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ID 1358 | SPATIAL INJUSTICE OF CENTRAL AREA PUBLIC SPACES AND ITS PRODUCTION MECHANISM: A CASE STUDY IN NANJING, CHINA

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ABSTRACT: Like many other large cities in China, Nanjing central area has experienced a large scale urban regeneration since twenty-first Century, mega-retail-Led regeneration, which transforms the original residential land to commercial land, dominates the process. Large scale and huge volume flagship stores emerge on the regenerated land affected by the commercial building model coming from the developed countries. The emerging space form is also supported by the local government, because it can quickly make the image of the city catch up with the international standard, significantly enhance the level of physical space environment and bring considerable economic income. Nevertheless, more and more attention has been paid to the negative social effects brought by this space form. Taking the central area of Nanjing as the research object, based on 2000-2015 historical topographic maps, this paper reveals the

transformation characteristics of central area space form in Nanjing, it shows that the space form has been transformed from the dispersed, high density and low plot ratio to the concentrated, low density and high plot ratio, in the meantime, it has produced many so-called “public spaces”. According to the authors’ first-hand survey data, this paper finds that the so-called “public spaces” are just the outdoor spaces separately belong to different commercial flagship stores, and in which there exist obvious spatial injustice. The injustice embodies in two aspects: one is the function simplification, the “public spaces” only bear the commercial and transportation functions, which can not meet the requirements of the central area public spaces to carry a variety of social activities; the other is the environment exclusiveness, the “public spaces” just designed to attract the young middle class with a consumption orientation, which can hardly be used conveniently, comfortably and with dignity by all regardless of age or economic circumstances. This paper also analyzes the production mechanism of space injustice from the aspect of China’s land regeneration system, and the local government entrepreneurialism and the capitalization of space production are defines as the root cause. In accordance with the analysis result, this paper suggests the public policy attributes of urban regeneration should be strengthened through the reformation of the land regeneration system and planning-making system, and the improvement of public participation, so as to obtain the realization of spatial justice.

KEYWORDS: Spatial Injustice; Mega-retail-led regeneration; Production mechanism; Central area public spaces; Nanjing, China

1 INTRODUCTION

Public space in central area is an important carrier of urban public social activities, it can promote the social sustainable development better with higher inclusiveness. The experiences of construction in Europe and America in the latter half of the last century demonstrated that, property-led regeneration would lead to privatization of the public space in the central area, and losing the true “Publicness” (He and Wu, 2005; Steel and Symes, 2005; Low and Smith, 2006; Minton, 2006; Madanipour, 2013; Tallen, 2013). At the end of the last century, western scholars combined social justice and space, and put forward the concept of “Spatial Justice” (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 2008; Harvey, 2010; Soja, 2010), which raised the reexamination of the social attributes of public space, such issues as accessibility, privacy of the public space and the right to develop and use of different populations had increasingly become the focus (Mitchell, 2003; Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004; Varna and Tiesdell, 2010; Gehl, 2011; Németh and Schmidt, 2011; Mehta, 2014).

China's modernization and urbanization are similar to those of European and American countries in the 1970s and 1980s, property-led regeneration dominates the process (He and Liu, 2008), and the central area often has the most frequent urban regeneration activities. Under the regeneration, the quantity, shape, environmental quality and function content of public space in central area have changed remarkably. Nevertheless, like the western countries, the transformation of public space under the economic-oriented regeneration always focuses the improvement of the environment quality so as to attract the consumer groups, and neglect the essential attributes of undertaking social public activities (Yang and Xu, 2011; Zhang and Hu, 2013).

In recent years, with the promulgation of the national planning documents, New Urbanization Plan of the State (2014-2020) and Opinions on Further Strengthening the Administration of Urban Planning and Construction (2016), and the convening of the “Central City Working Conference (2015)”, the concept of seeking social equity has been emphasized. Simultaneously, the thoughts of “Space Justice” and “Inclusive City” are introduced to China, and also the “New Urban Agenda”, which was issued at the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Urban Sustainable Development held in Ecuador in 2016, appealing to all the countries to promote the construction of “Inclusive City” and “Shared City”, particularly emphasizing the importance of public space (Shi, 2017). Under the influence of these global planning concepts, Chinese scholars begin to pay attention to the social benefits of public goods such as public space, from qualitative point of view, some scholars criticize the lack of public justice in China's public space (Yang, 2006 ; Chen and Ye, 2009a; Yang and Xu, 2011; Zhang and Hu,2013), discuss the definition of publicness in public space (Yu, 2005; Xu and Semsroth, 2013), social attribute characteristics (Yang, 2013) and responsive solution of privatization of public space (Dai and Xing, 2010; Zhang and Yu, 2010), but lack the quantitative research. Hence, this paper hence takes Nanjing Xinjiekou city centre as the research object, based on the 2000-2015 year history maps and one-hand survey data, and

quantitatively analyses the change of public space form and function, and the social injustice of the current public space and its production mechanism.

