jobs make it easy to change the shifts with colleagues when a person is needed in collective events without having to disturb the manager. This makes villagers think that they still enjoy much freedom.

I argue that the local tradition and custom of willing to work near home is influential to the reinforcement of the village collective of a relocated villages, while it is also largely established by the relocation compensation policy. First, the entire village is relocated in the resettlement residential compound under the guideline of the “one-step urbanization” which retains the intactness of the village and provides the sufficient condition for the restoration of the village collective. Second, the cash compensation policy institutionalizes the economic recollectivization of the village collective, which consequently brings about a power recentralization of village cadres. Besides these two favorable conditions associated with the local governance, the local tradition of seeking employment nearby is also vital to prevent the decollectivization of the village.

Let us look at the dynamic of the compensation package. The way the compensation is divided into collective and individual parts promotes both a collective process and a more individual approach. Villagers are compensated according to national law as interpreted locally. The three villages share a similar compensation package. The cash compensation mainly derives from the expropriated farmland of the village. The policy stipulates that: ten per cent of the cash

compensation must be kept as collective fund, which is noticeably important as the initiative pooling of resources for the later village corporatism (see Hsing 2010:122); the remaining part of the cash compensation is distributed to each villager autonomously decided in terms of intra-village procedures. Aside from the lump sum income of cash compensation, there are some commercial buildings and a few plots around the resettlement residential compound. They are distributed to each village collective as collective assets for commercial lease. Ten per cent of the profit of the rent is stored as a collective fund and the rest is evenly distributed to each villager. For instance, North village obtained a rental income from its collective assets amounting to 3,000,000 *yuan* in total in 2012. The village collective reserved 300,000 *yuan* (ten per cent) as collective fund and distributed the rest. Thus, each villager in North village got 2700 *yuan* as dividend in that year. Therefore, each village works as a share-holding company and the village collective's role as dispenser of dividends is greatly strengthened. In fact, a formal share-holding company is formed at the level of the sub-district. Like other villages under the jurisdiction of the sub-district, the three villages were asked to invest in a "land-lost peasants entrepreneurial base" [*shidi nongmin chuangye jidi*] project. The project developed a commercial plaza in the college town with shopping, dining and entertainment all together. By doing so, a symbiotic relationship (Weber and Zhao 2010:69) has formed between the relocated villagers and urbanization – the faster the pace of urban development and the higher *renqi*, the more rental income and the higher value of the invested real estates. In the official discourse, this is "letting the land-lost peasants sharing the benefit of urbanization". As the representative as well as manager, the Residents' Committee (village committee) is empowered with the restoration of economic control.

Apart from cash compensation, each household is given one relocation apartment for private use to compensate for its house removal and one apartment for lease, which I have discussed in Chapter 1. In sum, we have seen that the villager's income source is multiple: their private rental income, the dividend of the collective properties, the potential dividend of the collective investment project (yet nothing so far) and their own work. The entitlement to all this is decided by the identity of being a member of the village.

What is at work here is *hukou*, the household registration system. Generally in China, due to the urban-rural asymmetry, people with urban *hukou* are covered by the national welfare system and have more access to public resource, such as medical care and pension payments. A common sense for contemporary Chinese people is “no matter what, better to have an urban *hukou*.” This became an important condition of spouse selection after the depoliticization¹³ of Chinese society since 1980s. Having a rural *hukou* is quite negative for a potential spouse. Given a chance, savvy rural villagers would transfer their rural *hukou* to an urban resident’s *hukou*. There are three conventional channels to realize this urban dream: through higher education, being a private teacher [*minban jiaoshi*] and joining the army. In the past, villagers in Chenggong apparently did not have great motivation to change their rural *hukou* due to the prosperous agriculture and locational advantage. There were several exceptional cases found in my fieldwork where people got an urban *hukou*, but now they asked to restore their former village *hukou*.

Qiaohui had been a private teacher teaching in a local elementary school in Chenggong for many years before she got a chance to be finally transferred to be a public teacher with urban *hukou*. When her daughter was born, Qiaohui let her daughter follow her registration as an urban resident without hesitation. However, when the village land was expropriated for the college town construction, without legal villager identity, both of them were excluded from the compensation package and the village collective dividend. Qiaohui and several other fellow villagers who were in a similar situation applied to transfer their *hukou* back to the village. I could image how hard that could be since I already heard that the village had severe restrictions on registering an outsider as a village member. Childbirth and marriage are the only normal ways to include a new member. In the case of marriage, the spouse from outside can register a village *hukou* free of charge. However, if the villager gets divorced and the new marriage also involves a similar immigration, then the new couple will be charged something like 100,000 *yuan* or 150,000 *yuan* to register a village *hukou*. Villagers are serious about the regulation, since more people

¹³ Depoliticization refers to the post-Mao era when “class” and “class struggle” are downplayed. In this time, the urban-rural dichotomy coined by *hukou* system came to the front. People with urban *hukou* in place of with advanced class background (worker or poor peasant) are favored. See also Yang (2010:552).

joining with prior links to the village would decrease the amount that each person can get. Luckily for Qiaohui and others, the community residents' committee (village committee) approved their requests. Qiaohui seemed not to be willing to tell many details to me, but I guess her and her daughter's luck might come from the fact that both her husband and a close relative are cadres in the village committee and that the luck of the other applicants also was related to the fact that they happened to apply with Qiaohui and her daughter.

In another case we find, Daqiang, a man in his late twenties who joined the army years ago, but who recently was urged by his family to quit and get married immediately, so that the family would have chance to add his name to the list and thus be entitled more square meters, be allocated a second apartment and entitled more collective dividend in the future. Although my fieldwork suggests that local villagers usually get married quite early (approximately around the early twenties), the pending second apartment may accelerate the trend towards early marriages and consequently bring about a "baby boom". Likewise, senior villagers are no longer seen as a family burden since they bring profit to the family according to the *hukou* policy.

The revived village director position

The image of village cadres kept changing in the eyes of their fellow villagers. At the time before the tax-for-fee reform in 2002 and the repeal of the agricultural tax afterwards, since the village cadres' workload was limited to urge villagers to pay tax to the state and their own salary was actually drawn from the village revenue, they were often perceived to extort money from their fellow villagers for their own salaries. Cadres at the village level are not state civil servants and are not placed on the state payroll. After the repeal of the agricultural tax, village finances became more dependent on subsidies from townships, so village cadres thus were seen as beggars having to ask for money from the township officials all the time. Both realities made villagers lose interest to run for the position of village cadres. However, the unwanted position became popular after the urbanization in Chenggong. "Before the land appropriation, everybody was busy earning their own money. Nobody would like to be elected as an unpopular director. After the land appropriation, however, they broke their necks to compete for the position," villagers told me. We have already hinted at

the explanation for this. According to the compensation policy, ten per cent of the land compensation cash must be reserved as the village collective fund, while the rest of it is equally divided to each villager. Being elected as cadres gives access to the village collective fund. There are also some collective housing properties built in and around the resettlement residential compound that can be used to obtain operating income. Also, in some cases, the relocated village still has some hilly area left. These areas were contracted to villagers before the relocation, but now the areas belong to the village collective as operating property, and anyone including the villagers needs to pay rent to farm on them. The rent also becomes part of the collective fund. The access to all these types of collective wealth lies with the cadres, a fact that has brought new interest in the position as village cadres, especially as the director of the *community*.

In principle, every villager can be a candidate, but in practice only those with economic capital can win. They themselves are entrepreneurs. After the depoliticization in China, economic status replaces class status (landlords, peasants, workers and cadres) as a new orientation for social status in market economy. Economic success brings prestige among villagers. Certain economic capital, social capital and symbolic capital are vital for a successful business as well as for the competition of a political position in village election. In order to win the election, the competitive candidates “bribed” their fellow villagers to vote for him (in most cases candidates are male). The bribe varies from banqueting their fellow villagers in restaurants, entertaining them in KTVs, and more directly, giving them gift money. In some cases, a vote was attached a marked price tag by candidates. For example, a voter would get 400 *yuan* if he or she agrees to vote for some candidate in a local village election. I heard that in an election a candidate spent 1,000,000 *yuan* in Chenggong. More importantly, this makes villagers constantly suspect their village cadres of embezzling collective funds in some way even though the village committee posts the collective revenue and expenditure every quarter at the *community*’s bulletin board to show the transparency of the village accounting. “At least, they have to recover the cost that they spent in the election,” a villager said.

It is also believed that only those who are both rich and keep a good relationship with the township (sub-district) level officials can work as a director. The

previous image of the politically well-connected village head is giving way to a new one with demonstrated business skills and personal networks who is an entrepreneur (Tsai 2002:6). Their accumulated economic capital and social capital are necessary for the competition of this political position. The political capital conferred by officialdom brings opportunities to extend their social network and the possibility of benefits such as tax breaks for their enterprises induce business people to take a turn as a village cadre (2002:6). Social capital does not only come from the support of the higher level of the political hierarchy, but also relies on the horizontal networks at the village level. In order to win supporters and allies, the director needs to maintain a good *guanxi* with his fellow villagers. *Guanxi* can be naturally built based on kinships, but also come from other relationships such as former classmates or childhood friends. Whatever its base is, *guanxi* needs to be consistently cultivated and often involves long-term engagements (Yan 1996:10). Villagers tend to vote for those who have a good *guanxi* with them, assuming this person will, when elected, give maximum “convenience” to them when called upon. The elected person is intended to do so to accumulate his own social capital and symbolic capital for his next election. In that case, the public election and collective resources are redefined in this private *guanxi* network for various private interests. “Our village leaders can earn their salary by sunbathing outside their office,” a villager commented about the workload of their village cadres now. Allegedly, in his village, the competition is less intense since the number of qualified candidates is small. The director has been reelected three times, but he still treats and gives gift money to his potential voters every time in order to maintain and re-establish this patron-client relationship (see Yan 1992:21).

Zhuxian, a cleaner in a university, told me how their director spent a lot of money buying votes in the election, how he took the whole guest hall of the next village to banquet his associates and well-connected personnel, including some upper sub-district leaders and how he personally invested several million *yuan* to run an entertainment locale in the college town. Many villagers suspected him of misappropriating their collective fund. “Nobody tries to report his corruption to the upper levels of the government?” I asked. “He is not afraid of being reported. They might have known it. One day when I was helping my husband watch the fruit stand, two official-looking men came to me. They pretended to buy fruits but asked about

our director's buying votes in the election," she continued with pride for her own shrewd at that moment: "I told them I knew nothing about it. They must have been sent by the higher-ups to investigate him."

Even if the distrust of the village cadres was quite widespread and apparent, few substantial conflicts erupted. Villagers may not avoid talking and complaining about the cadres' corruption in daily conversation, but my fieldwork shows some issues should not be omitted. First, many villagers are kinsmen of their villager cadres either by kinship or by marriage. The connection can cover many generations and is intended to be remembered. The complicated relationship net was vividly metaphorized as "entangled melon vine and bean vine" by one of my informants. In that case, every villager might get some benefit or "convenience" from his or her cadres, which made most villagers think of themselves as members of the "privileged" group and thus became more tolerable to the cadres' corruption. Second, the cadres maintain this patron-client relationship for both advancing their social capital and symbolic capital for the next election and thus guaranteeing stability, all in order to avoid dismissal from their posts (Chen 2007:165). Third, with villagers less involved into the decision-making body, the information-asymmetry makes any disclosure of irregularities hard. The complaints remain just rumors when lacking hard proofs. Fourth, the control over the village cadres are much loosened in market economy, which compels the regime to turn a blind eye to what is going on (Chen 2007:157).

The different administrative Residents' Committees and common wealth that can be shared differentiate villagers of one village to those of another. The bulletin boards of each village will put up announcements for village events respectively, including the granting of dividend and subsidies, the free medical check for elderly villagers and announcements of the winning bidders of collective storefronts. Each village has some autonomy to manage their territory in the resettlement residential compound. The territorialization of their own living space is embodied in some practical things. For example, instead of introducing a third-party estate management company to organize the cleaning, greening and guarding jobs, each of the three Residents' Committees hire some of their own villagers to take care of these things. Their salary will be drawn from the collective fund. Moreover, the committee has the right to operate the collective properties, such as storefronts, to obtain operational

income. Ten per cent of the income is reserved for the collective fund, and the rest is allocated to every villager equally. This is a rudimentary form of a shareholding company. These matters are all directly related to the village's territorial autonomy under metropolitan governance. The committee can also decide the usage of the collective fund. For example, whether to grant 100 *yuan* or 150 *yuan* to each senior villager over 60 on the Seniors' Day. The usage of the fund is largely determined by the opinion of the director. In that case, as the leader of the village, the director also has more authority. The function of the village or *community* as a collective is reinforced by all these changes and the collective cohesiveness is strengthened primarily through the shared economic interest.

However, the autonomy of the village is not unlimited. The "self-governance" implies that "the *community* is expected to manage its own affairs within the operational parameters established by government authorities" (Bray 2006:543). For instance, the three villages were asked to use their reserved collective cash compensation for land appropriation to invest in a sub-district's development project. The project aimed at developing a business plaza named "land-lost peasants entrepreneurial base" in the college town in 2011. Each village as shareholders can get a dividend of the profit. The business plaza has been running for two years, but villagers complain that they have got nothing yet. Villagers blame the recession of the plaza for the lack of *renqi* in the college town. The local state's aim of including the land-lost peasants in the benefit of the urbanization also confronts them with the uncertainty and risk of the "new city". Now villagers can only expect the promotion of *renqi* in Chenggong.

Three photos, three important kinships

In the old Chenggong we also see that families have maintained relationships in ways that migration processes in other parts of China have destroyed. One example is Shaohua. Shaohua is in his early twenties and is one of the college students in Middle village. He used his summer holiday time to work as a waiter in a restaurant run in the "land-lost peasants entrepreneurial base". When I interviewed two women who worked in that restaurant, he voluntarily came to join us. I was glad to find that he happened to come from one of my fieldwork villages. He and his parents lived in an

apartment on the first floor in one of the blue buildings. When invited to his home, I was impressed by a large picture displayed in the living room. The picture is one and a half meter long with about 60 people involved. That is his entire four-generation patrilineal family. The eldest generation only includes his grandmother, while the youngest generation includes several of his nephews and nieces. Shaohua's father, in his forties, has seven siblings and the family could have been bigger if the one-child policy had not implemented. That large "all in the family" photo impressed me a lot since I had not seen a big family like this for a long time in the urban context. In most cases, even if I know that there exists a big family like this, it is quite rare for the family members to be able to gather, since they can be living here and there, rural or urban, at home or abroad, scattered all over the world. Actually, one young guy from the family also missed this photo taken. Shaohua told me that he joined the army and could not come back. "But he sent back his identity photo, so we asked the photo studio to insert him right here." Thanks to the modern technology and the persistence of the family, no one is missing in this photo. Together with this large "all in the family", there are other two enlarged photos preserved in glass frames standing on either side of the TV. One includes Shaohua's nuclear family and his grandma; the other is Shaohua with all his male cousins on his father's side. Shaohua explained that besides the big family (extended family) photo, each "small family" (extended family started from the generation of Shaohua's father) took a photo respectively with the grandma and then senior members insisted that as the new backbone of the family, all the male members in his generation should take a picture together. With my further knowledge about his family and the village, the three photos just well represent a basic social network in a local village, which highlights kinship, family and the brotherhood of "the same generation or age group" (Yan 2009: xxv). These three primary relationships make and remake villagers in their post-relocation life and livelihood (about this I will elaborate below and also in the following chapters).

