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To cite this article: Zeng Weihe (2020) The Social Governance Community in Transforming Neighborhoods: A Spatial Reconstruction Perspective, Social Sciences in China, 41:3, 173-198, DOI: [10.1080/02529203.2020.1807093](https://doi.org/10.1080/02529203.2020.1807093)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02529203.2020.1807093>



Published online: 11 Sep 2020.



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## **The Social Governance Community in Transforming Neighborhoods: A Spatial Reconstruction Perspective**

Zeng Weihe

*College of Law and Political Science, Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology*

快速城市化和乡村振兴战略推动了转型社区的产生。基于空间的社会性嵌入行政性，提升治理性的空间多属性整合框架，对转型社区社会治理共同体进行类型学的理论概化，划分为散建社区社会治理共同体、拆建社区社会治理共同体、移建社区社会治理共同体、集建社区社会治理共同体四种基本类型。转型社区社会治理共同体生成于空间重构与生产的再造过程之中，在空间重构阶段，空间行政性发挥功能，形成差异化治理空间特征；空间社会性发挥功能，形成松散关联网络、多元组合网络、紧密利益网络、高度关联网络四种社会治理共同体社会关系网络。在空间生产阶段，空间社会性嵌入治理性发挥功能，实现了自上而下行政控制和自下而上居民自治的治理空间融合，生成了“管控—浮治”、“指导—议治”、“扶持—联治”、“引领—民治”四种行政调适自治的社会治理共同体治理策略，本研究在理论上与已有的“控制的自治”，“行政消解自治”形成理论对话；在实践中对强化社区社会治理共同体的“民治导向”和补齐社区社会治理共同体的“能力短板”具有启示意义。

**关键词：**空间再造 转型社区 社会治理共同体 治理有效

The strategies of rapid urbanization and rural revitalization have fostered the emergence of transforming neighborhoods. Using a framework integrating multiple spatial attributes that embeds the administrative nature of space in its social nature and raises the level of its governance, this paper provides theoretical generalizations for the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods on the basis of a typology that divides them into four types: social governance communities of individually constructed neighborhoods, social governance communities in post-demolition constructed neighborhoods, social governance communities in immigrant constructed neighborhoods, and social governance communities in collectively constructed neighborhoods. Social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods emerge in the course of spatial reconstruction and redevelopment of production. At the stage of space reconstruction, the administrative nature of space plays its part in developing differentiated spatial governance features, while the social nature of space takes effect through the establishment of four types of social governance community social networks: the loosely connected network, the multiple components network, the close

interest network and the highly associated network. At the stage of space production, the social nature of space is embedded in governance and takes effect through the integration of top-down administrative control and bottom-up resident autonomy. Consequently, we see the generation of four governance strategies of administration that adjust the autonomy of social governance communities: “control—superficial governance,” “guidance—deliberative governance,” “support—collaborative governance,” and “leading—governance by the people.” In terms of theory, this study conducts a theoretical dialogue with the existing “controlled autonomy” and “autonomy with administrative elimination,” and in terms of practice, it has implications for strengthening popular rule by neighborhood social governance communities and filling the ability gap in such communities.

**Keywords:** spatial reconstruction, transforming neighborhood, social governance community, governance effectiveness

The transforming neighborhood is a form of community and a unit of social governance as opposed to the traditional village form. Since reform and opening up, China has urbanized rapidly and has implemented a strategy of rural revitalization. At the same time, it has launched a number of “regeneration campaigns” to rebuild the social governance community of transforming neighborhoods, including rebuilding “city villages,” undertaking eco-migration, relocating impoverished residents, arranging resettlement, and collectively constructing residential housing. On the one hand, spatial risk and governance issues have emerged in the course of the spatial reconstruction of transforming neighborhoods, posing governance challenges and giving rise to the “community dilemma” in neighborhood governance. The fact that traditional public space has disappeared in the reconstruction has led to the disintegration of village social networks, the fragmentation of community memory, the elimination of social order and the reduction of governance ability, raising the question of how the social governance community can be rapidly rebuilt through spatial reconstruction. On the other hand, some transforming neighborhoods have developed striking practical forms of grassroots social governance communities through spatial reconstruction. This article uses a cross-case study of micro-evidence to provide a systematic analysis of the social networks and governance strategies of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods. We summarize this practical experience with a view to facilitating overall rural revitalization.

## **I. Spatial Reconstruction and Framework of Analysis**

“Space” is a fundamental concept in the sociology of space. The classical sociologists, including Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Georg Simmel and Max Weber, have carried out research on space to some extent. Simmel pioneered studies of social space and spatial ordering, dividing space into space in the physical sense and space seen in the light of spiritual interaction and clearly stating that space has strong sociation: its various parts are separated

and summed up in its spiritual aspects, and hence it has social significance.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, the sociological study of space went through a long period of quiescence until the 1970s, when Neo-Marxist scholars like Lefebvre, Harvey, Castells and Soja reopened the spatial dimension of sociological research. Lefebvre's "production of space," in particular, introduced Western sociological research to an "age of space." He regards space as a special sort of social practice, emphasizing that it is "a social reality—that is to say, a set of relationships and forms... It should account for representational spaces and representations of space, but above all for their interrelationships and their links with social practice."<sup>2</sup>

Spatial reconstruction is the process in which spatial attributes function. Research abroad has focused on the sociation, politics and organization of space and other single-attribute subdivisions. Firstly, space has a social nature. Putting space production at the heart of social space research, Lefebvre proposed the well-known "dialectical trinity" of space production, or the trinity of spatial practice, representations of space and representational space. On this foundation, he put forward the logic of space production: each society produces its own space, social space is the configuration of social relations, and space also reproduces itself. Space produces both social relations and social order; it encompasses the production of things, whose coexistence contains their interrelationships and functions and covers their (relative) interactive order and (relative) disorder. Space implies a kind of order; it is the result of a series of operations.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, space is political in nature; it is the place where politics dwells. Spatial policy "would attempt to unite the appropriation of time and space by the users, the individuals, and the groups." And this kind of appropriation of space would combine with the highest level of socioeconomic organization. Access to urban rights means establishing or reestablishing a unity of time and space, a union that replaces segmentation.<sup>4</sup> To eliminate spatial inequality and realize spatial justice, a degree of spatial practice is required. "The post-metropolitan transition itself has created a significantly altered context for the struggles to achieve greater social and spatial equality and justice."<sup>5</sup> Thirdly, space is organizational. Tilly has proposed the polity and mobilization models, holding that the state is an active actor and will suppress or facilitate challengers as its own interests require. He argued that the production of space is a kind of social construction, or a seamless process combining "organization" with "dynamism."<sup>6</sup> These studies show that space reconstruction comprises the two stages of space reconstruction and space production, with the latter taking the reproduction of social relations as its core content. The exercise of the social, political and organizational functions of space have given rise to the varying governance communities of urban neighborhoods that maintain spatial order and promote spatial justice.