2 CONCEPT DEFINITION AND STUDY OBJECT

2.1 CONCEPT DEFINITION

2.1.1 PUBLIC SPACE

Public space, as a technical terminology, first appeared in sociology and Political Philosophy, in the early 1960s, it gradually was introduced to the subject area of urban planning, and appeared in architectural academic works written by Mumford and Jacobs. It has different definitions according to different angles (such as social research, political philosophy, and spatial design, etc.), but they also has something in common (such as accessibility) (Chen and Ye, 2009b). This paper uses the most generalized definition of the concept that public space is the space all the people have the right to approach and visit freely.

2.1.2 SPATIAL JUSTICE

Lefebvre and Foucault first expanded the social attribute of space, from a static perspective to a dynamic perspective, and from "Containers" of social activities to "Space Production" under the impact of social relations (Lefebvre, 1991; Elden, 2016). Under their influence, Harvey, soya and others continue to deepen the theory of "Spatial Justice", and argue that, under the condition of capital operation and political power, there are social injustice phenomena such as unfair distribution and possession of space resources (Harvey, 2008; Harvey, 2010; Soja, 2010). As far as public space is concerned, as social public goods, its spatial justice should be reflected on the fairness of the public space production process and fairness of use right (Madanipour, 2013).

2.2 STUDY OBJECT

Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu Province, is an important regional central city of the Yangtze River Delta, with a population of 8 million. Nanjing Xinjiekou district is located in the heart of the inner city, because of its important traffic location and commercial foundation, it has been the location of the old city centre of Nanjing since the foundation of the People's Republic of China, taking Zhongshan Road, Zhongshan East Road, Zhongshan South Road and Hanzhong road as the main framework, its general scope is the area extending around the intersection. Since the reform and opening-up, especially after entering the new century, it has a rapid development and has gradually become the most concentrated area of public facilities in the inner city, and also the most densely populated and the most crowded area. The new Nanjing Plan (2013) clearly pointed out that Xinjiekou area will continue to be the city centre bearing the important public activities, therefore this paper selects the most central 1.56 square kilometer area of Xinjiekou as the study object (Fig.1).

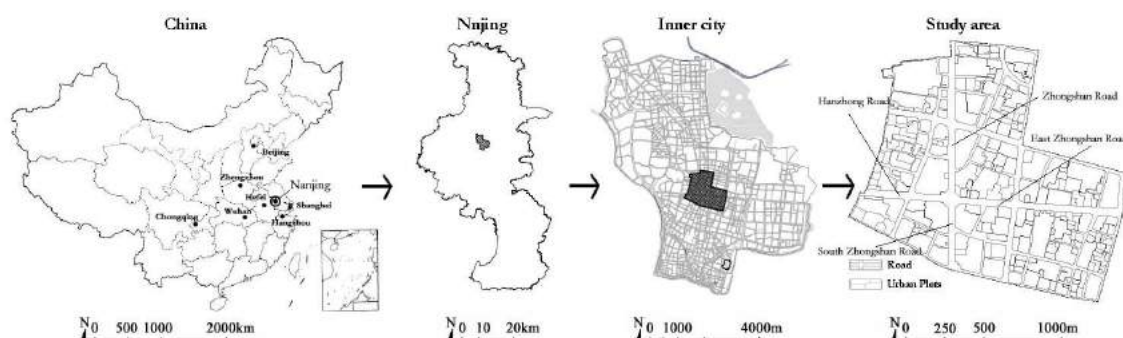


Figure 1 - Study Area Location. (Source: Created by the author)

3 EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC SPACE

3.1 OVERALL SPATIAL EVOLUTION

In order to clarify the process of public space production, we first need to analyze the characteristics of the overall spatial evolution of the central area. This paper divides it into two aspects of land use and spatial morphology.

3.1.1 LAND USE EVOLUTION

Since the reform and opening-up, China's major cities have rapidly changed their development goals from “Productive City” to “Living City”, the central area has become the major region for promoting urban economic development, improving people's living standards and improving the quality and image of urban environment, and commercial-office use buildings full of modern international flavor just cater to this demand (Wu et al., 1999; Geng, 1999). Because of the limited financial resources, the property-led regeneration has been perceived as a “panacea” of the local governments (He and Wu, 2005; He and Liu, 2008; Huang and Cao, 2011).

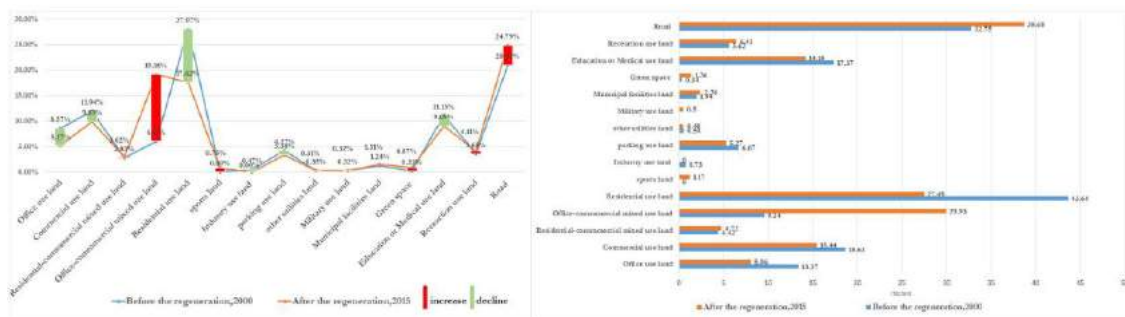


Figure 2 - The Proportion and Area of Land Function Changes. (Source: Created by the author)