Shaohua's mother died when he was young and his father remarried. His grandmother on his birth mother's side "adopted" his stepmother and let her take her deceased daughter's place, so the broken connection between the two families was artificially reestablished. As a person not blood-related, Shaohua's stepmother addressed his grandmother "mother" and she was addressed as "sister" or "aunt" by

other members of that family. When the family held funerals or weddings, Shaohua's whole family would also be invited, as if there was no change at all.

This is a somewhat extreme case, but it is not in any way an exceptional case of how local villagers value the kinship bond and smartly find their ways to remake it in that they believe that a big family can guarantee its members a wide social network which potentially contributes to the accumulation of social capital and the social capital someday may convert to other forms of capital benefitting all the family members. Shaohua's experience reminds me of many urban versions of this kind of story which often repeats the Snow White plot telling how the evil stepmother tortures the poor child. While put in the frame of a big extended family, the story becomes how the wise grandmother manages to maintain the kinship network and even actually enlarges it.

Although the change of the residential mode (from self-built houses with sufficient space for stem family or even extended family to live together to apartments with limited area) and the corresponding allocation policy (one household can be entitled two apartments) facilitates nuclearization of the family, i.e. the gradual replacement of the traditional extended family by the smaller unit of a couple with unmarried children which has long been regarded as a global trend in the modernization of the family institution (Yan 2009: xxiii), my fieldwork suggests that these changes do not make people distant from each other. In fact, some villagers I interviewed even feel that their kinship bonds become reinforced after the land appropriation. This might be another unintended consequence. First, cash compensation partly reduced conflicts caused by hair-splitting among relatives. "Since each family has some savings at hands, we don't make a fuss about tiny things. I find relatives become more easy-going," a villager told me. Second, without much pressure on subsistence, villagers have more time to mingle. Earlier, when having their own lands to tend, villagers were supposed to be busy on farming. Frequent gathering and chatting were seen as being lazy or fooling around. Now they seem to have the opportunity to slow down without worrying about the immediate shortage of money. Third, relatives are reliable to provide useful information and substantial help when a person wants to invest in a new livelihood, such as renting land in other counties to continue farming, which I will elaborate in Chapter 4.

The guest hall, a reestablished rural reciprocal system

One effect of the attempts to maintain the realm of the extended family is seen in the importance of significant banquet events for weddings and funerals. There are two significant locales that tie villagers of each village together and impress them about their villager identity. They are the guest hall and the village temple.

Each village must have a guest hall in the village. It is a local convention in rural Chenggong. When a family in the village has a wedding or a funeral, the family is supposed to banquet relatives and friends in the village guest hall for three days, including three big lunches and big suppers. Most guests are local, mainly from the same village. The number of guests varies but often reaches several hundreds, and can involve about one third or half of the village population. So when a family holds an event like this, it is more like a village festival, bringing people together. Invited families can save the cooking time at home and go out to mingle with others within the three days. As for those who are invited to help in the guest hall, they are happily socializing with one another while working. The kitchen of the guest hall can be busy but also full of laughter.

To invite helpers is very necessary. The village guest hall is just a locked building at times without full-time chefs or servants. It is constructed as a big bungalow with a kitchen. The big bungalow is the hall for banquets. Several tens of wooden tables with chairs or benches around are set in the hall. The area of the bungalow varies according to the population of the village and other economic and geographic conditions. Since the guest hall banquet does not involve any ritual or ceremony, it is not a big problem if the hall is too small to accommodate all the guests at the same time. No precise time stipulates the beginning and ending of the banquet. No seats are reserved, either. Guests assemble and sit together wherever they want at each meal. When seeing the table is full, waiters will immediately serve the rice and dishes. After eating, if the guests leave, their table can be cleaned and reset for newcomers. If the guests of a table favor some dish, they can specifically ask for another portion from waiters or just send someone to get it from the kitchen. The guests literally “help themselves” and “enjoy themselves” in the banquet in ways that

will never happen in an urban banquet which is often held in a restaurant where guests are supposed to act as guests.

Since the banquet lasts for three days, many ingredients should be prepared or even be half cooked ahead of time. Cold weather favors the preservation of the ingredients, so local custom is to hold the wedding ceremonies in the winter months. Paradoxically, cold weather cools down the cooked dishes quickly, so the kitchen must also include a big rectangular pit furnace [*dilu*] used to keep unserved dishes warm in the kitchen. The operation in such a kitchen and the arrangement of the banquet are tricky but full of life. It leaves the local “specialists” with a lot of opportunity to combine their special skills with story telling that create a good atmosphere.

These “specialists” are “helpers” invited by the host family. They are selected from the guest families. All the crew including the cooks, waiters and waitresses all work under the command of the chef [*dachu*] who is the leading figure in the guest hall. Any host family tends to invite a capable chef with good reputation to help. When the chef agrees to help, the host family just needs to tell him the number of guests and the budget, and the chef will arrange and take care of the following things. He decides the dishes for each meal and commands the temporarily organized culinary team working together. A chef needs considerable social and symbolic capital to motivate his randomly organized staff to listen to him, as he instructs them in their work such as preparing materials and ingredients, arranging the guest hall, cooking, serving the food and finally cleaning the kitchen and the guest hall for next use. Chefs are not professional, either. They are ordinary villagers at time, but they also have this special skill by interest or by chance. In many cases it is a family tradition. The skill can be handed down from the older generations of the family.

None of the helpers are paid. They may be invited for an extra meal at the end, but that may be also for consuming the leftovers. The host family may give some gifts such as two cartons of cigarettes to appreciate the chef, which by no means conforms to the market prices of rented expert help as far as the value of the gift is concerned. No one from the host family deliberately stays in the guest hall to supervise the work. Helpers are supposed to take care of everything just as they deal with their own affairs.

The help implies a close *guanxi* between the host family and the helper's family and also a mutual trust. According to the local custom, a family should banquet guests [*qingke*] in the village guest hall for both weddings and funerals. When corresponding rites are carried out in the host's home, banquets are held in the guest hall. The host family and the close relatives are busy with rites, leaving the helpers take care of all the affairs in the guest hall for them. The process of working together is also important for each helper to display his/her capability comprehensively in front of his/her fellow villagers, therefore winning prestige, such as being a capable man, diligent, good at cooking, very social or funny. Nobody would ruin the chance of displaying their competence and personal skills in front of their fellow villagers. In Bourdieu's terms, villagers obtain symbolic capital by winning prestige and accumulate social capital by enlarging their social network through the corporation and concrete tasks (Bourdieu 1986).

The helper team can be seen as an extended kinship network of the host family, which we may regard as friends, but it is not quite the same. The concept of friendship is not highly stressed among villagers. The help offered is based on reciprocity, as well as an established close connection (good *guanxi*), which involves both moral obligations and emotional attachments (Yan 2009: xxxiv). The number of helpers invited shows the volume of the host family's social capital. It is not a shame to ask for such help, instead, a host family may intend to ask more people than needed to show off and to get prestige of having face [*mianzi*]. It is not economic capital that is displayed, but social capital and symbolic capital.

Those, who seldom get involved in these village-based activities gradually withdraw from this reciprocal system and would feel embarrassed to invite helpers from within the village. In my fieldwork, I heard villagers talk about a family in such a situation. The family ended up paying daily wage to hire helpers from other villages in the guest hall. Instead of admiring their consideration, villagers felt sorry for them. In another case, a host family banqueted guests for their daughter's wedding in Chenggong's most famous restaurant just as an urban wedding. But instead of having one banquet, they banqueted guest twice in the restaurant (probably trying to follow the local custom of three-day banquet in some sense). Their generosity was not quite admired. Villagers sanctioned this breach of custom by calling the girl and her family

tuhao. *Tuhao* is a new buzzword in China, which just became popular since September 2013, but was soon widely used through internet and other social media. To say someone is *tuhao* is to imply that they come from a poor peasant background, and have made it rich quick – but without quite having the manners or sophistication to go along with it (BBC News, October 31st 2013). The word is similar to “bling” or “nouveau riche” in English, but it is also an old word in Chinese. It was widely used between 1920s and early 1950s to refer to landlords and gentry who would bully poor peasants. Later, these people became “class enemies” that should be “beaten down” in the communist revolution. Reappearing in the late-socialist China, it reflects a mixed emotion of sneer and jealousy. When used by villagers, it indicates that villagers felt that the family should not have shown off their wealth in this way. In general, although generous, this different wedding banquet was not appreciated by villagers.

Each event happening in the guest hall reestablishes the host family’s close relationship with the guests and the helpers. It is a presentation of the family’s social network. A successful presentation may strengthen and increase host family’s social and cultural capital. At the same time, the large number of village members involved give villagers more chances to imagine it as a collective gathering and reunion, which helps to shape the villager identity from the same village collective. Those who work out or marry out of the village get a chance to come back eating or working with their fellow villagers within the three days, catching up on social affairs and maintaining their local social network. Although the helper team is mainly composed of competent adults, some young people are encouraged to learn to accomplish some simple tasks within it. To offer help and to work with other adult villagers socialize them into the rural community. The interaction within the guest hall is an important socialization and is vital for villagers produce and reproduce themselves out of their rural tradition.

However, I should make clear again that the design of the resettlement residential compound does not include a guest hall. This underlines the fact that the authorities might not hold such traditional and communal activities in high regard. Nevertheless, people improvise. At the time of fieldwork, the three villages share one guest hall with the property right of South village. Each household who needs to use it pays some rent to South village. The guest hall thus is an investment and earns rental revenue for the village collective fund. However, this guest hall is simply built as a

non-permanent construction with some shelters on the top as roof and half-built walls on a vacated lot among construction sites. This is so because the land is state-owned after appropriation, but there is not specific development projects going on here. Permission would not be granted if the building were permanent because the land formally belongs to the state. The non-permanent character of the guest hall suggests that it will be demolished immediately if the state retrieves the land for any specific development project. It is based on this consensus that the state turned a blind eye to it. Rumor also said that South village had used some *guanxi* to finally get the permission. No matter in what sense, both the guest hall and the fate of this local tradition may be temporary.

During my fieldwork, I also observed another case relating to the village guest hall in the college town. In that case, the resettled village firstly used the space between two apartment buildings to build a non-permanent bungalow as their village guest hall in the residential compound as soon as they resettled. However, villagers complained that the guest hall was narrow and with poor settings. Then the Residents' Committee transformed an underground parking lot in the residential compound to a new village guest hall. I witnessed the first banquet held in their new guest hall. The guest hall is bright and finely-decorated with tall and decent gate. The kitchen is conveniently divided into several working sections with electrified devices. Of course, most important, a pit furnace is included. Built in the resettlement residential compound under the autonomy of the village, hopefully this guest hall will have different fate.

The village temple

Different from the guest hall, village temples are nearly abandoned and faded out of people's vision after relocation. Traditionally, each village in Chenggong has at least one small temple for local religion. The temple is built in the village and its porch often functions as a public space for villagers to sit and chat. The gate of the temple is open all year around and there are always pilgrims coming and going. When the temple holds the annual Buddhist ceremony in Decembers, villagers will gather in the temple offering incense to Buddha, donating merits and praying for peace and good fortune in the coming year. The temple provides two vegetarian meals on that day.

Villages can spend a little money to buy a ticket and eat there. The ticket for each meal is just several *yuan*.

Village temples show different predicaments in the process of land appropriation and relocation. In my case, North village lost its temple, while temples of Middle and South villages' were kept since they had already been designated as county-level cultural relics. Although the two temples were kept, they were distant from the villagers since they became "placed" outside of the resettlement residential compound. In the first month of my fieldwork, I was very interested to look at the temples that were still kept. However, villagers I talked with asserted firmly that I could not find them and I should not try without any company. Later, I finally persuaded my informants to take me to see them. Then I realized what they meant. There were no proper roads leading to the temples. They were actually located in the middle of nowhere among piles of earth more than three meters. Both temples were locked and nothing could be seen from the outside. Therefore, I was very glad that I had chance to attend Middle village's annual temple event before I had to finish my fieldwork.

I read the tiny poster about this event on the village bulletin board, but I was worried that I could not find that place alone. Luckily, Shaohua called and said that he and his village buddies planned to join it, and I was welcomed to go with them. Twelve of us, driving two cars headed to the village temple at lunchtime. Shaohua's village buddies were young men in their twenties like him. They grew up together, but Shaohua was the only college student among them. Shaohua was enrolled by one of the universities in the college town, so he could live both on campus and at home. Although making new friends in college, he still kept a close relationship with these former buddies. Our cars lingered on the roads for quite some time, first for locating the position of the temple and later for struggling to approach it after we could see the roof peak behind a tall earth pile. The temple turned out to be walled on a university campus and our cars needed to pay to go through the university gate.

The temple was composed of several brick houses with tiled roofs. Wooden short tables surrounded by eight stools were set both in the yard and under cloisters of the temple. Many villagers already sat and ate. Female villagers prepared meals in the

kitchen of the temple. They also worked as waitresses. They came voluntarily. “It is for your own sake to come and help in the temple. Buddha will bless you,” a female helper said to me. It reflected a reciprocal relationship but this time it is between people and their gods. The temple was composed of three shrines. I could recognize that the god of fortune and the god of reproduction resided respectively in two side shrines, but I was not sure about the gods worshiped in the main shrine. I tried to ask some female helpers. They did not seem to know, either. The person presiding in the main hall was female. She conducted people to kneel and worship batch by batch. Her prayer for every batch was with the same words, praying for peace and good fortune, but I was surprised to find that her prayer even included the youngsters’ winning when they played Mahjong, a popular Chinese gambling game. When it is played as a gambling game, it is prohibited by law. I just heard that the police sealed up some underground Mahjong gambling houses in the residential compound. But gambling in villagers’ eyes is evidently not as evil as in the state’s view, and hence it could be “blessed”.

When we sat down around a table, several middle aged women served the dishes and rice immediately. The rule was similar to the one in the guest hall. The waitresses came to ask us if we wanted something more from time to time. The temple did not provide liqueur, but eaters were allowed to drink. I saw some men bring their own liqueur and drink together happily. Shaohua told me that the temple event was not as crowded as the time when the temple was in the village.