1 Georg Simmel, *Sociology: Investigations on the Forms of Sociation*, p. 460.

2 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 116.

3 Liu Shaojie, *Analysis of Western Spatial Sociology Theory*, p. 262.

4 Henri Lefebvre, *Space and Politics*, pp. 14-45.

5 Edward Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*, p. 368.

6 Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, pp. 53-56.

The multiple attributes of space and the reconstruction of space through the exercise of its functions facilitate the transformation of traditional villages and the formation of transforming social governance communities. A number of in-depth and innovative findings on the reconstruction of community space have been produced in China, but they lack a compound analytical framework, being primarily linear and focusing only on either the social, administrative or governance nature of space. The first category of research covers the social nature of space and the spatial reconstruction of social relations, a subject mainly seen in sociologists' research on the end of villages and their reconstruction. Li Peilin considers that "the end of the village" is manifested not only in the spatial reconstruction of "the village in the city" and urbanization, but, more importantly, he says that "it implies the disintegration of the village social network."<sup>7</sup> Based on the case study analyzing a Hui ethnic tourism community, Sun Jiuxia believes that space production centers on the production and reproduction of social relations; she presents the process of social space production in ethnic tourism communities as a process of adjoining, separation, overlapping and integration of production space and living space. In the course of this process, the production and reproduction of the social relations of community space occur at multiple levels and among multiple actors.<sup>8</sup> Zhang Zhen *et al.* analyzed the formation of alienated spatial relations among urban communities and put forward the idea of restructuring community relations by "separating construction from management."<sup>9</sup> The second category of research deals with the administrative nature of space and space administrative control and governance strategies, focusing on administrative control in urbanization. Some scholars have proposed an interpretive model of "autonomy under administrative control," which they see as a semi-administrative village governance model. With the acceleration of the project-based management mechanism, the village committee serves as the extension of the grassroots government hierarchy.<sup>10</sup> Other researchers suggest a rural governance framework of "autonomy with administrative elimination," noting that administrative power is the basis for eliminating the practice of village autonomy, and that village cadres are now neither "agents" of state power nor "protectors" of village governance.<sup>11</sup> In "controlled autonomy," the relationship between the grassroots government and the village committee is one of control and dependence, and in "autonomy with administrative elimination," the grassroots

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7 Li Peilin, *Tremendous Changes: The End of the Village—A Study of Villages in the Center of Guangzhou City*, p. 143.

8 Sun Jiuxia and Zhang Shiqin, "Social Space Production in Ethnic Tourism Communities—A Case Study of the Hui Community in Sanya, Hainan," pp. 68-77.

9 Zhang Zhen and Yang Jianke, "Alienation of Spatial Relations in Urban Communities: Formation and Governance Mechanisms—From the Perspective of Space Production," pp. 82-88.

10 Wang Lihui, "Controlled Autonomy: Formation Mechanism and Internal Dilemmas of Semi-administrative Governance at the Village Level—Against the Background of the Integrated Development of Urban and Rural Areas," pp. 57-68.

11 Zhao Xiaofeng, "Autonomy with Administrative Elimination: A Perspective on Understanding the Rural Governance Crisis before and after Tax Reform," pp. 73-78.

government and the village committee are likewise in opposition. Scholars tend to explore governance strategies in terms of power relationships. On the basis of the governance challenge posed by changes in community space in the course of “turning villages into urban centers,” Wu Ying has suggested a public space governance strategy that combines top-down construction logic with bottom-up demand logic.<sup>12</sup> In their case study of the power situation of urban communities with commodified housing, Sun Xiaoyi *et al.* have proposed combining community governance rules with action on property owners’ rights protection to rebuild a governable neighborhood space.<sup>13</sup> The third category of research, dealing with the governance of space and its effectiveness, attaches more importance to the latter. On the basis of an analysis of rural governance in practice, Lu Dewen observes that the reconstruction of rural governance space is a relatively independent and complete policy system, and the effectiveness of rural governance comes from the effective response to governance needs of the institutional space of space reproduction.<sup>14</sup> Wu Xiaolin analyzes the spatial risks, safety risks and governance risks of space production in large communities, holding that the imbalance of rights in urban areas is the underlying cause of urban problems and that the effectiveness of urban governance lies in ensuring the city rights of community residents through spatial reconstruction.<sup>15</sup> The three types of research discussed above all proceed from a single spatial attribute and function to build a governable social governance community. However, they do not research the integrated interactions of multiple attributes.

To sum up, scholars inside and outside China have conducted quite adequate research on the attributes and functions of space in the reconstruction of neighborhood social governance communities. However, there are some shortcomings. Firstly, their research horizon has a unitary perspective. Such an approach makes it hard to give a full explanation of the complex issues in space governance, but often makes it easy to be trapped into static mechanical analysis and dispersed case interpretations. Secondly, this approach fragments the relationship between spatial attributes. These studies lack in-depth research on the relationship between the different attributes of space and their interactive function in the construction of the neighborhood social governance community; moreover, they do not properly explain the generative mechanism and operational logic of such communities. Thirdly, their research methodology has been confined to static analysis of individual cases, mainly dealing with the governance challenges and countermeasures encountered in

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12 Wu Ying, “Governance Strategy in Spatial Change: The Governance Transformation of Grassroots Community in the Process of ‘Turning Villages into Urban Centers,’” pp. 94-116.

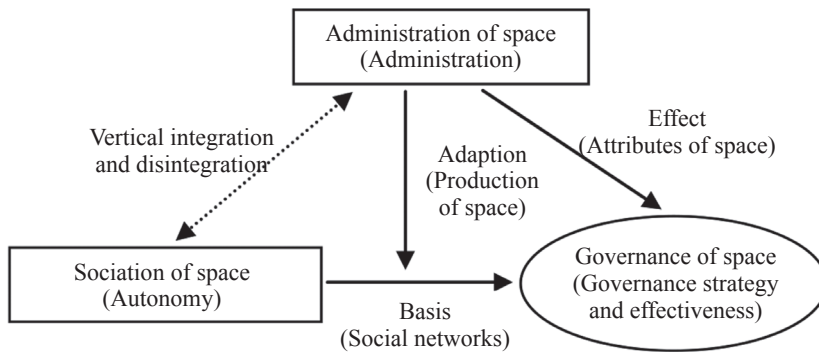
13 Sun Xiaoyi *et al.*, “Rebuilding a Governable Neighborhood Space: An Analysis from the Perspective of Space Production,” p. 118.

14 Lü Dewen, “Rural Governance Space Reconstruction and Its Effectiveness: An Analysis of Rural Governance Practice in W Town,” p. 96.