The temple is locked at times and the devout in the village keep the key. They come to offer incense on the first and the middle day of each lunar month. Men in the villages regard it as a women’s thing. Some said that it was feudalistic superstition and only ignorant old women were keen on it. The annual temple event is not exclusively just for villagers of Middle village. Villagers from other villages are welcomed to join. The female helper I talked with worked on campus as a cleaner. She said she also invited students whom she knew to come and play in the annual event. “But I don’t see them today. Our temple is just opposite to their campus. Maybe they can’t find the way to walk in,” she said with a little disappointment.

Although the religious activity of the temple faded from villagers' daily life, the annual temple event at least is still an opportunity to gather villagers, but now probably with more social meaning than with religious meaning.

Square dance

The square dance [*guangchangwu*] is a popular female activity in the resettlement residential compound. Each village has their own square dance team and all the dancers are female. As a national fitness exercise it has been prevailing for years in towns and cities in China. Dancers are mainly retired female citizens older than 55. The age of 55 is the legal retirement age for women, while men retire at 60. After retirement, senior female citizens often choose to join a square dance team. It can be just in their residential compound or in a public park. The time is either in the early morning or in the evening after dinner. The activity can be organized in every corner in towns and cities where recently media reported more and more conflicts happening between the senior dancers and their neighbours. The noisy sound produced by the sound equipment is often a source of complaints.

Female villagers began to practice the square dance after they were relocated to the resettlement residential compound. They said they had been busy earning money from their land before they moved. "Who would have that free time and free mood to do that while farming? Everybody was busy with their vegetables or flowers," an "elder sister" told me. Furthermore, only female villagers aging from thirty to sixty practice the square dance. This age range is much younger than their general urban counterpart, which means dancers in the village still work in the daytime. However, as the compensation money leaves the villagers without any notable career pressure or any pressing economic concerns, they can still enjoy dancing in the evening and expect to keep fit just like fashionable urban women. Contrary to the general square-dancing trend in the community, local female villagers over sixty are more "conservative" and refuse to join this public showing-off. They are actually easy to recognize in the compound, wearing an iconic costume with blue Chinese-style jacket with buttons down the front and with embroidered apron. Matched with this costume, they wear a fillet dotted by tiny jade on their heads, with their hair worn in a bun behind. This is the typical rural dress for elderly rural women in Chenggong. Only

those over sixty still wear it. The younger generations do not follow this custom anymore. While the dancers are practicing, women wearing this traditional costume may sit beside watching, but never joining in. Compared with their fixed and iconic costume, dresses on women in the dance team are more colorful and fashionable. Boots and high-heeled shoes match all kinds of short skirts and jackets. Although the whole dance team tends to be younger than their urban counterpart, youngsters under thirty in the village do not join the dance. According to them, this is an “activity for old women”.

With more free time after resettlement, women from each village spontaneously organized their own square dance team on different empty grounds in the compound. On fine evenings, after dinner, square dance enthusiasts would get together in their little square and dance with the music. Among the three villages, the dance team of Middle village is the most eye-catching one, since their “little square” is just located near the “little street” of the whole neighborhood. It is the empty ground in front of the supermarket at the main intersection. While they dance, other villagers, female and male may gather watching and chatting. Around the same square there is some outdoor fitness equipment fixed on the ground that people can use while chatting. Children may also try to follow some steps or just chase around. Participation of the dance team is free of charge and it is open to everyone, including the outsiders. Mostly the outsiders are those who run a business in the residential compound. Square dancing, then, is an activity that any community member can join and it has nothing to do with their *hukou*. As an outsider, I also took advantage of it to get to know people and let them get to know me.

There is no hierarchy within this spontaneous organization. Anybody can lead a dance standing at the front row and others will follow. The steps are learnt in various ways. Some are taught by the dance teachers of the Seniors’ College in Chenggong. They send teachers to various communities to teach dancing on weekends. Some are taught by two local primary school teachers. As primary school teachers, they get chances to learn new steps from their work place and then teach others here. These two sources also give villagers the impression that all teachers can dance and teach dance. So when I told them that I taught in college, they were very excited and immediately asked me to teach them some new dance. I had to explain that I came

here to follow and learn, and I could not teach. I felt sorry to let them down, but later, I found I could be of some other help. I could help them copy dance music to their USBs, since most of them did not have a computer at home. Besides these two ways, some enthusiasts also learn steps from videos by themselves and then teach others.

Time is also a very loosely defined element. No fixed time for dancing is determined. When several members arrive after dinner, they will go to the *community* guardroom nearby, drag out the sound equipment stored there and connect to power. The equipment was bought using the village collective fund. The songs are stored on their USBs. Many of them buy a USB and keep the songs on it so that they themselves can practice at home as well. The songs are mainly folk songs with cheerful and fast tempo melody, such as pop songs of a Tibetan or inner Mongolian genre. I was so surprised that they could dance to hundreds of songs and remember some very complicated steps that really beat me. Once the music is on, more people will get together.

Nobody will be judged for making wrong steps, since it is regarded as an entertainment and casual body exercise. In spite of proficiency, the same dance can be performed in various genres by different dancers, learned through their self-study. The dance usually lasts for one hour and half with approximately 30 dancers gathered each night. Some may dance while chatting with each other. The music is loud just as the square dance in all other places. The loud and cheerful music together with people dancing, strolling around and chatting, makes the intersection a place with *renqi*. I often joined the dance and met people there at the time of dancing. One day, I met a teacher who works in a university in the college town and lives in a residential compound developed exclusively for teachers from that university near here. He said he often went to swim in a nearby reservoir after work, and on his way home, he would always like to detour to drop by this little square in the evening and stay for a while. “I feel very pleasant and peaceful while staying in this village neighborhood chatting with people. Our residential area may have better facilities, but has few people,” he said: “Even there are more people in my residential compound in downtown Kunming, people are all strangers and seldom talk to one another. I appreciate the warmth of this community”.

In addition to providing a daily gathering for villagers, the square dance team may also practice very hard to join the regional square dance competitions in the name of their village. In sum, although spontaneously and loosely organized, the village square dance team contributes to the strengthening of a sense of both community and village collective. It is also a way of allowing female villagers to perform in public with confidence, coordination and beauty.

Concluding remarks

With the intervention of the local relocation policy, the “one-step urbanization” benefits the revival of collective identity for the three relocated villages in several ways. One important factor is that the local compensation package and the accumulation of the collective fund, first from the reserved cash compensation and later from the rental and operational income of the collective assets, help change the status of the village head / *community* director to work for collective aims. The election of the village cadres is based on the establishment of a patron-client nexus. Not designated as a government official, the director depends on his economic capital, social capital and symbolic capital to win the election and perform the expected management in the village. This new village organization and management give more authority and autonomy to the village collective, which benefits the reterritorialization of the village. As a self-governing organization, the village committee has the power to determine the allocation and investment direction of the collective fund. In this sense, each urban village works as a preliminary share-holding company after relocation. The relocated villages are required to invest in the share-holding company organized by the higher juridical-political unit. Thus, we see the state’s power still has strong control and penetration into villagers’ life. The village collective fund is also expected to invest in the business project in the new district, which is also based on the local state’s discourse of “let the locals benefit from the construction outcome of the new district”. This is further stressed when we see that the word *renqi* used quite often in villagers’ daily life, reflecting how they expect the ongoing urbanization to bring about an increase in their property value and profit to their collective investment project. In this sense, the local relocated peasants are not excluded from the commercialized city. On the contrary, they are included as investors contributing to

the local commercially booming economy. The state's inclusion policy thus builds up a symbiotic relationship between the land-lost peasants and the local urbanization.

We see then that the village collective identity brought about in several ways. It is institutionalized by rules concerning the distribution of dividend, the claim on the collective assets, the concern of the *community* welfare and the control of *hukou*; It is practiced through local custom and social network; It is presented in some important arenas, such as the office building of the Residents' Committee of the *community*, the village bulletin board, the village guest hall, the village temple, the ground for the village square dance and by village base events, such as banquets, annual temple events and square dance.

CHAPTER 3 Employment in the city: exploiting the urban labor market

When doing interviews in the college town and asking people “What do you do for a living”, the answer was always expressed as “I do *dagong*.” *Dagong* refers to work as a wage labor without high academic requirement and is quite the opposite of being a boss or an entrepreneur. Having something to do with migrant workers in the urban context, the term *dagong* sometimes conveys derogatory meaning.

After relocation, the large majority of land-lost peasants chose to develop a new livelihood based on the locally urbanized labor market. A few with sufficient economic and social capital accumulated became local entrepreneurs running their own businesses. Different from other development projects (such as dams or the renovation of “urban villages”) that uprooted peasants and settled them far away from their former villages, in totally strange environments where there were few proper reemployment opportunities (see, for example, Liu and Murphy 2006:637; Wilmsen 2011; McDonald et al. 2008), the college town happens to provide some opportunities that suit the land-lost peasants and therefore facilitate both their reemployment and process of reterritorialization. Without substantial physical removal, relocated villagers are still connected with their “historically formed sense of place and place-based collective memory” (Hsing 2010:197). For instance, villagers tended to be very clear about which college “occupied” their former land. Once, I talked with some villagers whose land happened to be occupied by the university where I work. When I mentioned that I worked in the Minzu University, one of them asked without thinking: “The Minzu University of our village?” Without expecting he would respond like this, I laughed and then agreed with him: “Yes, the Minzu University of your village”.

Thus, unlike the average migrant workers who leave their hometown and do *dagong* in big cities far away, most land-lost peasants in Chenggong do *dagong* locally. The college town provides a lot of job opportunities suited their conditions and preferences. These job opportunities are mainly on the service sector such as cleaners and gardeners on campus, in newly developed residential compounds, and even in the new municipal government complex; waiters and waitresses in canteens.

For the younger generations with higher education, they may find better jobs as office clerks in companies and thus earn more money. With better chances to live in cities, the younger generations definitely embrace the urban jobs more. Besides these wage labor jobs, villagers also seek to mobilize their own resources to earn money in the college town. For example, some with cars and driving license work as taxi drivers.

The economic situation of *dagong* in Chenggong has been changing with local dynamics. In the early years of the college town construction, these jobs were easily found but often with low payment and strict conditions such as age limitation. Some employers were even picky about the looks of candidates, since they understood there were many land-lost peasants in the college town as a labor resource. The monthly wage was only 680 *yuan* in 2007. Later, new dynamics emerged and produced a labor shortage. On the one hand, with more campuses constructed, more maintainers were needed. On the other, when more villagers chose to continue as peasants and migrated to neighboring counties, the labor shortage was aggravated. Such changes in supply and demand affected the local wage labor market. The wage doubled, even tripled. Ads are often seen on village bulletin boards with wages ranging from 1,200 *yuan* to 2,000 *yuan* per month. The rise of wages in the whole region can be seen from the officially published minimum wage standard. In May 2013, according to the regulation of Yunnan provincial government, the minimum salary level in Chenggong district was 1,130 *yuan* per month.

Being without special skills or high education, this labor market become a preferred choice for villagers. They seem happy since the jobs are quite near home and are relatively “free”. When interviewed, they always say: “The work is not tiring, but it won’t let you earn much.” While enjoying the privilege of having the freedom and flexibility of employment near home, the wage level on the other hand does not help much on their savings. On the contrary, as wages are limited, the compensation money is consumed from time to time to cover family expenses.

Campus work

There are two typical campus jobs in the college town: cleaners and gardeners. They seem gendered in a sense. Almost all the cleaners are female and most gardeners are

male. This is partly caused by the ads for the jobs and partly by the people's stereotypes. Some ads clearly say that female workers are wanted. Others do not say that, but since colleagues are all female (or male), villagers feel embarrassed to work among people of the opposite sex. They feel more at ease working among people with the same gender.

I met Fang from the square dance team of Middle village. She is in her thirties and is a mother of two children. She has been working in a nearby university for several years. Her husband also works in the same university as an electrician. The couple's income is about 4,000 *yuan* per month, which means that their annual income is as much as that of a very hard working rural household in the village before the land appropriation. Nevertheless, in the urban context, Fang said they had to use some compensation money to make ends meet from time to time, for example, when her children got sick. "Do you think money will be a problem in the future?" "It is OK. If you have more money, you spend more; if you don't, you spend less. That's it." "Do you miss the farming life before?" I asked. "Are you kidding? You don't know how tiring it is to farm. I enjoy my current life." Her answer made me feel that I just asked a very silly question. Later, Fang took me to "experience" her work and I found that she was indeed very happy working with her female friends, enjoying being with them.

During the work, Fang develops a good relationship with four other local female villagers and they back up one another when in need. For example, when Fang's son was sick and she needed to take him to the county hospital, her "good sisters" would share her work; if she was asked to offer help in the village guest hall, she could also be able to well coordinate her job and her social obligation with the help of her "good sisters". At work the understanding is that they are not absent in the manager's record as long as the work is finished. In fact, the manager does not directly supervise each of them. Team leaders arrange their work. The team leaders are selected from cleaners with ability to mediate conflicts and arrange the work. Therefore, they enjoy some freedom under the level of the manager. Cleaners go to work at 7 o'clock in the morning, punch the card in the manager's office and then begin sweeping their own plot. Cleaners are supposed to sweep the campus twice a day, but as long as they can keep it clean all day long, nobody will investigate

whether the second time is performed or not. Fang and her friends are very serious about the cleanliness of their own territory. When walking on the campus, they always pick up garbage on the ground as soon as they see it. Fang often jokes about this reflex: “We are hopeless. Normal people stare at the ground looking for money, while we are only sensitive to garbage.” The working hour is from 7am to 5pm. Workers go to the manager’s office to punch the card at 5 pm and go home. As long as the campus is clean and they show up in the manager’s office on time twice a day, they are full-time employees. Fang and her friends often finish the first cleaning by noon, go back home to cook and have lunch. The afternoon is less tense. Besides walking around now and then on campus picking garbage on the ground, they can enjoy some free time chatting and having fun. They often stay in their rest room, teach each other how to knit sweaters or sometimes go shopping together in the nearby commercial streets.

Although the income is not much, Fang is not ambitious to earn more money as migrant workers might do in cities. Migrant workers have the heavy burden of paying the rent in cities and save money to support poor families in their home villages. Fang enjoys her job as well as her life in the residential compound. She is one of the enthusiasts in the village square dance team. When the evening comes, she often stands on the first row leading the dance with confidence and dedication. Fang only got primary school education and I was curious about whether she would like her children to “fulfill an academic dream” for her, as many urban parents who themselves missed their chance of study would do. “I will try my best to give them my support as long as they want to go to school, but I will never push them hard to study,” she said.

While female villagers like Fang enjoy the campus work, earning their own wages and having fun working together with friends, some male villagers have similar conditions in this campus work. Similar to the cleaning job for women, the gardening job is easy and flexible for male villagers as well. They have the liberty to have breaks and enjoy a cigarette together during work. However, these service jobs are considered as “low grade” and physical labor is looked down on by people in the city (Zhang 2002:323). Surrounded by the glory of successful peasants and being the patriarchs of the family some male villagers in their fifties would stay home rather than take jobs as gardeners. While wives in their fifties do not mind finding a cleaning

job outside, husbands without other appealing job options end up staying at home where they help take care of grandchildren. Villagers say: “Now we have a bunch of male nannies in the village”.

Drivers

There are villagers working as all kinds of drivers. Some are recruited by the bus companies and work in the public transportation system as formal staff. Others work as freelancers, for example, some who bought the sprinkling trucks can be hired by gardening companies for part-time or full-time jobs. However, more freelancers use their minibuses, cars, or motorcycles for transportation business. They are called “black cars” [*heiche*], which implies that they are not legal taxis. Both the drivers and their vehicles may not meet the requirement for transportation business and they are not included in the national tax system. Such activities are strictly prohibited in downtown Kunming, but are more accepted in Chenggong. The local authority seems to turn a blind eye to it. As I see it, there are two possible reasons: first, the flexibility of “black cars” helps reduce the inconvenience of public transportation in Chenggong; second, it is an accepted extra income source for local land-lost peasants. In fact, anyone who has a vehicle can join this business in the college town. Drivers are not necessarily full-time. For instance, a villager in his forties working in an institute in the college town as a security guard drives his motorcycle to do transportation business when he comes off the shift. In another case, a local villager in his thirties, who works as a purchaser in a restaurant in the “land-lost peasants entrepreneurial base” sometimes drives his minibus out in the evening as a taxi.

There are also some relatively full-time “black car” drivers from local villages who make a living out of it, relying totally on their driving license and private car. Their income may fluctuate every month, but they can obtain an average income similar to villagers who do *dagong* on campus, while they enjoy more freedom and “dignity” as freelancers. It was difficult to get direct information from these drivers due to their somewhat illegal work. They face the risk of being fined by the authorities. “The situation is much better now. They may fine you some money when you are reported, but they do not confiscate your car. So it is risky to do the business, but the risk is not vital,” a villager told me. Private cars and minibuses are always

found parking in front of the gates of colleges, with their drivers going to potential passengers asking their destinations and negotiating the prices.

Enjoy retirement

Urbanization produces “retired villagers” in the resettlement residential areas, which also is a new thing. In the Chinese rural context, villagers do not have the concept of retirement and peasants in their sixties and seventies still work on their contracted land as long as they are physically able to (see Pang et al. 2004:73). Work is equated with necessities such as food, clothing and shelter. Any penny comes from farming. Their urban counterparts are treated differently. They stop working after their retirement age and get pension every month. In the eyes of the rural villagers, urbanites are “raised” by the state after they get old. Relocation policy in Chenggong provides some subsidies stimulating the purchase of pension insurance. Most senior villagers I interviewed have bought such pension insurance. Now they can get several hundred *yuan* every month and enjoy the urban life. They regard this as an improvement. “Now we don’t have to rely on sons or grandsons anymore,” one of them told me. With pension as monthly income, they feel at ease to do nothing, enjoying their retirement time. They often gather on the public greening chatting and playing cards, or take a walk on the campuses.

In the past, with little income, thrifty senior peasants used to walk around in the fields or in the mountains to see if they could bring back some wild vegetables for their family to eat. In contrast, elderly urbanites in Kunming like taking a walk in public parks as a body exercise. Now the two activities are combined by elder villagers in the college town. Some of them take a walk on campus as a body exercise like the elderly in cities while picking up discarded plastic drink bottles and carton boards that they can sell for money. Some senior villagers also learn to take advantage of the favorable treatment provided by the public transportation. In the name of respecting senior citizens, the city bus company issues “loving heart bus card” [*aixinka*] for those over 60 in Kunming. Now that Chenggong is part of Kunming, this favorable policy includes Chenggong as well. Senior villagers over 60 can travel by bus for free, so they often make a visit to the old town center, the new public parks and the municipal government complex for a walk and sightseeing. Besides buses,

they have the priority to take the newly built light rail that connects the new district of Chenggong to downtown Kunming. Having been looked down upon by their urban neighbors in Kunming for “backwardness”, now they have the chance to enjoy the modern transportation system even earlier than most of urbanites in Kunming.

Businessmen in Chenggong

The local entrepreneurs whom I interviewed would complain that it is hard to run a business in the college town. People often blame this on the lack of *renqi*. The investment in a small business is about 200,000 *yuan*, which many land-lost households may afford with the input of their cash compensation. Rather, villagers would like to try investing in small businesses that they are familiar with, such as fruit stalls.

Kun is a villager of North village. He, his wife and their daughter have two apartments in relocation. They live in one of them and rent the other out. As young as thirteen, Kun already followed his elder brother to sell fruits in Kunming. Each time, they rode bicycles for one hour and a half from the village to the market in Kunming. In the 1990s, he was in his twenties and followed other villagers to work as a peasant worker digging fire clay. They were asked to work for twelve hours a day. While the boss earned good money, their daily wage was just five *yuan*. Since then, he made the decision that he would only work for himself. “No matter how much or how little, all the money will be yours.” Later, he concentrated on vegetable farming. Apart from the six *mu* contracted land of his family, he rented more land in a neighboring village. He could save 10,000 *yuan* each year. That was right before the land expropriation. After the resettlement, he rented a stall from the village committee in the commercial street on the north periphery of the residential compound and began selling fruits with his wife. His stall was placed together with many smoky barbecue stalls, which was not agreeable for his wife, so they subcontracted the stall and stayed at home for some time. Feeling that it was really boring to be unemployed, he accepted a job to work as a security guard in the nearest college. “The salary was 2,400 *yuan* per month. It was not tiring although sometimes we had to work night shifts.” Not long after, his father passed away and he had to ask for leave for the funeral. The manager who is not local seemed unhappy about it, so Kun just quit the job after the funeral. “The job is not

free and if you ask for a leave when you have other things to do, they will be unhappy. So I just quit and sell fruits again.” Now he is the only local person doing fruit business on the commercial street, others are all outsiders. “There were several fellow villagers selling fruits before but they could not earn money, so they gave up,” he explained.

Most of Kun’s customers are college students. Many of them look familiar to him. While sitting with Kun at his stall, I saw students pass and greet him. As customers, they also trust him. Many pick fruits, deliver them to Kun to weigh and pay him without asking the unit price. Kun’s relaxed attitude and his habit of reducing the price often make his customers happy. However, he also has his principle. Once, two girls carrying a bag of fruits that they just bought from the next fruit stall wanted to verify the weight of their purchase on Kun’s scale. Kun immediately stopped them. “That will make trouble,” he said.

One day, at about 5 pm, I saw a large group of students pass through the commercial street and swarm into the resettlement residential compound. They would have their dinner in restaurants run in the transformed tool rooms of the yellow buildings. When I was surprised at the *renqi* of the commercial street, Kun told me it was not as popular as three or four years ago. “The commercial street was much more crowded three years ago. At that time, the street was so crowded, especially in the evening that a two-minute walk strolling from end to end usually needed ten minutes in the evening. The *renqi* was shared and scattered to the commercial street outside the teachers’ residential compound.” I understand that the compound that he refers to is the one where my apartment is located. The street along the east side of the gated compound has become the most crowded commercial area in the college town in the recent two years.

Although successful, Kun’s business may be too small to place him among business elites. Jiaming should be such a business elite. Jiaming is in his early forties and runs a restaurant in the “land-lost peasants entrepreneurial base”. His restaurant has three floors and is exquisitely decorated. Jiaming is from one of the dislocated villages in Chenggong but strictly he is not a land-lost peasant. After graduation from a university in Kunming, Jiaming ran his own business in Kunming. Several years ago,

one of his former classmates who worked in the county government of Chenggong told him about the preferential policy for land-lost peasants to start their business in the “entrepreneurial base”. He invested this restaurant there. He told me that he had invested 3,000,000 *yuan* in this restaurant so far. The business is not very good. In fact, due to the lack of customers, the business in the whole “entrepreneurial base” is slack. His restaurant is one of the better ones. Most of his employees, mainly waiters and waitresses are young boys and girls around twenty from Chenggong. The manager in her twenties graduated from a college in Kunming years ago. She complains that it is hard to control her young employees. “They are not with high *suzhi*. Although you teach them for many times about how to do things right, they will never listen. You can’t scold them, either. If you push them too hard, they will just quit.” Two senior female employees in their forties and fifties respectively working as dishwashers and cleaners in the kitchen are from one of the dislocated villages. They said they felt lucky to find a job here. “The boss is a kind person. It is just that the business of the restaurant is not very good. You see, the whole commercial plaza has no *renqi*. We hope his business will be good so we may be able to ask him to raise our salary.” Located at the relatively marginal area and a little further from the campuses, the “entrepreneurial base” is not as bustling as expected. Jiaming and other businessmen often sponsor various activities or competitions in order to attract college students here and promote *renqi* in this place, but all these efforts have not received satisfying outcome.

Concluding remarks

In contrast to long-distance resettlement and other possible unfavorable trends such as joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, loss of access to common property, and social disintegration (Wilmsen 2011:147), the “inplace urbanization” [*jiudi chengshihua*] in Chenggong and the particularity of the college town project facilitate the market economy to absorb displacees from the agricultural sector in some sense. Therefore, the majority of villagers would rather stay to exploit the local markets than become migrant workers. This is in favor of their reterritorialization in the college town and meanwhile the autonomy of village collectives within the resettlement residential compound, which I have discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, the presence of

many fellow villagers in almost every corner of the college town as cleaners, gardeners, security guards, cooks, waiters and waitresses in colleges and other residential compounds reduce their feeling of alienation in urban settings. Although their original landscape is totally changed, Chenggong is still “their place” with their memory, their homes, their jobs and their main social networks.

The adaptation to the new environment imposes challenges to people. Due to the limitation in livelihood options, female villagers tend to find jobs and accept them more easily in the college town, while male villagers have problem finding pleasant jobs without hurting their masculinity. Therefore, the urbanization process facilitates women’s movement out of the domestic sphere to a more public and independent situation, at least to some extent. Urbanization also includes the rural seniors into pension systems and other privileges, which give them chances to extend their space beyond their villages. Meanwhile, we notice that villagers’ employment situation in Chenggong is not static. It may fluctuate with other dynamics, such as supply and demand in the local labor market and with the *renqi* of the areas.

Despite many different livelihood choices, there appears to be one salient distinction between my informants: Most villagers turn to wage laborers, while a few become entrepreneurs. This process of polarization in wealth probably also existed among villagers before, but is accelerated by urbanization and by the input of cash compensation. Besides a few entrepreneurs who run businesses in Chenggong, more entrepreneurs are found in another group which is worth discussing. They are migrant farming entrepreneurs, who will be the focus of Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4 Becoming farming entrepreneurs

Some land-lost peasants chose to migrate to neighboring counties, renting land to continue their greenhouse farming as their livelihood after relocation. Although using the similar greenhouse farming technique and still growing greenhouse vegetables and fresh cut flowers for export like before, with the cash compensation as the start-up investment, the size of their farm is scaled up, to more than 20 *mu* or even bigger. To satisfy the need on a farm of such a size, it is impossible to rely on labor recruited within the family or mutual help from fellow villagers. Instead, farmers hire farmworkers with different skills to finish work on their farm. The entry of the investor-farmers with compensation cash capital into unofficial land lease market renders the local peasants to lease out their land and then to become farmworkers, thus stimulating the corresponding agricultural industrial chain to form in these counties. Based on the above characteristics, I name the investor-farmers from Chenggong “farming entrepreneurs”.

Statics show that there are 12,173 land-lost peasants in Chenggong going out renting land of 99,496 *mu* in 2011. They do not account for the majority of land-lost peasants in Chenggong, but they do show up on local news and in official propaganda, represented as a model of how the local state helps land-lost peasants to achieve reemployment successfully. Due to the scale effect, the income of these farming entrepreneur households is likely to be increased compared to before, thus they become the evidence that the urbanization also benefits land-lost peasants and make them “develop”. In this sense, the image of land-lost peasants is to some extent based on the successful farming entrepreneur group. The historically derogatory objectification of the peasantry as uncivilized [*meiwenhua*] and backward [*luohou*] temporarily gives way to “skilled migration” for the “regional economic development” and “folk angels” of the “integration of central Yunnan” – all concepts heard and seen in the local media reports in Kunming (Kunming Daily, April 8th 2011).

Addressed as “bosses” by their farmworkers and known as “being rich bosses” in other counties and talked about as entrepreneurs in their own village back in

Chenggong, the farming entrepreneurs find the respect and confidence that rural peasants have been lacking in China.

However, my fieldwork suggests that such a successful livelihood is not plain sailing all along for villagers in Chenggong. Disregarding romantic nostalgia about farming culture, there are economic dilemmas behind this choice. Let us look at some of the challenges.

The earliest entrepreneurs

Having similar climate to Kunming, the nationally famous “city of eternal spring”, Chenggong has a proper climate and soil qualities for the growth of vegetables, flowers and its famous big, juicy and sweet pears. Most Chenggong villagers had the experience of selling their pears in Kunming by walking or by bicycle as early as 1980s. Although suffering from the poor transportation system, diligent villagers could still make a fortune at the harvest time by exploiting the accessible market. By the end of the twentieth century, with interregional markets across the country and the formation of the agricultural industrial chain, some villagers accumulated a substantial amount of capital through farming. Right before the construction project of the “New Kunming”, their vegetables, fruits and flowers had been mainly sold out of Yunnan to the east coast of China and even further to the overseas market. Farming was their main livelihood and something that they were really good at.

The villages in the area of the college town were not the richest in Chenggong, but some village households could still earn up to 30,000 to 40,000 *yuan* a year through family members’ own hard work. When it came to the moment of relocation, with their own savings and the received cash compensation, many villagers chose to lead an easy life and gave themselves a good “break”. Money was spent open-handed on various items such as decoration of their new apartments, good clothes, luxury mobile phones, jewelries and cars. Consumption quickly became a competition among villagers. Some took the chance to start traveling to see the outside world for the first time in their lives. They joined tourist groups to go sightseeing in big metropolises in China like Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin. More villagers were keen on local entertainment, such as having banquets in restaurants with friends, drinking

and singing in KTVs, or gambling. The excitement of enjoying an urban and extravagant life was gradually cooled down and people subordinated themselves to the reality that urban cost of living was much higher than their rural one. “The expenditure begins as soon as you open your eyes in the morning,” a villager said. Villagers realized that the cash compensation would be used up soon if they kept the current consumption level without supplement. Being idle for some time, they began thinking about working. Farming was definitely on their mind, being the only thing they were confident with. To continue farming meant a lot of start-up capital, an amount equal to all their savings. Besides, there was no land available in Chenggong, which meant they had to migrate to other counties to rent land. Risk of investment and the foreseeable hardships made villagers hesitate. The discourse in villages did not encourage taking this risk. Fellow villagers would sneer those who had the idea to continue farming outside: “We have been farmers all our lives. Aren’t you fed up with it?” So most of them just followed others to find a job in the college town, but a few with initiative still chose to take the risk. They became the earliest entrepreneurs.