15 Wu Xiaolin, “The City Within a City: Space Production and Governance Risks of Large Communities,” pp. 137-143.

neighborhood spatial reconstruction, such as “turning villages into urban communities,” and “migrant relocation,” but not providing any typological cross-case analysis. Lastly, they do not have a comprehensive analytical framework suited to Chinese circumstances. They generally draw on Lefebvre’s space production theory and Suja’s space justice theory, but fail to explain the special governance challenges and the interaction between different actors in community space reconstruction in China, which does not have the Western political balance of power or games between organized interest groups. For these reasons, given the institutional context of neighborhood spatial reconstruction in China, we start from a compound perspective in which space sociation is embedded in administration and improves governance, thus avoiding the linear thinking found in a single type of case and conducting cross-case and organizational typological analysis that enables us to establish a framework integrating multiple attributes of space for the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Framework Integrating Multiple Attributes of Space for Social Governance Communities in Transforming Neighborhoods



Firstly, social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods are a compound of the multi-attribute integration and functioning of space following reconstruction of the traditional village space; it is a transitional community form and social governance unit.

Secondly, the administrative character of space performs the function of administrative control, shaping the differentiated characteristics of community space and interacting with the social connections of sociation to generate four basic types of communities: the social governance community of individually constructed neighborhoods, the social governance community of neighborhood construction following demolition, the social governance community of immigrant constructed neighborhoods and the social governance community of collectively constructed neighborhoods. The administrative nature of space is in fact the dominant actors’ response strategy for handling spatial contradictions. It is primarily manifested in the administrative control of society by administrative forces under

government plans for spatial governance, and embodies the state logic of top-down spatial governance.

Thirdly, the sociation of space has the function of social connection, and generates the social networks of the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods. These basically comprise loosely connected networks, multiple components networks, close interest networks and highly associated networks. Different types of networks have different capacity for community autonomy, and the intensity of the relationship is proportional to the community's governance capacity. Sociation is the bedrock of the social governance community of transforming neighborhoods, and its functions embody the logic of residents' bottom-up autonomy. This section of the paper focuses on horizontal interaction among community actors.

Fourthly, the fact that the sociation of space is embedded in its administrative nature promotes the governance character of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods, thus enhancing governance effectiveness. Governance represents an optimal strategic combination that performs the functions of interaction and cooperation. Four major strategies are carried out in social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods: "control—superficial governance," "guidance—deliberative governance," "support—collaborative governance," and "leading—governance by the people." This section focuses on the vertical interaction and cooperation between grassroots government and autonomous mass organizations.

Lastly, the administrative character of space and its social nature also interact with each other. Some scholars have summed this up as the production of community space with a "vertical integration and disintegration trajectory," where the relationship between the government and the community is composed of the integration and disintegration of various spatial strategies including compromise, struggle, cooperation and competition.<sup>16</sup> Due to space limitations and the ordering of the content, the present paper will only analyze cooperation between the higher and lower levels.

We use a framework that integrates multiple attributes of space and community in a micro-empirical cross-case study. The data are derived from a field survey of ten transforming neighborhoods in Nanjing, Guangzhou, Qianxinan Prefecture in Guizhou and Tanghe County in Henan during 2016-2019. The cases were selected primarily for their representative nature, in conjunction with their geographical distribution and data availability. The data include government work reports, online reports, local archives, village records and in-depth interviews. In addition, we reviewed and referenced the existing typical case studies of the construction of transforming neighborhoods. The transforming neighborhoods surveyed have been coded for convenience (see Table 1).

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16 Huang Xiaoxing, "'The Trajectory of Up-Down-Fragmentation-Integration': The Producing of Community Space," pp. 199-220.



Table 1 Surveyed Transforming Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Name and Code	Spatial Characteristics
Individually constructed neighborhood	KL and LJ in Guangzhou	Well-known “village in the city”
Post-demolition constructed neighborhood	YF and FT in Nanjing	Typical post-demolition resettlement neighborhoods resettling several villagers groups simultaneously
Immigrant constructed neighborhood	YA and XAC in Qianxinan Prefecture (Guizhou); SHM and LJ in Tanghe County (Henan)	Typical poverty reduction relocated neighborhoods; neighborhoods relocated for building medium- and large-sized reservoirs
Collectively constructed neighborhood	HX in Jiangyin (Jiangsu); WJZ in Nanjing	Neighborhood reconstructed on the site of the original large village; transforming neighborhood reconstructed on the urban land bought by the large village

## II. Spatial Characteristics and Basic Types

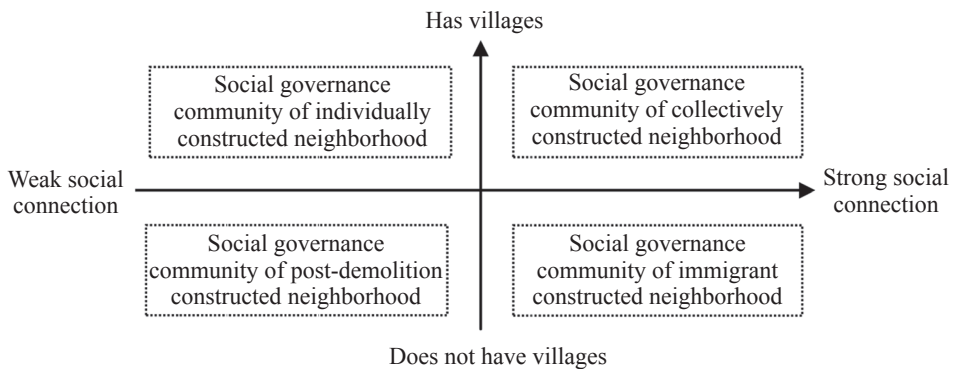
The spatially reconstructed transforming neighborhood has two spatial characteristics. The first is the administrative transformation of physical space. This spatial reconstruction bears the stamp of administrative dominance, demonstrating the process of administrative control whereby the government effectively implements policy by using its administrative powers in urbanization under state spatial planning. In the course of this process, some villages are relocated, among them “post-demolition constructed neighborhoods” and “immigrant constructed neighborhoods” for the purpose of poverty reduction or avoidance of natural disasters. These are neighborhoods without villages, since the original villages no longer exist, and their spatial memory has been totally dislodged. Other villages have not undergone relocation; in their case, the original sites have been re-planned and transformed, as in the case of HX neighborhood. Others again, while maintaining the original (old) sites, villages have bought land and built new villages in an urban area, like the WJZ neighborhood. These are neighborhoods with villages, since the original village space is still maintained as an “object” space.

The second spatial feature of the transforming neighborhood is the changes in connections in social space. Following spatial reconstruction, the structure of residents’ groups in the transforming neighborhood and their social connections with the original neighborhood, such as memory and cultural identity, have changed. Both the individually constructed neighborhood and the post-demolition constructed neighborhood are heterogeneous as the former attracts a large outside population while the latter settles more than one villagers’ group simultaneously; as a result, the social connection in such social governance

communities is relatively weak. On the other hand, both the migrant constructed and the collectively constructed neighborhoods are homogeneous, since the former is settled as a whole while in the latter the villagers' structure remains unchanged; consequently, the social connection in such communities is relatively strong.

Some studies have shown that villagers' spatial relocation and social connections have an important influence on the governance order of the transforming neighborhood. Firstly, the spatial relocation of villages affects the basic situation of community governance and "the full integration of village space with rural neighborhood memory shapes a unique local order."<sup>17</sup> Secondly, the social connection of the village affects the formation of the endogenous neighborhood order and serves as the foundation of its governance.<sup>18</sup> On this basis, we carried out typological analysis along the dimensions of "whether the original village was retained" and "strength of social connection" to summarize the four ideal types of the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Basic Types of Social Governance Communities of Transforming Neighborhoods



### 1. *The social governance community of individually constructed neighborhoods*

This is a "village in the city" community that was reconstructed on the original site after the arable land of the traditional village had been partly or wholly requisitioned in the course of urbanization. Its basic feature is that it is neither urban nor rural or both urban and rural. It was built spontaneously by the villagers and has developed little by little; no unified planning appeared in the course of its spatial reconstruction. Its spatial characteristics are spontaneous housing construction; the search for profit from the use of space; and complex population flows. Because urban planning has lagged and because the site is "in the middle of the city," its land has become a scarce resource, and collecting housing rentals and contracting out land serve as the major income sources. Driven by self-interest, the villagers build bigger and

17 Yang Xueyun, "Space Transfer, Memory Fracture and Order Reconstruction," pp. 111-115.

18 He Xuefeng and Tong Zhihui, "Social Connection in Villages: The Social Basis of Village Order," pp. 124-134.

better houses of their own, and even erect illegal buildings, leaving scenes like “handshaking buildings” and “just a thin strip of sky.” Accordingly, many management problems are associated with the use of land, such as illegal renting, reselling and transferring of ownership. The fact that the floating population exceeds the native population, the complex demographic structure, the rapid population mobility and tricky security management are among the noticeable features of such a community.

### *2. Social governance communities in post-demolition constructed neighborhoods*

The spatial design of this type of neighborhood is basically based on the common man, on convenience and on practicability. Although there are many reasons, such as urban expansion, new city development and land transfer, for “turning villages into urban communities” after demolition, their spatial characteristics are standardized at a low level in terms of the spatial narrative: in order to maximize use of the construction land quota, neighborhoods constructed on a demolished site usually build several standardized high-density, high-rise apartment blocks to resettle a large number of villagers who were moved due to demolitions. Apart from the apartments, all the outdoor space is public neighborhood space, with a distinct division between public and private space. For instance, the green setting becomes public space and can no longer serve as the production unit of the traditional village. Traditional public space that was once the vehicle of collective memory and historical accumulation, such as millstones, grain-drying grounds and opera stages has disappeared from traditional villages and been replaced by simplified urban public facilities to meet residents’ basic living needs: gyms, reading rooms and community squares.<sup>19</sup>

### *3. Social governance communities in immigrant constructed neighborhoods*

This includes the new communities constructed for migrants resettled due to poverty reduction, environment protection, natural disasters, etc. Its structural spatial features are standardization and utility. Reducing poverty by relocating people has been carried out swiftly. According to the Programme of Poverty Alleviation Through Relocation during the 13th Five-Year Plan, China relocated ten million people during this period. Communities with centralized relocation and resettlement share some basic practices in spatial reconstruction, including acting according to the resources they have, guaranteeing the basics, strictly controlling the size of resettlement housing, simultaneously providing the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities, and meeting the basic production and living needs of the targets of relocation. Construction is based on distinctive resources and local production and ways of life, and the living environment is improved by guiding the targets of relocation from their impoverished living conditions to collective resettlement in a nearby neighborhood.

### *4. Social governance communities in collectively constructed neighborhoods*

This generally refers to the “super-villages” in the eastern coastal areas which, relying on their strong collective economy, are built as “beautiful villages” on the sites of the original

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19 Wu Ying, “Governance Strategy in Spatial Change: The Governance Transformation of Grassroots Communities in the Process of ‘Turning Villages into Urban Centers,’” pp. 94-116.

villages or as commercial housing demonstration communities in the urban areas. Their spatial features are high-end and comfortable, manifested in the rational planning of their spatial layout and their pursuit of top quality. In addition to the asphalt road to the village, wide driveways and green pastoral landscape with a rural air, each family lives in a large house in a fresh and quiet environment. For example, the WJZ community, which has a total of forty villa-type apartment blocks of different styles, was established on purchased urban land. Public facilities including a road and a mansion beside the lake were built successively, demonstrating the village characteristics of “pastoral scenery, rural tastes and family life.”

### III. Spatial Reconstruction: The Formation of Social Networks

Spatial reconstruction has fundamentally transformed traditional villages into social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods. At the spatial reconstruction stage, the four types of community share some common characteristics. Firstly, there are transforming neighborhoods that have lost some village elements. The village is not only a physical space and governance unit, but also a space for living and production composed of many elements. Spatial reconstruction has wrought a fundamental transformation in the spatial elements of traditional villages, disintegrating the village space and beginning to urbanize the villagers’ living space, thus developing a transforming neighborhood from which the “village” has been lost.<sup>20</sup> Although physical village space still exists in social governance communities in both individually and collectively constructed neighborhoods, they have lost some village elements and experienced changes in their living and production space; on the other hand, in social governance communities in migrant constructed and post-demolition constructed neighborhoods, the displacement of physical space has meant that all elements of their physical space are lost and the elements of social space are fractured. Secondly, new social structures and community governance systems have emerged. Following the disappearance of the public space of the traditional village and the disintegration of public order, the public space of the transforming community changes from “rural” to “urban.” Consequently, the social network begins to be reconstructed, the community order begins to be rebuilt, and villagers become townspeople in various degrees. The reconstructed transforming community is no longer a village integrating production space and living space, but a transitional neighborhood, a site of living and a social governance unit. The production function of the village disappears, and the green scenery becomes a landscape embodying “urban spirit” rather than a factor of production.

The spatial reconstruction of transforming neighborhoods is a process through which a new collective memory, community identity and community order are generated, or where the social networks of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods are

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20 Wen Jun and Wu Yuefei, “Villages That Lost ‘Villagers’: Transformation of Traditional Villages and Their Rural Reflection: Based on the Experience Study of 15 Typical Villages,” p. 27.

recreated. The difference in typological spatial characteristics generates four very distinct types of social networks in social governance communities.

*1. The loosely connected network in social governance communities in individually constructed neighborhoods*

Social networks in such communities are relatively complex. They can be roughly divided into the social networks of the registered population (those with *hukou*) and the social networks of the floating population (without *hukou*). Registered villagers, who are much fewer than the floating population, share the same collective village memory and have a strong community identity and formal residency status. They enjoy the dividends of the collective village economy, and the rent from their land means they have everything they need for a comfortable life. For instance, the KL and LJ communities, which have established stable linkages through thirteen economic cooperatives, have only 3,300 plus shareholders as compared with a floating population of more than 150,000. However, the social networks of social governance communities composed of “natives” are strongly exclusionist, and the natives, who are in possession of the scarce resources of land and housing, constitute the upper level of the transforming community. In the second kind of social network—that composed of the floating population—the large population, heterogeneity of demographic structure and rapid mobility endow the networks with the characteristics of complexity, dispersion and diversification. These can be roughly divided into the social networks of fixed occupations (small business, manufacturing, services, etc.) and those of dispersed occupations. The former are “mobile social networks,” constituted not only by the interpersonal chain of relationships formed in the course of mobility and migration, but also by social sub-networks that form the basis of survival and development.<sup>21</sup> There is a high internal homogeneity within this population, who largely come from the same native place, are fellow workers, etc. Their community identity is weak and their integration into the community is a long process. The group whose livelihood is dispersed consists mainly of construction workers, mobile stallholders, etc.; these feature greater mobility and lower community identity.