Following my informants in the resettlement residential compound in Chenggong, I extended my fieldwork to Songming. Songming is about 76 km away from Chenggong, approximately one hour’s drive by car. It is one of the counties with abundant land available, which made the land renting possible for Chenggong land-lost peasants. With Chenggong land-lost peasants renting land and doing greenhouse farming, the latest five or six years see a complete and new agricultural industrial chain being formed in Songming. The industrial chain includes skilled farmworkers, truck drivers, cold storage [*lengku*] owners, greenhouse builders, seedling cultivators, farm manure providers, pesticide providers and chemical fertilizer providers, which all facilitate greenhouse farming and induce more greenhouse investors to make a fortune.

The current facilities are based on the striving of these earliest farming entrepreneurs. In the first few years, they taught and trained the local peasants step by step about how to cultivate the greenhouse vegetables. They themselves worked as truck drivers transporting their farmworkers, fertilizers and pesticides from Chenggong to Songming. They also had to transport their harvest back to Chenggong to sell, since cold storages were all placed in Chenggong. The hardships that the

entrepreneurs had experienced scared off others who had the intention but were less determined. This hesitation and the following dynamics set a higher threshold for others to join. Also “my” land-lost peasants had to rely on the social network back in the home village to deal with difficulties they encounter. One such challenge is to find good plots of land.

To find a good piece of land

A good piece of land with proper price is hard to find. Most villagers depend on their trustworthy kinsmen and close fellow villagers to help them rent the land. Renting land can be a very complicated problem that requires all the possible resources a person has. First and foremost is the actor’s social capital. A villager with more social capital tends to find a good piece of land with proper price. High volume of social capital comes firstly from a social network as wide as possible. Therefore, when a person claims that he would like to rent a piece of land, his widely scattered relatives and friends can give him feedback with useful information not exclusively from one county. The efficacy of the information brought back not only depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize, but also on the “volume of the capital (economic, cultural and symbolic)” (Bourdieu 1986:249).

Here, I confine Bourdieu’s cultural capital in a narrow sense by referring it to the expertise that is necessary for practice farming. In this sense, cultural capital only exists in the form of local knowledge and skills of how to cultivate and manage the greenhouse farm in order to be a successful farmer. In other words, the cultural capital in this sense can almost directly convert to economic capital in the field of agribusiness. Following Bourdieu, we can say that the cultural capital in agriculture that the farming entrepreneurs acquire comes from “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” (Bourdieu 1986:243) in the rural society. It is not learnt from schools and perhaps not identified as education by the people themselves, as its holders are regarded by many as illiterate or uncivilized. First at this is a “good eye” in distinguishing good land from bad land.

To look for a plot for others can be time consuming and sometimes troublesome, but since *guanxi* and mutual help work both ways all members in the

same social network have the obligation to provide backing when one member is in need. My fieldwork indicates that with limited extension of their social network in Songming, the farming entrepreneurs have been valuing their established social network back home and this might explain how they always manage to attend village-based activities in the resettlement residential compound, no matter how busy they are.

Shaohua's father Jiaxiang is one of the migrant farmers in Songming. He comes from Middle village. Jiaxiang in his forties is a stern man. He is not tall but strong and tanned. His image just fits my imagination for a typical Chinese ploughman. Before I could finally meet him on his land in Songming, his son comforted me about the meeting: "Don't be afraid if he looks serious. He is always like that. It doesn't mean he is angry with you." The meeting went much better than I had expected. Jiaxiang was easy-going and became talkative when asked about farming. Jiaxiang and his wife started renting land three years ago through the help of one of his nephews who is one of the earliest entrepreneurs in Middle village. Jiaxiang rents 20 *mu* farmland in Songming. He told me that to have at least 40 *mu* to farm could bring the best profit rate. I asked him why he did not rent as much as that and he explained:

Our appropriation money was given bit by bit. For example, as early as 2003, the government appropriated some of our land for the construction of a new road. This brought each villager in our village something like 20,000 *yuan* as cash compensation. The continuous appropriation did not stop until all our land was appropriated and we were relocated. Although each villager got approximately 200,000 *yuan* in total, the cash compensation was spent here and there as soon as it was allocated. Very few of us would think of saving it as capital for investment. In the early years, renting land doing cultivation outside did not make a fortune like these years. Most villagers like us didn't realize it was the right thing to do. When we planned to do it three years ago, the money was spent on other items and the land rent was much higher. That's why we could only afford renting 20 *mu*. It would be perfect if we could have 20 more. Now, to find a piece of good land is harder and harder.

This dilemma also keeps many villagers from choosing migrant farming as their livelihoods. Jiaxiang gave me a detailed investment estimation of renting and farming a piece of land of 40 *mu*. From looking for a piece of land to the first harvest, a household needs to prepare at least 600,000 *yuan* for the initial investment. Some of the villagers had to borrow money from their relatives. "You can't imagine how stressful it would be when witnessing the whole family savings and loan 'disappear'

on an empty greenhouse farm. I was often sleepless in the evening,” Jiaxiang recalled the first months of his entrepreneuring: “For the same size of land, the investment can be more than that. It depends.” I understand his meaning quite well after I experienced several times of looking for a good piece of land with him, seeing all the fluctuations of different evaluations and choices.

The day when I met Jiaxiang and his wife on their farm was a busy day for him. Several other men were visiting him discussing a piece of land that they wanted to rent for a young man. The young man in his late twenties was Jiaxiang’s nephew Chao, who allegedly had been “idling” for years and wanted to do some “real business” now. Other two men were Jiaxiang’s nephew Lintao and Lintao’s best fellow villager friend. Both of them in their thirties were among the earliest successful farming entrepreneurs. It was Lintao who introduced Jiaxiang into this business three years ago. They were all villagers of Middle village. When Chao declared that he wanted to rent some land to do greenhouse farming just like them, they began keeping an eye on the local information in Songming for him. Recently, they found a young Cantonese man who failed at making money from farming and wanted to transfer his land lease. They evaluated the quality of the land and concluded that it was a very good plot with abundant water resource and at the same time good location to avoid the flooding in the rainy season. The young Cantonese was from an affluent family. His two uncles had been doing business in Chenggong for years. Like many other outsiders coming from east part of Yunnan and even outside the province, the young Cantonese was enchanted by the great success achieved by Chenggong peasants, so he came to rent a piece of land to do greenhouse farming himself. With very little farming experience and careless management, his vegetables did not grow well and he lost a lot of money. Now he wanted to transfer the whole farm to someone to pay his debt. He urged Chao to sign the contract as soon as possible. Jiaxiang suggested that they should meet and talk to the local village committee to see how they felt about the transfer. They asked for a meeting with the Cantonese and the village head in the afternoon and organized a banquet after that, as was the tradition. Jiaxiang told Chao to prepare enough money for the night. This would be an important occasion for Chao to build up *guanxi* with the cadres of the local village. I asked Jiaxiang whether I could go with them. He looked embarrassed. I understood immediately this would be a serious negotiation and

only insiders and men were the proper attendees. He promised he would let me know the detail when he came home.

In the late evening that day, the others drove Jiaxiang back home. He said the meeting and the banquet went very well. The village representatives drank with them and promised to give Chao “convenience” in the future. In the end, they paid 10,000 *yuan* to the young Cantonese as earnest money and they talked about measuring the land and deciding the final price the next day. The unit price for the land with greenhouse and everything on it was 16,000 *yuan* each *mu* but the Young Cantonese claimed that his land was 33 *mu* in total although his contract signed with the village said it was only 27 *mu*. He explained that since he had a good *guanxi* with the village head, the village head secretly exempted six *mu* on the contract. Now, he asked for rent according to the actual area in order to offset some of his loss.

The next afternoon, the men brought the measuring tape and went to measure the land. We three women, Jiaxiang’s wife, her daughter and me were allowed to follow this time. There were not enough seats in the car, so we three women walked there through field ridges. It was only 15 minutes’ walk. The Young Cantonese’s farm looked bleak. The films of the greenhouses looked worn out with weeds and sundries all over outside. The vegetables in the greenhouse were in some unhealthy and yellowish color. It was quite the opposite view than what could be seen on Jiaxiang’s thriving greenhouse farm. Jiaxiang and the others were busy measuring the land. They wrote down every figure they could measure and then used the limited math knowledge mainly learnt in elementary school to estimate the area. However, no matter how they measured and calculated, the area was 27 *mu* instead of 33 *mu*. While they measured the land under the stinging sunshine, the young Cantonese sat inside playing games on his laptop. When he got to know their result, he could not believe it. He seemed to trust Jiaxiang and his nephews not to make a mistake nor deliberately deceive him, but it was harder for him to believe that the village head deceived him after he gave him 30,000 *yuan* as secret brokerage and constant gifts and banquets at times. He called the village head to verify the figure. It turned out that the village head did not betray the collective benefit by receiving the bribery but fooled the young Cantonese by saying that the land was 33 *mu*. His dream to offset his loss by charging

on the extra land area was disillusioned and he became hesitant to subcontract the farm for the unit price of 16,000 *yuan* to Jiaxiang's nephew.

On the morning of the third day, Jiaxiang and the others went to bargain with the young Cantonese and tried to persuade him to rent for 432,000 *yuan* based on 27 *mu* in total or with 10,000 *yuan* more. We women stayed home cooking for them. After noon Jiaxiang came home with one of his eyes bruised. He told us that they encountered some creditors with a lot of helpers coming to ask for payment from the young Cantonese. The creditors were the greenhouse constructors, the fertilizer providers and some farmworkers. The young Cantonese owed them the payments for the goods and salaries. The creditors heard that there was a contract transfer in progress and they worried that the young Cantonese would run away with money, so they came to watch and urge him to pay debts as soon as possible. The confrontation developed to a riot and Jiaxiang was accidentally injured. Considering the complex situation, Jiaxiang and the others finally decided to give up this land and looked for another plot for Chao.

The great demand for land renting also brings consequences for the village cadres in Songming, consequences which to some extent are similar to the dynamics in the resettlement residential compound in Chenggong. Through organizing the land renting, the village committee interferes in villagers' economic life once again. The political capital of village cadres is increased through their role as brokers between migrant farmers and local villages. Exploiting a flourishing unofficial land renting market, their political position can readily convert to economic capital.

Like Chenggong in the past, Songming is an agricultural county. The county seat is surrounded by vast farmland. Villages are engaged in farming with 1.5 *mu per capita* as contracted land allocated after the household responsibility system was established in 1980s. The land was allocated equally to each household mixing with both good quality and bad quality. Thus, an area of 20 *mu* can be farmed by over 100 households. It is nearly impossible for a migrant farmer to negotiate with as many landlords as that to rent the land. It is local village cadres who have the authority to summon that many villagers to give up their land at once. Migrant farmers not only depend on village cadres to obtain land, but also need to rely on them to obtain

facilities such as the introduction of electricity and tap water from the village to their farm and help solve unexpected conflicts in the future. Hence, they always intend to build good relationships with local village cadres through banquets and gifts. At the same time, they feel that individuals are not as reliable as a concrete organization such as a village committee, so they prefer to sign the contract with the organization. Likewise, as for the local villagers, they can rely on their village cadres to rent their land out for rental income without having to deal with “untrustworthy” strangers.

The greenhouse farming

The whole production, management and sale of greenhouse farming depend on the farming entrepreneurs' experience and skills. The greenhouse farming is not physically tiring for farmers. Daily work including watering and fertilizing is done by the sprinkling irrigation system mounted in greenhouses. However, farmers need to control the proper timing and the dosage. The pesticide and farm chemical spraying is a skilful job, not only the formula but also the process of spraying itself. It requires some strength as well, for the person needs to drag a long rubber pipe with the sprayer at its end walking repeatedly along greenhouses. The job is done through the coordination of the farmer couple. When a husband sprays along the greenhouse, his wife stands on the track helping him adjust the rubber pipe. If the wife happens to leave for Chenggong, then the husband has to hire a worker to assist him. The hard labor in the busy season is accomplished by hired farmworkers. Farmers would hire daily farmworkers to finish other labor-intensive farming jobs like ploughing land, hoeing weed and harvesting. Thanks to the earliest entrepreneurs' training and cultivation, there are many skillful farmworkers in Songming.

It is quite necessary to hire farmworkers to finish the work, because time is a big issue for greenhouse farmers. With time saved, they will get a chance to grow one more harvest within a year. The usage of land here is just like the usage of a machine in a factory. A running machine can always bring profit to the owner. The growing period of greenhouse vegetable is 45 days on average, so the high utilization of the land can bring more harvest times to farmers within a year. The vegetables are to meet the market demand of the coastal cities in east China, such as Guangzhou and Shenzhen. There is a small local market in Kunming. The head lettuce [*tuanshencai*],

the leaf lettuce [*youmaicai*], the milk Chinese cabbage [*naibaicai*] are the popular types that farmers grow. Broccoli is popular, too, but its growth does not need greenhouse cultivation. The basic price for each type of vegetables on the purchasing day is determined by the market of its destination, for example, the market in Guangzhou. It can fluctuate dramatically. The unit price of per kilo can range from 0.3 *yuan* to 7 *yuan*. Therefore, the gross income for a harvest of 20 *mu* can vary from 9,000 *yuan* to 210,000 *yuan*. As suppliers, the farmer has a limited scope to negotiate the price with cold storage bosses. The quality of vegetables is another factor, but it is just simply categorized into two levels: the qualified level and unqualified level. Qualified vegetables are purchased by the cold-storage boss for the normal price, while the unqualified ones can only be purchased to the “bad noodle storage” [*lanmianku*] with the price even lower than cost. In some bad cases, the farmer has to spend money to hire labor to clean the vegetables from the land as garbage.

The harvest of greenhouse vegetables should be as standard as products produced from an industrial assembly line to meet the requirement. Their cultivation needs experienced farmers and skillful farmworkers to control and adjust their growth. Besides personal accumulation, migrant farmers acquire the knowledge and experience mainly from their relatives and close friends. “Other people will not teach you if you are not a relative. After all, there is some competitive relationship among us.” The knowledge such as when and how to choose proper pesticide to prevent vegetables from the disease and insect pests, when to choose right farm chemicals to adjust the growth of vegetable to the ideal shape and how to spray the pesticide and farm chemicals should be grasped well by farmers themselves. Meanwhile, they should have the ability to distinguish the good farmworkers from the bad ones. When the harvest time is approaching, the farmer will contact a cold storage boss to place an order. In the time of a tight market, storage bosses will personally drive around looking for the supply of goods. After the purchasing date is set, according to the workload, the farmer will set about to call farmworkers and truck drivers to come on the purchasing day. Farmers have their own stable farmworkers and truck drivers based on long-term cooperation, but they can also find new ones from the labor market.