*2. The multiple component network in social governance communities of post-demolition constructed neighborhoods*

The intention of policy planners was that the space for such communities would be designed so as to expand land for urban construction and reduce the per capita living area of the rural population so as to gain maximum benefit at the least cost. Unlike individually constructed neighborhoods, which are composed of all the remaining villagers and large numbers of migrants, the residents of post-demolition constructed neighborhoods generally come from several different groups of relocated villagers, with practically no outsiders and only a small number of tenants. Due to this residential structure, such communities are made up of small sub-groups of people who know each other within groups of strangers who are

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21 Wang Chunguang, “Mobile Social Networks: How Wenzhou People Act in Paris and Beijing,” pp. 109-123.

distant from one another. The fact that these groups of villagers are not familiar with each other leads to the existence of many separate social networks. The villagers have their own collective memory and identity, but find it hard to forge a shared identity with their current community overnight; even if they do have a shared identity, it is not strong, as most of the villagers are more or less reluctant to leave their old village homes. Because these communities consist of closed and stacked apartments instead of open individual courtyards, they minimize neighborhood interaction and interpersonal communication, so the formation of a unified internal social network is a long process. For example, there are more than 8,000 residents in the FT community, most of whom are resettled people from fifty villager groups in Changlu Street (currently merged into the Zhongxin, Pudong, Liujia, and Luying communities), four villager groups in the Gongnong and Heping communities and one villager group in the Xichangmen district. Consequently, the villagers from different villages constitute a heterogeneous neighborhood of “acquaintance societies.”

*3. The close interest network in the social governance communities of immigrant constructed neighborhoods*

Unlike post-demolition constructed communities, which only consider residential space, the design of immigrant constructed communities gives comprehensive consideration to residential and livelihood space. The centralized resettlement mode allows this type of social governance community to maintain quite a good social network, though the network of economic life needs to be rebuilt and establishing the social networks embedded therein is a slow process. In the course of adapting to resettlement living habits, customs, production and work, migrant groups who have faced common difficulties and encounters and who possess closely connected common interest claims pursue those claims. This stimulates their interest in participating in the public affairs of the neighborhood, resulting in the formation of a mutually beneficial network of interchanges of close interests and a residents’ union based on common interests. This kind of close interest network is characterized by spontaneity and de-administration; it involves the pursuit of common interests aimed at solving various problems in the migrants’ lives and a flexible community of close interests spontaneously developed within the remit of law and policy, in sharp contrast with the “micro-autonomy” networks created in community grassroots governance units.<sup>22</sup> The XAC community was established by relocating the entire village and maintains their neighborhood relationship of “leaving the farmland but taking home with me” by naming their new site after their original village location and calling each apartment block after the original villages, groups and landscapes that are so deeply engraved in their memories. To solve the common employment difficulties faced by the residents, the community self-governance organization has set up a human resources service company to promote employment with industrial development and business

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22 Lu Xianying, “The Autonomy of a Close Community Network of Common Interests as Another Way of Thinking about Grassroots Community Governance: The Enlightenment from the Innovative Effect of Social Governance Mechanism in New Resettlement Villages in H Province,” pp. 62-72.

startups, thus building up a strong employment platform and a social network that supports the startups.

*4. The highly associated networks of social governance communities in collectively constructed neighborhoods*

This type is a transforming neighborhood social governance community model. Its social network is characterized by having “capable people” at the helm, coordination by the management team, and villager participation. “Governing by capable people” is a prominent feature of the good self-governance capacity of the social governance communities of collectively constructed neighborhoods. For example, the HX community is headed by Secretary Wu (吴) and his son, and the WJZ community by Secretary Wu (武). Since both are deputies to the National People’s Congress and National Model Workers, they are endowed with an exceptional capacity for village governance and economic management. In addition, they both serve as the chair of their villages’ group corporation, and are respected by the villagers, all of whom respond as one to their calls. “Governing by capable people” does not mean showing off one’s ability; rather, such “capable people” need to establish a well-structured leadership that relies on their prestige in the clan and among other leaders of the village. Under the leadership of “capable Party Secretaries” and other leaders, the village rules and regulations formed through democratic consultation and centralized decision-making often act as psychological contracts strictly observed by the villagers. Another feature of highly associated networks in this social governance community of collectively constructed neighborhoods is that it boasts a social security system centered on village household registration, which offers registered villagers all kinds of welfare from when their children start school up to aged care. They have a highly superior sense of collective identity and happy memories of their village. Joint construction, joint governance and joint sharing meet here.

#### **IV. Production of Space: Governance Strategies in Autonomous Administrative Adaptation**

The production of space is the reproduction of social relations. It moves from “objects in space” to the production process of space itself.<sup>23</sup> The production of space in the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods demonstrates the spatial governance strategy of integrating top-down administrative control with bottom-up resident autonomy. On the one hand, driven by the strategy of rapid urbanization and rural revitalization, the spatial reconstruction of such communities embodies a spatial governance logic dominated by administrative forces. Although the social governance communities in individually constructed neighborhoods are built spontaneously by villagers, the government’s old-town renovation policy plays a centralized planning and rectification role. The social governance communities of both post-demolition constructed neighborhoods and immigrant

23 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 33-36.

constructed neighborhoods are both planned and built by the local government, and the villagers are also relocated in an orderly fashion by the local government. Though the social governance communities of collectively constructed neighborhoods are established by the village itself relying on the collective economy and the forces of the villagers, the national rural revitalization policy gives important guidance in this regard, and its standards of construction give a clear demonstration of the overall requirements of beautiful villages and comprehensive revitalization. On the other hand, the process of constructing the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods also reflects the spatial narrative of villager autonomy. In the initial stage of space production, the four types of social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods already had or had newly set up autonomous mass organizations to deal with community affairs. At the same time, social organizations and other consultative and co-governance platforms for villager participation in the governance of community affairs, like the “Party-Masses Joint Committee” and “Citizens’ Council” have been created. The vertical integration of governance space realizes the coordination between government and society and the benign interaction of grassroots government and autonomous mass organizations. Therefore, in the social governance structure of social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods, a number of actors including the grassroots government, the Party branch committee and the resident/villager committee, social organizations and the masses constitute social governance networks at various levels. Here the interactions between the government, the Party branch committee and the resident/villager committee play a central role, dominating the actual operation of the social governance community. The governance strategy of “autonomous administrative adaptation” has been developed in the interaction between the grassroots government and the autonomous mass organizations, with the government choosing appropriate administrative adaptation methods to enhance governance effectiveness in line with the specific circumstances of resident self-governance.

*1. Social governance communities in individually constructed neighborhoods: “control—superficial governance”*

The collective economic organizations in social governance communities of individually constructed neighborhoods generally adopt the structure of stock companies. The community thus weakens the autonomous functions of autonomous mass organizations such as the residents’ committee; it regards the interests of the collective economy as the most important and sees its major responsibility as increasing the income of shareholders and villagers. This leads to a profit-oriented community that depends on collective economic dividends and housing rentals. In this way, the residents’ committee is “suspended” above the society of the transforming community, resulting in misdirected governance by autonomous mass organizations and a governance state of “semi-paralysis.”<sup>24</sup> For example, the streets and alleys

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24 Zhou Feizhou, “Rural Fee Reform and the Changing Relationship between State and Peasant,” p. 36.



of the KL community are crammed with people, with bicycles left lying around, electric bicycles tearing past, people crossing against the lights and constant breaches of orderly traffic operation. All kinds of public security incidents keep happening, even criminal cases that would make your hair stand on end. Under the “superficial governance” regime, the chaos and disorder of spatial reconstruction in such neighborhoods means that its social network loosens and fractures; its complexity makes it unintelligible, and it can easily degenerate into an urban slum and a dead end for the maintenance of social order, or even an area with a high incidence of public security cases.

“Superficial governance” is more inclusive of the migrant population and the social governance problems they cause. It complements grassroots government control, but also contains certain tensions. On the one hand, government control provides “superficial governance” with a stable developmental environment, acting as a mechanism that maintains the village collective’s sustainable development. Strong government control is therefore absolutely necessary. Strengthening the police and having more patrols is a commonly seen method of achieving this goal. An administration-led model of networked social governance has met with favor, with grid workers entering flats and houses to register information on the floating population on a regular basis so as to identify suspicious persons and strengthen control. This kind of top-down authoritative control is not only legitimate but also effective for the “superficial governance” of the social governance communities of individually constructed neighborhoods. However, it will not only lead to high governance costs due to information asymmetry, but may also result in problems such as the difficulty of effectively protecting the public interest due to the failure to fit people’s preferences to their livelihood requirements. Blindly implementing an authority model of controlling governance “may damage social vitality and inhibit and overdraw on the social creativity of society.”<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, government control regulates the governance of individually constructed communities, which to some extent affects the structure of benefits under the “superficial governance” regime and may lead, for example, to rent reductions, etc. This means that control is an abnormal rather than a normal form of governance. The governance strategy of “control—superficial governance” lacks a strong internal governance body, and may well hollow out community governance. Consequently, community order has to be maintained by governmental control.

## 2. *Social governance communities in post-demolition constructed neighborhoods: “guidance—deliberative governance”*

Guidance is the legal means enjoined on grassroots governments for regulating autonomous mass organizations. According to the 2018 Organic Law of the Urban Residents Committee, under the operation of the system of resident autonomy, grassroots governments should “guide, support and help” the work of the residents’ committee, while the latter should

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25 Huang Jianhong and Gao Yuntian, “Building the Social Basis of ‘Chinese Governance’: Construction of Social Governance Communities in the New Era,” pp. 1-11.

assist the former in carrying out its work. In the post-demolition constructed neighborhood, contradictions are prone to arise among the residents about the use of space and property management. Specifically, issues that betoken a failing social order, such as putting up unauthorized buildings on public space, planting vegetables on public green land and homeowners' rights not being guaranteed have turned out to be major dilemmas for social governance. All this requires the guidance of grassroots governments in giving full play to the role of autonomous mass organizations and innovating the style and stimulating the vitality of community governance. In conjunction with the multiple components network of post-demolition constructed neighborhoods, democratic consultation is an effective way to innovate social governance in such neighborhoods. It can be an important channel for facilitating and standardizing the expression of people's claims, the coordination of their interests and the protection of their rights and interests.

Governance employing guided residents' deliberation turns to be an effective mechanism to deal with the contradictions within social governance communities of post-demolition constructed neighborhoods. The "harmonious demolition of illegal buildings" that occurred in the YF community's Yumin Jiayuan explored a path for the reconstruction of community order that integrated residents' deliberation with governance. In the early stage of spatial reconstruction, when a new community order was yet to be established, some households privately carried out illegal construction, including expanding their new apartments, digging basements and breaking walls down to set up shops. All this seriously affected residents' daily life and travel, posing great risks to safety. To solve the dilemma of having law enforcement officers repeatedly demolishing these structures and the residents repeatedly rebuilding them, the YF Community set up a "Party-Masses Joint Committee" under the guidance of the Sub-district Office. The community's Party branch committee mobilized Party members and the masses to deliberate and exchange views on the various effects of illegal construction on their quality of life and gradually came to an agreement on demolishing the unauthorized constructions. On this basis, the community staff gathered the residents' views, carried out extensive propaganda and implemented comprehensive measures. In the end, they successfully cleaned up seventy-eight illegal buildings that had disturbed residents' peace for a long time. The whole process was harmonious and peaceful, with the owners of the illegal constructions understanding the actions and the residents being satisfied. The "harmonious demolition" in the YF transforming neighborhood serves as a good example of implementation of the "guidance—deliberative governance" strategy, as a governance strategy in which the most critical links are government guidance and the masses' deliberation.

### *3. Social governance communities in immigrant constructed neighborhoods: "support—collaborative governance"*

Unlike the social governance communities of post-demolition constructed neighborhoods, social governance communities of immigrant constructed neighborhoods need to provide residents with livelihood space in addition to living space. The grassroots government is

responsible for organizing such neighborhoods for poverty alleviation and other purposes. Apart from the relocation project itself, the grassroots government is also in charge of employment support, children's admission to school, social security, community integration, etc. Furthermore, it must do a good job in implementing the subsidy policy and supporting land, finance and banking policies. For instance, under the guidance of the 2018 Measures for Managing New Urban Residence Permits in Qianxinan Prefecture (Trial) issued by the Party committee and government of Qianxinan Prefecture and the "1+13" policy system for new urban residents, the YA and the XAC communities managed to promote a governance innovation for "fast integration." Through the community police office, the YA community issued the villagers with new citizen residence permits which guarantee their legal rights and interests in employment, residence, etc. The change from "residence permits" to "new citizen residence permits" enhances the villagers' sense of identity with the community. The XAC Community takes its name from the lines "Where my heart is at rest, there I dwell," from the famous poet Su Shi's "Calming the Waves." This too has enhanced the collective identity of the migrants. Government support has effectively improved the governance ability of the social governance community, strengthening migrants' participation and their sense of satisfaction. As a result, the new citizens soon recognize the community as the place "where their hearts are at rest."