The mature industrial chain has produced a large group of skilled greenhouse farmworkers. Some of farmworkers come from poor rural area in Yunnan and adjacent provinces such as Sichuan and Guizhou, while most of them are local peasants in Songming, in my informants' words: "Chenggong people taught Songming people how to farm." With a lot of migrant farmers from Chenggong flocking into Songming to rent land, many local peasants choose to rent out their contracted farmland for the yearly rental income. Freed from the land, local peasants become "rural surplus labor" either standing at the local labor market looking for employment or work on the greenhouse farm run by Chenggong villagers. Most farmworkers working in the greenhouse are middle-aged women. Some persons with mobile phones are the main contacts of greenhouse farmers. The greenhouse farmer will call the contact and talk about the working dates, the types of work, the wage and the number of workers he needs. The contact is in charge of finding needed number of farmworkers in her village and they all come to work on an appointed date. Each greenhouse farmer has phone numbers of several contacts just in case that their preferred ones are too busy to come. Each contact also leaves their numbers to different farmers to get job offers. Some farmworkers told me that they could get endless job offers in the busy season from July to October and they could still work three to four days a week in the slack season. The wage is settled daily, so the organization of the work team is quite loose. Each farmworker has full freedom to choose their working days. Farmworkers can work as day labor thus to get a certain amount as wage or the wage can be counted by pieces. On average, the wage for a day labor is 100 *yuan* this year, which is ten times of the wage level in 2007. A skillful worker may get up to 150 *yuan* a day by piece based wage. The annual income of a farmworker can exceed 20,000 *yuan*. It has been much higher than the annual income of a peasant when the traditional agriculture was engaged on the household's contracted land.

“Chenggong people” and “bosses”

Being outsiders as well as migrants, the farming entrepreneurs from Chenggong are not marginalized as the mass of migrant workers nor are they stigmatized as the "floating population". On the contrary, they have a good fame in Songming. Their

identity as land-lost peasants has faded, instead, they are talked about as “Chenggong people” with the connotation of “rich people,” in local discourse. For example, some shopping experiences with wives of my male interlocutors in Songming informed me that it is even a shame to bargain with street vendors as “Chenggong people”. “Chenggong people” are the main consumers of local expensive dining and entertainment locales, such as restaurants, KTVs, and sauna houses. Their farmworkers directly address them “boss” [*laoban*]. This title is later internalized into this group. Now they use it to greet each other. “Hey, boss. How’s business?” The term can be used to address both men and women. I heard husbands ask their wives: “Boss, what do we eat today?” This internalization not only penetrates into the group, but also into individuals. Jiaxiang’s wife often said that her silent husband now became more and more voluble in front of people. “Being rich is really different,” she said.

When Jiaxiang’s vegetables were to be harvested, I followed him to the nearby town seat to hire farmworkers. The town is called the “goat bridge” named after a bridge in the town. The labor market is set around the bridge. After morning meal, we drove the car to the goat bridge. The bridge was full of people standing and waiting for employment. I noticed that there were more women than men. The late autumn morning was cold. Female farmworkers all wrapped their head with colorful kerchiefs and folded their arms against the cold after standing too long outside. Whenever a car pulled over and a boss-like person walked out, a lot of people would rush to the person. The crowd made a jam on the bridge and the road. Passing drivers of cars, tractors and vans had to keep sounding the horn to clear their way. I was stunned for a moment when Jiaxiang got off the car. He was immediately surrounded by female workers. Jiaxiang’s two arms were dragged by several women while they anxiously persuaded him (almost like begging him) to hire them. Although pushed groggily like a drunken man, Jiaxiang appeared very calm. He calmly negotiated about the wage, time and the number of labors with them. When they talked, some women left him for me and said: “Boss, hire us. We can do job well.” I told them: “I’m not the boss. He is.” “Then could you let the boss know that we would like to accept the job for the wage he provides? The other women are our fellow villagers. We can’t say it in front of them.” I promised them that I would try, but I did not know how to reach the

“boss”, since he was surrounded tightly. Luckily, those women seemingly lost their patience since Jiaxiang would not agree to raise the wage. I led these women to talk to him again and the employment was set. The next morning was the harvest day. When I got up at 7 o’ clock in the morning, they had already been working in Jiaxiang’s greenhouses with head lights for two hours.

In addition to the greenhouse farmers, there are several other “bosses” in the industrial chain in Songming. They are the chemical fertilizer providers, farm manure providers, pesticides and farm chemical sellers, cold storage runners and cold storage bosses. Except for the last one, Chenggong people mostly played all the other roles. To run businesses like these need more capital, and these capital came from their earlier successful businesses in Chenggong. Some of them can run multiple businesses in Songming. For instance, the pesticides and farm chemical shop runners also rent land and grow vegetables or flowers at the same time; or farm manure providers have their own chicken farms, and chicken manure is the by-product of their farms. No matter what, these entrepreneurial roles all reinforce the image of “Chenggong people”.

Livelihood in Songming and life in Chenggong

The migrant farmers lead a double life in Songming and Chenggong. In some sense, I argue that they have their livelihood in Songming, while having a life in Chenggong. Undoubtedly, they make their living mainly through running the greenhouse farm in Songming and only drive back to Chenggong every two weeks. Although Songming is the place where they spend most of their time, it is not “home”. Migrant farmers still elaborately maintain their social network back in Chenggong. When invited to wedding or funeral banquets, they will drive back to attend and stay one day or two. Even if asked for help in the guest hall for a banquet, they would go with pleasure without any complaints.

The social network that they actively maintain in Songming is mainly among “bosses”, mainly their relatives or friends. The usual ways to mingle are eating together in restaurants or in their own place and play cards with cash stakes after that. When a family has a guest visiting, the host will take the chance to invite people over

and cook something better. I was treated such meals when I first came to visit Jiaxiang and his wife on their farm. They deliberately prepared more food for meals, so they also invited their neighbors and called relatives to come and eat together. The following days, we were invited to these families on their farms to eat and to play as well. I felt happy that I could meet more people and visit more farms through this circular treat, but also doubted if this was their real life in Songming. The festival-like life stopped when I was not treated as a guest coming from afar and life came back to normal. It is, just as they told me, idle.

Migrant farmers may extend their social network to include some local village cadres, but this extension is more based on the instrumental *guanxi* (Yan 2000:181; see also Wilson 1997) which anticipates short-term payback. At the same time, my fieldwork indicates that migrant farmers seem to keep a distance with their farmworkers, or, in other words, they try to maintain a “working relationship” with them. For instance, when the farmworkers are hired to work on the farm, lunch becomes an issue that needs to be discussed ahead of time. If the farmworkers decide that they will bring their own food as lunch during work, they should be paid five *yuan* more as lunch subsidy. Otherwise, the migrant farmer family will cook lunch for them. With totally different etiquette from treating friends, the lunch is simply cooked and made of cheap food ingredients in order to cut cost. Once, when Jiaxiang’s wife complained that the farmworkers did not harvest vegetables well into baskets if she stopped watching them. I asked: “If we serve them some better food at lunch, perhaps they will do better jobs?” She replied me: “No, that doesn’t work. I tried before. These people are ungrateful. They just care about how much they can earn from you.”

Migrant farmers’ daily life on their farm was quite simple or even tedious. Besides the busy time, such as the time of seedling transplantation or harvest, the daily work is just watering or sometimes spraying fertilizers. Farmers eat quite simple food at times. They grow some vegetables outside the greenhouses for self-subsistence, so they only need to drive to the food market once in a while to buy some meat. At times, watching TV is a common way to kill time. Farmers install the satellite dish on their house. TV is turned on the whole day. They can catch up with almost all the latest popular TV series and shows. Besides the entertaining program, they are also keen on domestic news and weather forecast, since the news might help

them foresee the price of their vegetables. The agricultural channel is one of their favorites, too. It is difficult to link them with the stereotype of rural people as illiterate and ignorant subjects, since they enthusiastically improve their knowledge.

Story telling is often a good way by which migrant farmers cultivate their cultural capital. One such story was about two agricultural college graduates who after graduation brought money to invest the greenhouse farm. They worked very hard on the farm, but still did not earn any money. Not only that, the big bundle of money that they had brought to Songming shrank to a small stack. “Two poor young men,” Lintao said, “I admire their courage. If their farm was near mine, I would like to teach them how to manage.” When talking about their greenhouse farming, they always sounded very proud of themselves. Moreover, as the story shows, even with an average primary school diploma, they are not afraid to be the teachers of college students.

This partially explains why villagers in Chenggong are not anxious to pursue a high academic achievement. Villagers were quite successful in agribusiness. The farming knowledge eclipsed the officially enacted school diploma in their rural society. A high academic diploma could not guarantee a good job considering the competitive employment situation, while land was always the last resort for a good life. Villagers in their fifties or sixties dropped out of school early mainly due to the historical reasons (for example, the Cultural Revolution), while adults in their thirties and forties whom I talked with were still mostly with primary school diploma. Younger generations dropped out with higher degrees. Very few went to college. Despite the generation difference, people give the same reason for dropping out: cannot read more. They do not appear upset about it and young people are not blamed by their families for this, either. Some villagers just attribute it to the lack of talent. “Study needs talent. If he doesn’t have it, it is useless to push him,” one grandparent said.

However, after relocation, the “last resort” does not exist anymore. Life and livelihood changes seem to bring new pressure on children’s education. A local primary school teacher who I interviewed told that now young parents were more serious about their children’s education, actively supervising them to finish homework.

She also expressed her worries about those kids whose parents are migrant farmers and have problem spending time with their children and taking care of their study. Villagers engaged in migrant farming are mostly in their thirties or forties. While the couple spend most of their time taking care of vegetables in other counties, their children, aging from teenager to their early twenties, were left home alone or were taken care of by their grandparents. Some villagers I talked with claimed that they gave up choosing to do migrant farming for their children's sake. They worried that without parents' supervision their children's education would be influenced.

Additionally, the livelihood of migrant farming brings some changes to female villagers. The migrant family is always composed of a couple. They are both familiar with the operation of the greenhouse. They work as partners and backup each other. When the husband drives out to order seedlings on seedling farms, the wife stays to deal with onsite business; when the wife follows the truck to sell vegetables in cold storage, the husband stays to settle the payment to farmworkers. Wives are called "bosses" by their farmworkers instead of the "wife of the boss" [*laobanniang*], which implies that they share the same status with their husbands in farm affairs. Disembedded from the constraint of the kinship for some time, the conjugal relationship comes to the front. Either husband or wife is important partner to each other in business and in the tedious farm life. Some wives claimed that they felt more intimate with their husband after they migrated to the farm. Although women play important role in family business and are able to participate in the decision-making, men are still dominant the public sphere. Such as in the case of negotiation with the young Cantonese and the village cadres, the female are thought inappropriate to attend. Additionally, wives often go back to Chenggong to look after children, while the husband spend more time on the farm, which impresses it that men are responsible for the business and women are still responsible for the family.

The dilemma of farming entrepreneurs

While the earliest entrepreneurs experienced the initial hardship, yet also made a great fortune, the followers engaged in greenhouse farming are to some extent stimulated by the supportive policy enacted by the district government of Chenggong, especially the version of 2009. Renting land and continuing farming is a policy sponsored by the

district government to solve the issue of the unemployment among the local land-lost peasants. The supportive policy issued in 2009 stipulates that households that rent land outside the new district of Chenggong can get a subsidy from the government. With land area ranging from five *mu* to ten *mu*, and with the tenure more than five years, each household can get a cash subsidy of 500 *yuan* per *mu* each year for five years; if the rented land is more than ten *mu*, the supportive policy will refer to the one for entrepreneurs (Chenggong Online, November 10th 2011). The supportive policy to some degree offset the risk of greenhouse farming and stimulates land-lost peasants to engage in migrant farming. It is reported that the district government of Chenggong granted a cash subsidy of 45,000,000 *yuan* between 2006 and 2010 to subsidize land-lost peasants renting land. Local media address them “foregoers of becoming well-off” [*zhifu daitouren*], and the evidence of peasants in Chenggong “losing land but not unemployed” [*shidi bushiye*], although encouraging land-lost peasants to continue farming seemingly contradicts the purpose of local state’s “one-step urbanization” concept which aims at urbanizing the rural population.

The facility of the mature industrial chain also attracts more greenhouse investors in Songming. Not only land-lost peasants in Chenggong, but also people from other regions in and outside Yunnan. The input of massive investors as greenhouse farmers pushes up the price of land and the price of farm labor. Five years ago, the yearly rent for a plot of one *mu* was 2,000 *yuan*, while this year the rent has been raised to 3,000 *yuan* in Songming. The salary for a daily farm worker is also raised from 10 *yuan* per day in 2007 to 100 *yuan* nowadays. With new farming skills, some local farmers are not willing to rent their land to outsiders. Instead, they want to be greenhouse farmers themselves and make a fortune out of it. This aggravates the shortage of both land supply and labor. It is more and more difficult to find a good piece of land with a proper price. The higher threshold not only blocks new land-lost peasants in Chenggong to choose it as a livelihood, but also makes current ones reconsider their choice when the lease expires.

Furthermore, some critical voices are also heard. Although the migrant farming is represented as “skilled migration” for the “regional economic development” and the farming entrepreneurs are “folk angels” of the “integration of central Yunnan” by local media in Kunming, some counter-discourses emerge from a neighboring city

where many Chenggong peasants flocked in. Local media in those places express concerns about the issue of local water pollution since the greenhouse farming consumes chemical fertilizers, pesticides and farm chemicals far more than the traditional farming. They blame land-lost peasants from Chenggong as outsiders to be too eager for quick wealth and instant benefits to think of the local environment protection (Yunnan Network, January 30th 2011).

Concluding remarks

It has been ten years since the new city construction started up in 2003. Although renting land to do farming was not an unknown realm for my people since some of them had tried renting farmland from neighboring villages when their greenhouse farming business blossomed, it would be an ordeal to kick off from scratch in a strange place. Despite the subsidy from the local government as stimulus, migrant farmers draw largely on kinship ties as well as other social capital accumulated in their village in Chenggong.

Technically, migrant farmers belong to the “floating population” as well, in that they have their livelihood in places other than their native place, and are excluded from the local society. However, they are not problematized as the “floating population”; instead, they are portrayed as the glorious outcome of urbanization.

Compared with the massive rural migrant workers in China, my people show many differences. In the academic discourse, rural migrant workers are a group who lacks reciprocal integration. They are integrated with the rural society at their home village, which is usually far from the metropolis where they make their living. Some migrant workers can only go back home once a year for a family reunion on the occasion of the Spring Festival, while others may not get a chance to go back for years. While spending more time living in cities, they are not socially integrated with the urban society or within the urban polity. They are “floaters”. They are marginalized in the sense that their right to the city has been constrained and their capacity of negotiating such right with other agencies has been weakened (Wu 2010:12).