The government-supported social governance community in immigrant constructed neighborhoods is a kind of "practical logic of administrative society." On the one hand, it contains an active administrative logic, in that the government takes the initiative in performing the tasks of standardizing land use, planning space, raising funds, etc., in the construction of transforming neighborhoods, thereby demonstrating its omnipotence. On the other, it bears the administrative responsibility for the helpless appeals and dilemmas of the villagers in the course of demolition and resettlement, who attempt to protect their "rights" by seeking government solutions to their problems.<sup>26</sup> In immigrant constructed neighborhoods, villagers will fall to complaining once issues like delays in relocation planning and imperfect supporting policies arise, or if the supporting facilities for employment, social security, healthcare, education, etc., do not meet their basic requirements. A good number of petitioners will keep appealing to the government to solve the problem of the emergence of illegal activities in project implementation. An effective resolution to this dilemma is to build a linked governance community of close interests. By actively implementing the relevant regulations, such as the Guidelines for the Democratic Councils of Migrant Villages (Communities) and the Guidelines for the Civil Mediation Committee of Migrant Villages (Communities) in Henan, the SHM and LJ Communities set up Democratic Councils, Democratic Boards of Supervisors, Civil Coordination Committees, economic and social organizations, etc. These form a closely connected governance mechanism that deals jointly

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26 Wang Chunguang, "The Withdrawal of the Village' during Urbanization and the Practical Logic of the Administrative Polity," p. 15.

with the contradictions emerging in the early stage of relocation. Residents' participation forms a virtuous circle in which residents regularly participate in and deal with conflicts in the community; trivial matters stay within the group and more important ones stay within the village, thus effectively eliminating unlawful petitions and visits to higher authorities at the early stage of immigration.

*4. Social governance communities of collectively constructed neighborhoods: "leading—governance by the people"*

The leadership role is generally achieved through the political adjustment function of grassroots Party organizations. The community's Party branch committee should play a bridging role in the construction of transforming neighborhoods, carrying out the Party line, Party principles and the decisions of the Party organizations at higher levels on the one hand and at the same time discussing and deciding on the important problems of village socioeconomic development, with a view to maintaining the presence of the Party in each important community governance link. Under the leadership of the Party, the integration of the trio of autonomy, rule of law and rule by virtue, as well the joint action of the triad of community, social workers and social organizations has become the local wisdom accumulated in the practice of leading at the grassroots level. For example, Party Secretary Wu of the HX Community has summarized the Party-led experience of making the village strong and the villagers rich as the "three facilitates" based on meeting the "three needs." Specifically, the "three needs" cover the need to promote comprehensive development, the need to strengthen contact with the masses and the need to achieve benefits for the masses. The "three facilitates" are aimed at making the village strong and its people rich. They comprise Party-led stimulus to development and win-win economic performance; the upgrading of village cadres and shared prosperity; and Party-building leading the way to the future and society's common advancement. Led by the Party, the HX Community, through villager autonomy, has achieved the goals of economically strengthening, democratically governing, culturally developing, socially securing and ecologically beautifying the village. It is now a national model village.

Leading means taking the helm and determining the direction, and popular governance is the core of community governance. The leadership of the Party stimulates the endogenous dynamism of the development of transforming neighborhoods. The practice of autonomous government forges a popular governance in which all the masses participate; this is the secret code for strengthening the villages in social governance communities in collectively constructed neighborhoods. For example, as a pioneer of the social governance community, the Party branch committee of the WJZ neighborhood has firmly upheld the "three beginning to ends": from beginning to end, upholding organizational construction as a strong guarantee, upholding the speeding up of development as a top priority and upholding democracy and harmony as important goals. Led by the Party, the community has maintained a leading position as a prosperous and civilized Nanjing village with

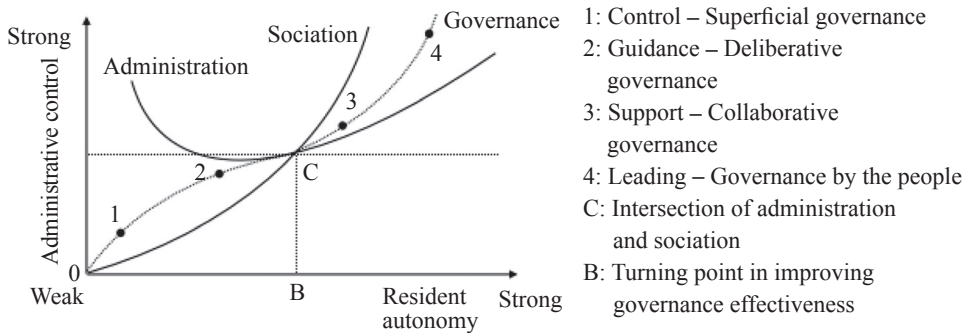
a strong economy. The WJZ neighborhood's Party Committee has explored the "four cultivations" of village autonomy: upholding the cultivation of village cadres in village-run enterprises, the cultivation of Party members from among rich villagers with expertise, the cultivation of rural brokers as links in the industrial chain and cultivation of the new type of farmer in cooperative organizations. It has thus successfully overcome the incompatibility between rural Party-building and economic development, serving as a leader in economic development and social governance.

## **V. Conclusions and Discussion: China's Choice of Grassroots Social Governance Community**

Spatial reconstruction is the engine of the establishment and development of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods. It brings about changes in the community's spatial characteristics; generates social networks; and adjusts spatial governance strategies. Spatial reconstruction has seen four basic community types take shape in grassroots society: the social governance communities of individually constructed neighborhoods, the social governance communities of post-demolition constructed neighborhoods, the social governance communities of immigrant constructed neighborhoods and the social governance communities of collectively constructed neighborhoods. The integration of multiple spatial attributes is the internal mechanism by which the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods are established and developed; this is embodied in the fact that the sociation of space is embedded in its administrative nature, thus promoting an optimal combination of governance strategies and raising governance effectiveness. Spatial reconstruction has two stages: spatial reconstruction and space production. In the first stage, the administrative nature of space performs the function of administrative control; on the one hand, differentiated characteristics of governance space are created, while on the other, the sociation of space performs the function of social connection. This establishes four kinds of social network in the social governance community: the loosely connected network, the multiple components network, the close interest network and the highly associated network. At the second stage, the embedding of the sociation of space into governance works to achieve the integration of top-down administrative control and bottom-up resident autonomy. Four governance strategies for autonomous administrative adaptation in social governance communities are thus generated, i.e., "control—superficial governance," "guidance—deliberative governance," "support—collaborative governance," and "leading—governance by the people."

*1. In the context of spatial reconstruction, some regular associations and mechanisms of innovating social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods can provide the basis for community construction at the grassroots level (Figure 3)*

Figure 3 Function of Spatial Attributes in Social Governance Communities of Transforming Neighborhoods



### (1) Governance of social governance communities and its determinants

The governance of the social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods is demonstrated through its effectiveness, which is determined by the interactions between the administrative and the social nature of spatial reconstruction. In the model of the four types of social governance communities, the sociation of spatial reconstruction presents a rising curve, while its administrative nature shows a roughly U-shaped curve. Control is an administrative “hard control” with a degree of governance effectiveness; however, it can struggle to maintain community governance order when resident autonomy is very weak. Leadership is an administrative “soft control.” It can have a significant correspondence when resident autonomy is very strong. At this time, the administrative and the social nature interact well, resulting in a good governance function. Guidance and support, in conjunction with the residents’ general autonomous ability, should selectively perform an integrative function on the basis of the residents’ autonomous ability.