Migrant farmers from Chenggong show several characteristics that demarcate them from the massive migrant workers in China. First, the direction differs. Rural migrant workers migrate from rural to urban, while migrant farmers in Chenggong go from urban to rural. A second distinction lies in the relationship with the home villages. In order to maximize the job opportunities and chances, migrant workers tend to migrate to bigger cities that may be far away from their remote home village and entails a disconnection with the social ties. Migrant farmers from Chenggong do not necessarily settle in faraway places, but in places that give them easy access back to the village. The social network in the home village is the significant source of their social capital, cultural capital and economic capital, which is related to various aspects of their life and livelihood. Thus, subjectively, they intend to keep integrating in their village in Chenggong. Third, they achieve different territoriality at their destinations. Migrant workers live as “floaters” in “urban villages” in cities with little territoriality, while migrant farmers live as “investors” and “bosses” and settle in their own farms with certain locally extended social network, which brings them much more control over territoriality.

CHAPTER 5 Conclusion: towards new Chinese subjectivities

In the final chapter, I want to place my study in a wider Chinese context that relates to how the Chinese people have gone through major changes since the Communist regime established in 1949. Some of the changes relate to the processes of urbanization, but in the Maoist era the cities and the countryside were kept strictly apart, and the countryside, i.e. the peasants, were seen as “behind” the urban population in cultural development. Nevertheless, at the same time, Mao introduced land reforms to give land to the peasants, taking it from the former landlords, and later to give it to the state, making the peasants into a communist collective working for the Revolution. My case from Chenggong can be put into this historical context, as I will do here. The case itself shows post-Mao developments, in which the rural peasants have been brought into the economic developments in China, developments that are labelled “Capitalist-like” and “market oriented”, as represented by the move from the peasant villages to the urban areas of Chenggong. What I aim to show is that my case represents a kind of “in between” situation. It does not show a total dichotomy between the former rural and the present urban way of life. Rather, the case shows an interesting mingling of processes through which new patterns emerge while earlier rural, and traditional, patterns remain and become transformed in the process. Let me illustrate briefly what I mean, and start with the broader history, before I link this to my own analysis presented in the thesis.

A historical view

China has moved from the Maoist phase, with revolutionary class struggle and near imperial sovereignty to one of policy-focused, regulation oriented and economy-building global society. China went from a system in which sacrificing your life for the revolutionary cause was left, and a new reality, focusing on the development of people and society and a revitalization of Confucian ethics, took over. Obviously, such a change in three decades affects different parts of China, their local histories and ethnographies of everyday life in different ways. Local, traditional realities are

mixed with the new developments with new understandings of rights and duties, in short, a change not only in social life, but also in Chinese subjectivities providing a basis for a new Chinese citizen. Hence, an important part of any study on China today will contain an element of such changing relationships between people and the state. What strikes us today is the development of the economy, of a new understanding of how to develop the population and the social body.

The rural subjects in the history of socialist China

One important context is the discursive construction of rural peasants in China as backward and primitive, but also as a revolutionary vanguard. We can get an impression of this by focusing on the history of land reform, and how such reform periods affected the subjectivity of Chinese peasants. Land reform was key to the Communist agenda and since right before the communists took power in 1949, the country has gone through three land reforms.

The first reform happened in early 1950s when the regime redistributed land to peasants. This era known just as the Land Reform period in Chinese history established the “village people’s government” marking the thorough penetration of central power into the lowest reaches of rural society, which was different from the earlier situation, both during the imperial and the Republican regimes, when government only reached down to the level of the county (Chen 2007:150). Accordingly, in the official Marxist party propaganda, peasants were “a revolutionary actor central to the Chinese Revolution, and to the historical transformation of China from a feudal to a socialist society” (Day 2013:4).

The second reform was featured as the period of collectivization. The Maoist regime monopolized the purchase and sale of grain and began to control the livelihood of peasants in 1953. The total economic control was not achieved until 1958 when rural collectivization culminated in the establishment of People’s Communes to replace the townships. A commune consisted of three tiers of organization that encapsulated nearly the entire rural population: the commune at the top level, the production brigade at the intermediate level, and the production team at the bottom level, which were administratively equivalent to the township, village, and

neighborhood respectively. The commune merged the administrative, organizational, and socioeconomic structures into one. Meanwhile, villagers were confined to their villages by the new household registration [*hukou*] system. With their own plots of land confiscated and physical mobility tightly restricted, peasants were turned from land-holding peasants into state-employed agricultural laborers (Chen 2007:151). However, the material deprivation of rural people only added to their revolutionary potential in official rhetoric, and the classes of privileged, intellectual urbanites were, particularly during the Cultural Revolution, asked to go down to the countryside to learn from the peasants (Kipnis 1997:168).

The third reform was marked by the decollectivization that began in 1978, when China instituted the household responsibility system. Since then, China has been poised between its former fully collective system of property management and a full system of private property allowing farmers to buy and sell land (Bossen 2002:86). In 1983, the commune system was abolished and the township government was resurrected. Corresponding changes were undertaken on the lower level: the production brigade was restored to the village and the production team was renamed as the “village group” [*cunmin xiaozu*]. Meanwhile, since the level of village was redesignated as villagers’ self-governing organization in this era, the village election for the “village committee” was institutionalized. During most of the 1980s, decollectivization improved peasants’ means of living and to some degree narrowed the urban-rural income gap.

Throughout this history there seems always to have been a clear difference in China between the rural and the urban areas. And, according to Wen, an agricultural economist, the reason is the following. With the commune system and the state controlled purchasing and marketing of grain in the rural areas, and the state subsidizing grain, housing, medical care and education in the urban areas, the dual household registration system was aiming at seizing the agricultural surplus through the compulsory purchase of agricultural products at a suppressed price for the “state capitalist primitive accumulation” (Wen in Day 2008:53). In short – rural areas produced surpluses on which the urban population survived. Wen argues that by keeping rural residents firmly in the countryside, these institutions reduced the cost and increased the efficiency of transferring rural surplus into the industrialization

process. In this sense, the rural sector was made to sacrifice for the development of the nation, primarily represented by urban China. However, the development strategy left the country with a binary system that places the city and the countryside in an “antagonistic contradiction” (Day 2008:56) creating increasing levels of inequality, placing the rural population in the position of persistent poverty and scarcity of resources.

But during the Maoist era this situation was concealed behind a rhetoric in which the peasants were a revolutionary vanguard on which China’s future socialist society was to be built. This changed with the period following Mao’s death and the end of the Cultural Revolution. The de-politicization of society in the “Deng era” the glorified and revolutionary portrait of peasants was ended. Instead, in both official propaganda and popular and intellectual writing, the peasantry became problematic: backward, harboring remnants of feudal thinking, and being represented as the root cause of China’s slow development as well as of its violent history (Day 2013: 5). Rural subjects were presented as backward, uncivilized and feudal remnants. In the 1990s, a crisis broke out characterized by deteriorating conditions of farming, the sliding of peasant income due to the falling agricultural prices and rising costs of agricultural inputs, and cadre corruption. During this crisis peasants and rural China were characterized as the source of crisis (Day 2013:6). The crisis was relieved as the peasant burden was alleviated through the tax-for-fee [*fei gai shui*] reform in 2002 and the repeal of the agricultural tax in 2006.

Back to my Chenggong Peasants

Returning to the peasants of this thesis, the people of Chenggong, I have heard many overlapping references during my fieldwork that can be linked to this history. My informants refer constantly to the collective they are part of as “our village”, at other times as “our brigade” or “our group”. Furthermore they tell the absurd stories about the collectivized times, stories of pain and suffering, and also about their struggle for a better life after “reform and opening up”. They talk about their experience of being looked down upon by urbanites in Kunming and give self-mockery: “We rural peasants are just uncultured, uneducated”. Part of the stories also contains a reflection of their present situation, after they have settled in the urban environment of

Chenggong. These stories, referring to the life I have described in this thesis, are positive stories. Most of the time people will say that right now they have the best life ever. There seems to be no sense of loss, of their land, of their former way of life, of their culture and identity. Rather, it seems clear that my informants are happy with the process of urbanization, and that they attribute the former misfortunes to individual's destiny and the inevitable demand of Marxian determinism of earlier times. They have finished with the past, and are ready to move forward.

Yet, the point here is not empirical. Rather it is to remind ourselves that the changes we see also will lead to new subjectivities. And this is what I want to focus on in ending my thesis. Now, in the contemporary context, where people are faced with more choices, leading to both successes as well as failures, how can we locate changing subjectivities? Where do we find society and the social, with lineages, clans, families, associations, communities and so on? And what is the new relationship between the individual and this social level and the state? The bureaucratic state is a huge monster that is difficult to penetrate, particularly for people way down in the system. So the relationship of *guanxi* is one factor that helps people to get access to necessary levels within the state system. But the same principle is also operating on the social level. It helps tie people together in the same way social rules of friendship and other types of relationships do. Perhaps such relationships may help in the dealings with the state, but in the process the acting subjects are also changing. The peasants in Chenggong show us a specific version of this history.

Before I sum up the empirical conclusions I should also indicate some conceptual directions I want to make use of in this summary discussion. I draw on Sherry Ortner's definition of subjectivity as "the ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire, fear, and so forth that animate acting subjects", as well as the "cultural and social formations that shape, organize, and provoke those modes of affect, thought and so on" (Ortner 2005:31). This definition stresses both the inner states of acting subjects and large scale cultural formations. By acting subjects, Ortner understands subjects as "fully culturally and structurally produced", but also "able to act on and sometimes against the structures that made them" (Ortner 2005:33). She contends that the element of agency lies in the assumption that actors are at least partially "knowing subjects" who "have some degree of reflexivity about themselves

and their desires” (Ortner 2005:34). Based on the partially “knowing subjects”, Ortner conceptualizes a complex subjectivity in which a subject partially internalizes and partially reflects upon or against a set of circumstances in which he/she finds him/herself (Ortner 2005:45). In her theoretical image, “actors bound but choosing, constrained but transforming, both strategically manipulating and unconscious of the frames within which they move” (Luhmann 2006:346). In addition to the investigation at the level of individual actors or groups of actors, subjectivity at a broader cultural and political level examines how particular cultural formations shape subjectivity. Here Ortner herself draws on Raymond Williams (Ortner 2005:45). Williams understands cultural formations as a cultural system with both the hegemonic cultural formations, as well as what he calls the “residual” ones as countercurrents to the hegemonic ones.

In the case of Chenggong, the dominant formation is a story of urbanization, modernity and individualization, whereas there are rural sub-cultures (Kipnis 1997) as countercurrents which invoke countercurrents in villagers’ subjectivity. Linking this to my ethnographic discussion we can say that the hegemonic cultural formation can be a clusters of political discourses coming from both the central state and the local state at various levels, in that “state power is interrelated processes of multiple centers of authority-building” (Hsing 2002:8) in contemporary China. Moreover, the rural population has been experiencing intensive and drastic changes in the history of communist China, but in spite of contemporary changes in this situation, the historical discourses that have objectify the rural peasantry in certain ways do not totally disappear. On the contrary, they are re-emerging here and there, still affecting the shaping of the subjectivity of rural subjects.

If I translate this type of thinking into my empirical analysis in this thesis, we can see for instance that the standardized architecture and spatial lay-out of residential compounds in Chenggong, and the standardized food market within the compound, manifest the state’s hegemonic planning mentality (Scott 1998:6) and desire to discipline the subjects to be civilized urbanites with high cultural quality, or *suzhi*. This “public architecture” puts people into a new setting in which they can become modern, leaving the dirty and chaotic environment they come from. This lay-out appeals to the top-down view of the state, and matches the state’s modernist aesthetics.

The problem, according to Scott, is that such a perspective ignores the “actual activity of the society” (1986:3). As a result, and as we have seen in my discussion, villagers themselves mobilize to remold the lay-out with their own territorial logic. The creations of the various gathering sites, the “little street” and the guest hall in the urban residential compound help to bring back villagers feelings about their former community with familiarity and affability. Hence, a hegemonic level of state decisions is modified by a “residual countercurrent”.

The sense of ownership is also materialized in the village’s self-governance. The self-governance includes the election of village committee, the management of real estate within the resettlement residential compound and the management of collective assets. The compensation policy enacted by local district government not only laid a great material foundation for the village collective, but also capitalized part of the reserved cash compensation. This changed villagers’ role from passive land-lost peasants during the urbanization to investors of it. Villagers’ involvement in urbanization also refers to their reemployment relying on local employment market and other ways to improve their income. Again, a hegemonic policy of state subsidies and systems of financing urbanization also provides a basis for new initiatives among people, and help produce agency.

Thus, the views and expectations about urbanization in Chenggong are different from what we see in many other cases of urbanization. Certainly they have moved from a rural to an urban environment, and certainly, many changes are going on, but the Chenggong people that I worked with respond not as losers and victims, but more like active participants in a situation that provided new opportunities. For instance, as shareholders in the local development, they share similar desires with the local government, expecting more outsiders to come into the area, as such *renqi* will enhance their property value and job opportunities.

In addition, villagers’ sense of ownership also comes from their daily practices. Although the landscape is totally changed, this does not give them feelings of alienation. Chenggong is still “their place” with their memory, their homes, their jobs and their main social networks. Villagers’ self-cognition not only comes from the relationship between them and urbanization, but also lies in their interactions with

other social groups practically and discursively. The migration of farming entrepreneurs to other counties greatly enhanced the status and reputation of “Chenggong people”, and through this they “challenge” the negative stigma and discrimination they faced as “rural peasants” during the past three decades.

All the processes indicated above, and which are discussed in detail in the thesis, can be summarized by the concept of “civic territoriality.” This is Hsing’s term, and I use it to argue that land-lost peasants in Chenggong, through their re-territorialization of their new urban environment, are in the process also of shaping a new subjectivity. But the dynamic is not only defined by spatial re-territorialization. There are also other changing dynamics that make the subjectivity a very complex and open-ended process. First of all, the process is not homogeneous. The increased availability of different livelihood strategies make people benefit from urbanization in different ways and to different extents. Some villagers become entrepreneurs with considerable accumulation of wealth; others become urban wage labors facing a reduction of income compared to before. Second, the choices of livelihoods, both as entrepreneurs and wage laborers, are not static. It is influenced by many factors, such as the intervention of local policies, with subsidies or with serious restrictions. Then there is the supply and demand of local job markets, which also affects the opportunities. This is not entirely new. There have always been tensions between people’s rural background and how they make a living in urban settings. Uncertainties and risks have always defined livelihood strategies. This ambiguity make people in Chenggong to rely more on their collective identity and rural social network, thus also reproducing their own identity in the process, limiting the process of “socio-cultural urbanization”. Third, the complexity also lies in the difference between genders and among generations. After relocated in the urban settings, women get more chances to work outside and become irreplaceable for the increase of family income. Their introduction of urban activities such as the “square dance” to their life in the resettlement residential compound shows that they are not shy to display themselves in the public sphere anymore. The seniors embrace their leisure retirement and do not have to struggle with their livelihood. For both positive changes are felt and commented on. The young generations are also more adaptable to changes and with

them the new patterns will be taken forward. All the processes and dynamics contribute to a complex and open-ended subjectivity of the Chenggong people.