### (2) The governance strategy choice of the autonomy of administrative adaptation

C is the point where the administrative and the social curve intersect. It is here that administrative control ability is lowest. When sociation is lower than point C, it is necessary to adopt the strategies of “control—superficial governance” and “guidance—deliberative governance” by strengthening the “hard control” administrative function and weakening the “soft control” administrative function; when sociation is higher than point C, it is necessary to adopt the strategies of “support—collaborative governance” and “leading—governance by the people” by weakening the “hard control” administrative function and strengthening the “soft control” function.

### (3) Ways to improve governance effectiveness

Point B is the turning point for improving the effectiveness of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods. Before point B, the interactions between the administrative and the social nature appear as an opposed, gaming relationship, requiring continuous coordination to improve governance effectiveness. After point B, such interactions

become positive and present a rapid route to improving administrative effectiveness. Although the “control” of social governance communities of individually constructed neighborhoods has a strong administrative nature, it is “hard control” of a last resort, lacking the autonomous ability of sociation; its “superficial governance” is in a state of autonomy failure, and hence its governance effectiveness is the lowest. The social governance community of demolition-constructed neighborhoods, despite some administrative decline, has adopted statutory “guidance” and comes under legal administrative control. Moreover, it adopts the “deliberative governance” characterized by democratic consultations, thereby greatly improving both the residents’ autonomous ability and the effectiveness of governance. The social governance communities of collectively constructed neighborhoods adopt administrative “soft control” by taking the initiative in implementing the relevant policies; consequently, this results in a better administrative control capacity with the highest level of sociation and a good level of resident autonomy. In addition, governance effectiveness has been maximized. Overall, the governance effectiveness of the four types of social governance communities of transforming neighborhoods shows an upward trend. This indicates that it is only when both administrative and social functions reach an ideal state that the best interactions can be achieved, so that a good community order can be established to move towards spatial justice and realize “good governance” in the social governance community of transforming neighborhood.

2. *“Autonomy of administrative adaptation” provides a new interpretive framework for the interaction between grassroots governments and autonomous mass organizations*

Although the existing theories of “controlled autonomy” and “autonomy of administrative elimination” have different focuses, they both emphasize the control function of the grassroots government and the dependent nature of the village Party branch committee and the villager/resident committee. This would ultimately result in village governance being divorced from the villagers, making villager autonomy a mere formality, creating a governance crisis due to the “failure of autonomy” and leading to ungovernability. Autonomy of administrative adaptation represents the seamless integration of top-down administrative control and bottom-up resident autonomy in spatial reconstruction, where the relationship between the grassroots government and the resident committee evolves into an adaptive coordination. On the one hand, the autonomy of administrative adaptation emphasizes the authority of the state; on the other, it stresses improving the community capacity for autonomy and coordinates the relationship between grassroots governments and autonomous mass organizations through adaptive governance, thus achieving positive interactions between governmental governance and villager autonomy. Therefore, in the construction of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods, we should fully value the role of the village Party branch committee and the villager/resident committee by strengthening both the leading role of the former and the core autonomous function of the latter.

### *3. Strengthening the “governance by the people” orientation of the social governance community*

According to the developmental path of governance effectiveness in social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods, the strategy of “leading—governance by the people” boasts the highest effectiveness thanks to its people-centered nature. This shows that it is only by improving the self-organizing ability of the masses at the grassroots and mobilizing them to participate positively in community construction and governance that institutional advantages can be turned into governance effectiveness and governance achievements can truly be shared by everyone. The Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China proposed to build “a community of social governance with the responsibility taken, shared and enjoyed by everyone.” This provides practical guidance for the construction of social governance communities in transforming neighborhoods. This proposal, put forward along the dimensions of concept, action and result, embodies the idea that the people have the key position in social governance and that governance should depend on the people and be for the people. In its construction, therefore, grassroots social governance communities should demonstrate the orientation of “governance by the people” by embedding the administrative in the social and improving governance, “listening” to public opinion in choosing the social governance agenda, “drawing on” the people’s wisdom in determining social governance projects, “pooling” people’s abilities in carrying out social governance work and demonstrating the people’s will in assessing the results. In this way, the people’s key position and their awareness of responsibility will be fully demonstrated in the construction of the social governance community.

### *4. Filling the gaps in social governance communities’ capacity*

Communities are on the front line in preventing and controlling the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, acting as a strong fortification. However, in the early stages, the numerous clusters of cases across the country exposed the shortfalls in community governance capacity. In terms of community resources, there were not enough full-time personnel and only limited emergency reserves of disposable materials and equipment for prevention and control; in terms of communication, there was no real-time information sharing platform and the emergency management system did not reach down to the community level; communities lacked screening and pre-examination and there were no channels for interaction between the community and healthcare institutions; in terms of social resource connections, there were no channels for distributing emergency materials and no means of contacting related enterprises, institutions and volunteers; and public services were unable to meet the diverse personal living needs of residents. To overcome the shortfall in capacity, a key step is improving the social network of social governance communities by supporting them with big data, artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital technologies. Along the vertical dimension, we should allocate human and material resources to the community and consolidate grassroots governments’ community adaptation



network. Along the horizontal dimension, it is necessary to fully mobilize the people, social organizations, enterprises and related institutions to participate in the prevention and control of the epidemic, implement hierarchical and classified management of the floating population, and establish a multi-governance network characterized by prevention and control by the masses. By making concerted efforts along both the vertical and horizontal dimensions to promote the benign interaction of governmental spatial governance and community autonomy, a community system of public health prevention and control can be established to respond to both normal and abnormal situations.

### Notes on Author

Zeng Weihe is Professor at the College of Law and Political Science, Nanjing University of Information Science & Technology. He is an academic and technical leader in the “333 High-level Talents Cultivation Project” for the young to middle-aged in Jiangsu Province, and an academic leader of the Qinglan Project for the young to middle-aged. His research interests focus on social governance and social development. He has published more than 80 papers in *Chinese Public Administration* (中国行政管理), *China Soft Science* (中国软科学), *Journal of Public Management* (公共管理学报) and other journals and has been the convenor of more than ten national and provincial projects, such as those of the National Social Science Foundation and the Humanities and Social Sciences Projects of the Ministry of Education. A number of his decision-making consultation reports have been approved by central and provincial authorities. E-mail: weihe601@163.com.

### Notes on Translator

Gong Huayan (龚华燕) is a professional translator. E-mail: 1158455725@qq.com.

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—Translated by Gong Huayan  
Revised by Sally Borthwick