It is too early to draw a conclusion about the new subjectivity that local land-lost peasants have in the urbanization in Chenggong, given the drastically changing socioeconomic dynamics locally and in the macro level changes of the state, but my preliminary findings on lost-land peasants echo Ortner's views of the subject as "existentially complex, a being who feels and thinks and reflects, who makes and seeks meaning" (Ortner 2005:33) and we can see that the post-relocation activities of land-lost peasants in Chenggong reflect a complex subjectivity provoked by a combination of the historical cultural formations and the current dynamics shaped by the move into the urban area of Chenggong and the various urbanization processes people become part of there.

Glossary

<i>aixinka</i>	爱心卡	loving heart bus card
<i>anzhi xiaoqu</i>	安置小区	resettlement residential compound
<i>baochan daohu</i>	包产到户	household responsibility system
<i>baodi</i>	包地	to rent land
<i>baozhuli</i>	宝珠梨	“Baozhu” pears
<i>chengzhongcun</i>	城中村	village in the city; urban village
<i>cunmin xiaozu</i>	村民小组	village group
<i>dachu</i>	大厨	chef
<i>dagong</i>	打工	to work as an employee
<i>dilu</i>	地炉	pit furnace
<i>fei gai hui</i>	费改税	tax-for-fee
<i>guangchangwu</i>	广场舞	public square dance, line dance
<i>heiche</i>	黑车	illegal taxi
<i>Huaxiang, guoxiang, caixiang</i>	花乡,果乡,菜乡	town of flowers, fruits and vegetables
<i>jiedao</i>	街道	sub-district
<i>jiewenlou</i>	接吻楼	kissing building
<i>jiudi chengshihua</i>	就地城市化	inplace urbanization
<i>ketang</i>	客堂	guest hall
<i>lanmianku</i>	“烂面库”	“bad noodle storage”
<i>laoban</i>	老板	boss
<i>laobanniang</i>	老板娘	boss’s wife
<i>laonian daxue</i>	老年大学	Seniors’ college
<i>lengku</i>	冷库	cold storage
<i>liudong renkou</i>	流动人口	floating population; migrant worker
<i>luan</i>	乱	chaos
<i>luohou</i>	落后	backward

<i>mei wenhua</i>	没文化	uneducated; uncivilized
<i>minban jiaoshi</i>	民办教师	private teachers
<i>naibaicai</i>	奶白菜	milk Chinese cabbage
<i>nongmingong</i>	农民工	migrant worker; peasant-worker
<i>qingke</i>	请客	to banquet guest
<i>renqi</i>	人气	human vitality; dynamisms; popularity
<i>shengchan daogu de haiwan bazi</i>	生产稻谷的 海湾坝子	a piece of plain land near the gulf and with abundance of rice
<i>shequ</i>	社区	community
<i>shidi bushiye</i>	失地不失业	losing land but not unemployed
<i>shidi nongmin</i>	失地农民	land-lost peasant; landless peasant; dislocated peasants
<i>shidi nongmin chuangye jidi</i>	失地农民创 业基地	land-lost peasants entrepreneurial base
<i>suzhi</i>	素质	quality of people
<i>tuanshencai</i>	团生菜	head lettuce
<i>tuhao</i>	土豪	bling or nouveau riche
<i>woshoulou</i>	握手楼	shake-hands building
<i>xiaojie</i>	小街	little street
<i>yibu chengshihua</i>	一步城市化	one-step urbanization
<i>youmaicai</i>	油麦菜	leaf lettuce
<i>zhaijidi</i>	宅基地	housing plot
<i>zhifu daitouren</i>	致富带头人	foregoers of becoming well-off

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Figure1. The map of Kunming (Google Maps, 2014)

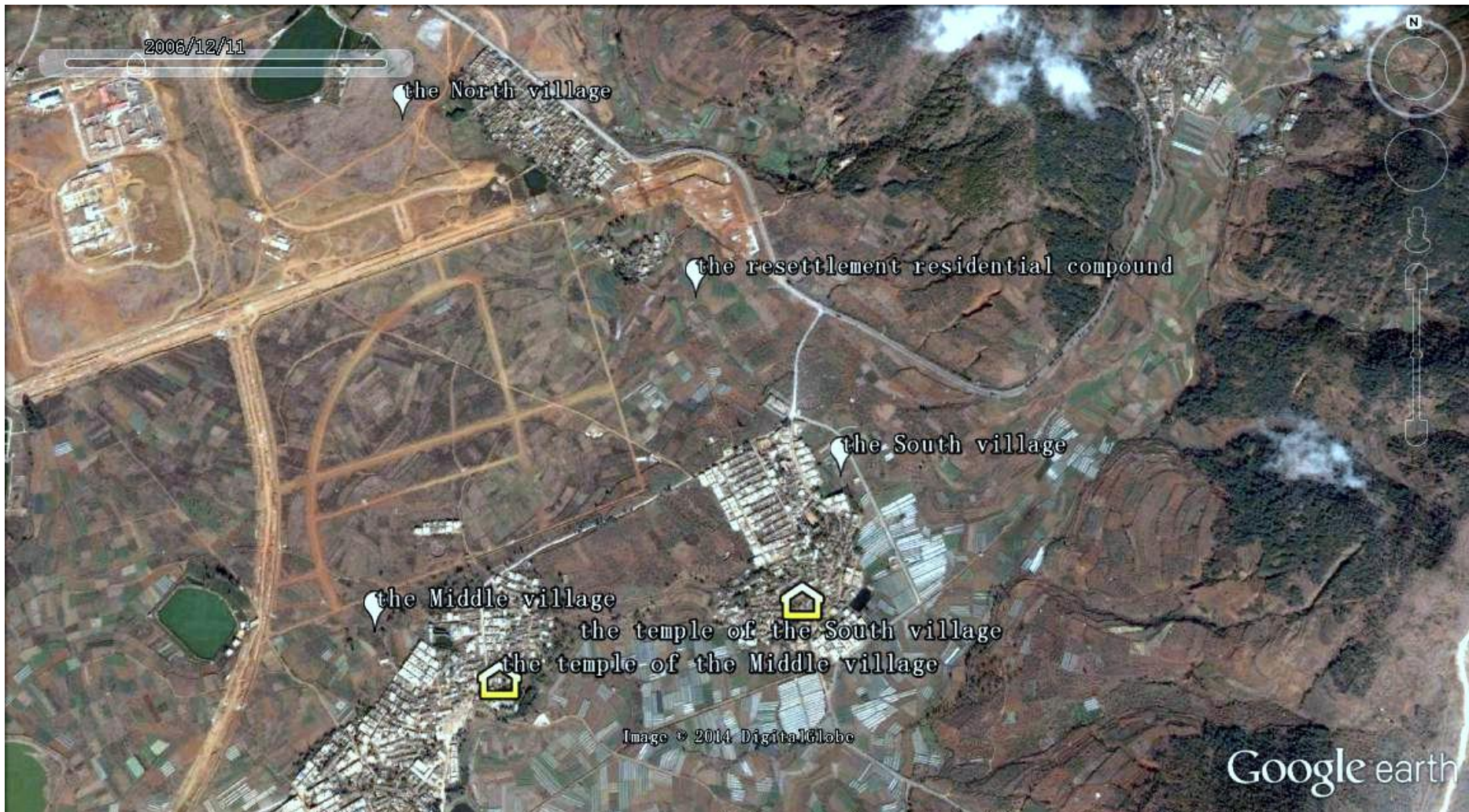


Figure2. The three villages in 2006 (Google Earth, December 11th 2006)

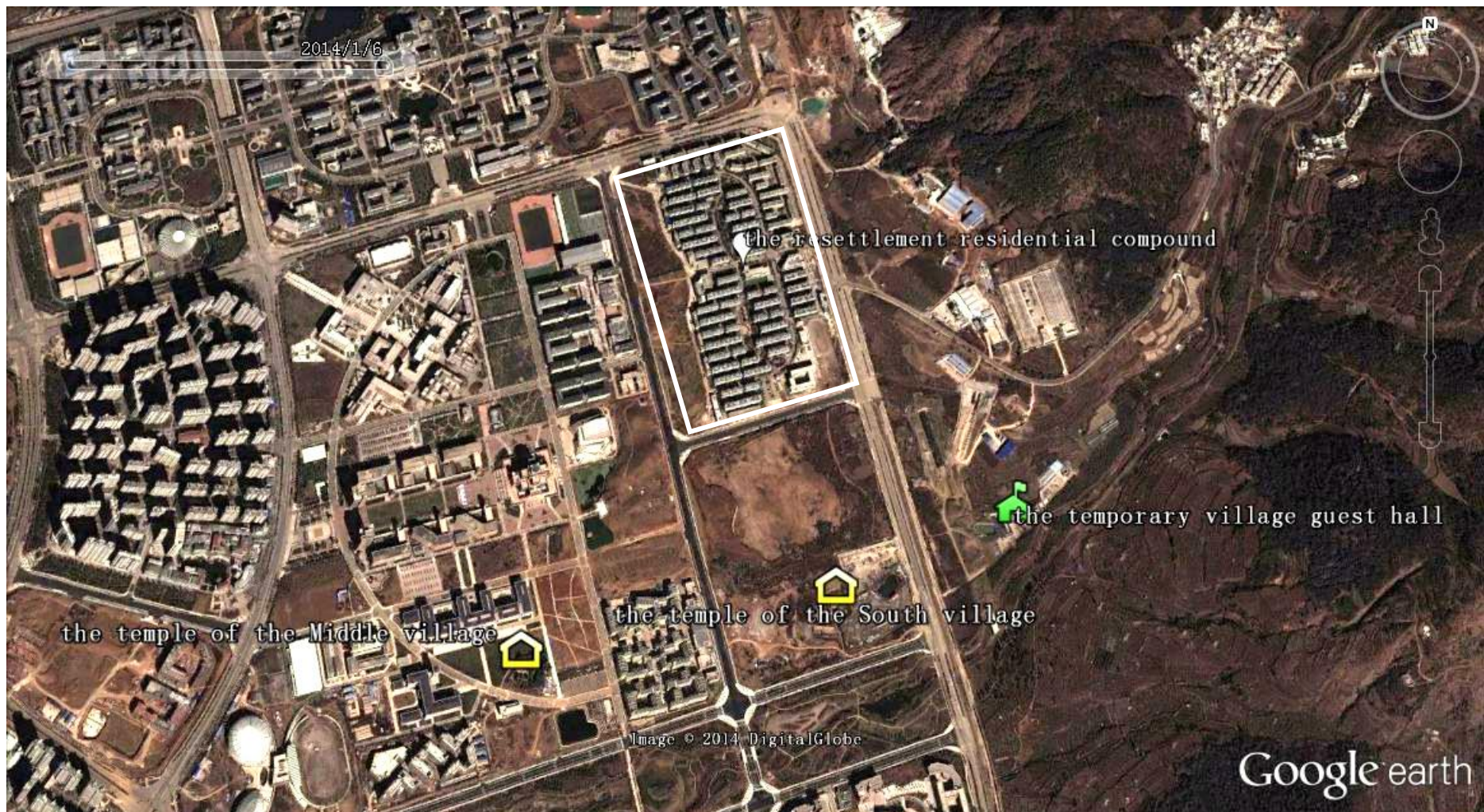


Figure 3. The resettlement residential compound and the college town in 2014 (Google Earth, January 6th 2014)

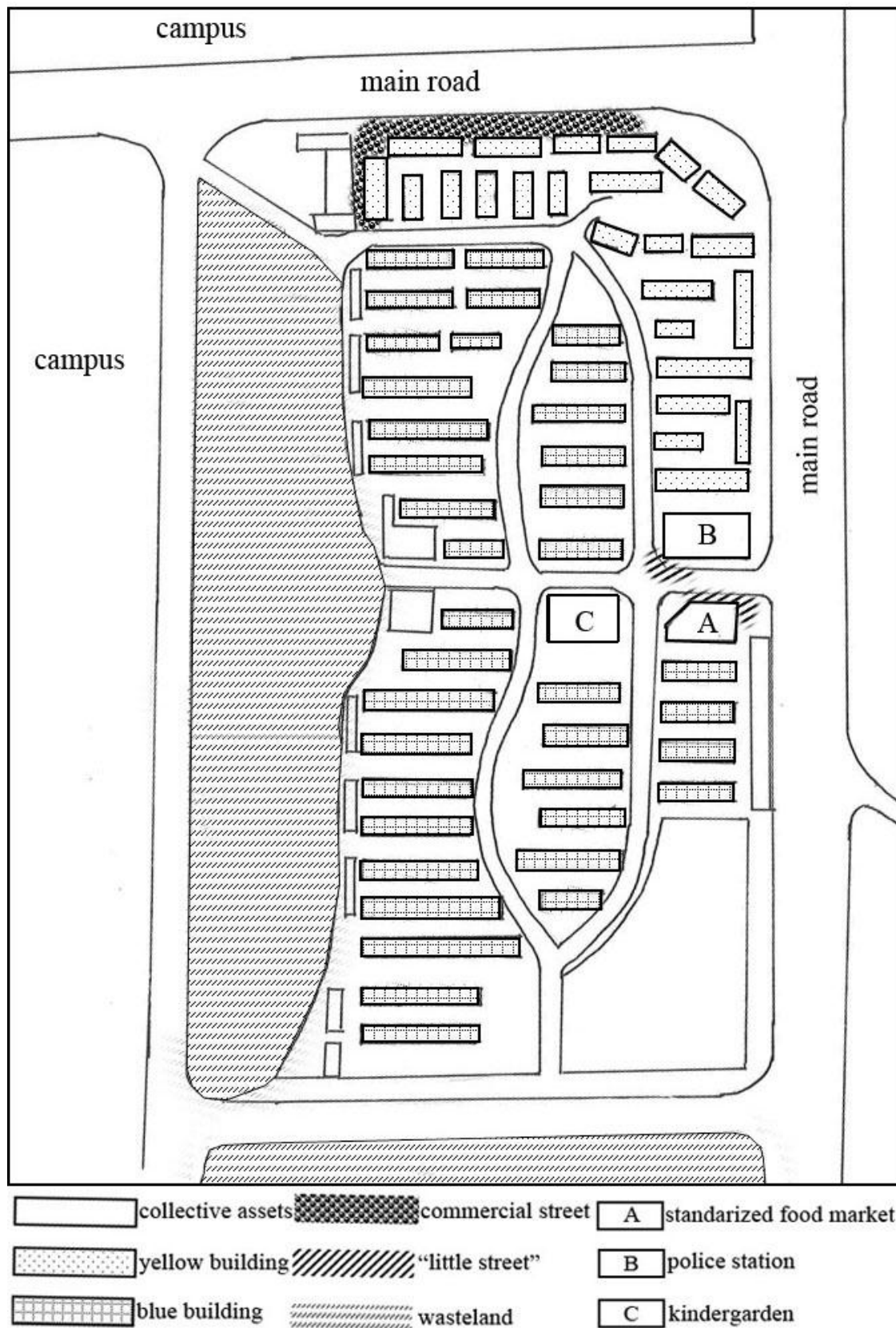


Figure 4. The sketch map of the resettlement residential compound

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