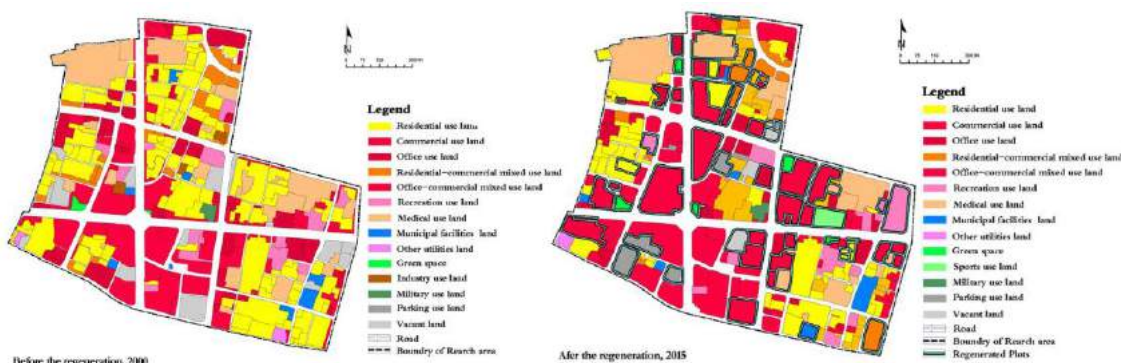


Figure 3 - Changes in the Functional Layout of the Land. (Source: Based on historical topographic maps)

In research area, from 2000 to 2015, the former 0.73 hectares of industrial land is completely cancelled, and the total amount of residential land decreases from 43.64 hectares to 27.49 hectares, and the proportion of residential land drops from 27.97% to 17.62%, the proportion of commercial-office mixed use land increased from 6.11% to 19.18% (Fig.2). Comparing the changes in the past 15 years, we can find that 60 plots are regenerated, accounting for about 32% of the total land area, of which 37 plots have become commercial and office related use after the regeneration (Fig.3).

3.1.2 SPATIAL MORPHOLOGY EVOLUTION

In the study area, the overall plot ratio in 2015 is 3.52 compared with 2.47 in 2000, the plot ratio of new regenerated plots is generally over 4 (Fig.4). The increase in the volume rate will inevitably lead to the

elevation of the building height or the promotion of the building density. Through the model contrast analysis, the overall height in 2015 has obviously improved, the new commercial-office building height is generally above 100m, buildings higher than 100m has increased from 22 in 2000 to 202. In the aspect of building density, most former plots demolished stands houses with higher density and lower height, due to flow distribution needs and urban image considerations, the regenerated commercial buildings need to have enough outdoor space. Through comparison, we can find that the overall building density decreased significantly (the overall building density was 0.44 in 2000, and that was 0.37 in 2015)(Fig.5). This indicates that total amount of outdoor space increased after regenerated, excluding the area increased by the road widening, the actual increase in external space area is 5.8 hectares.

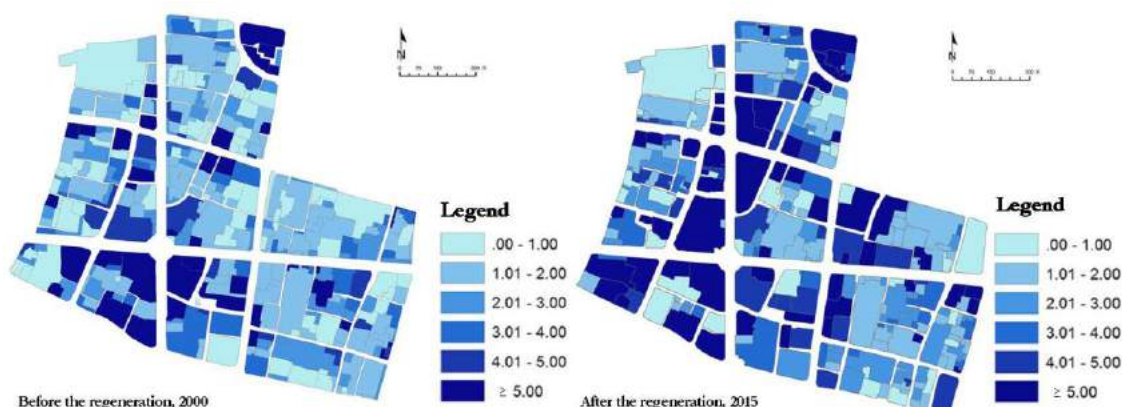


Figure 4 - Plot Ratio Change. (Source: Created by the Author Based on historical maps)

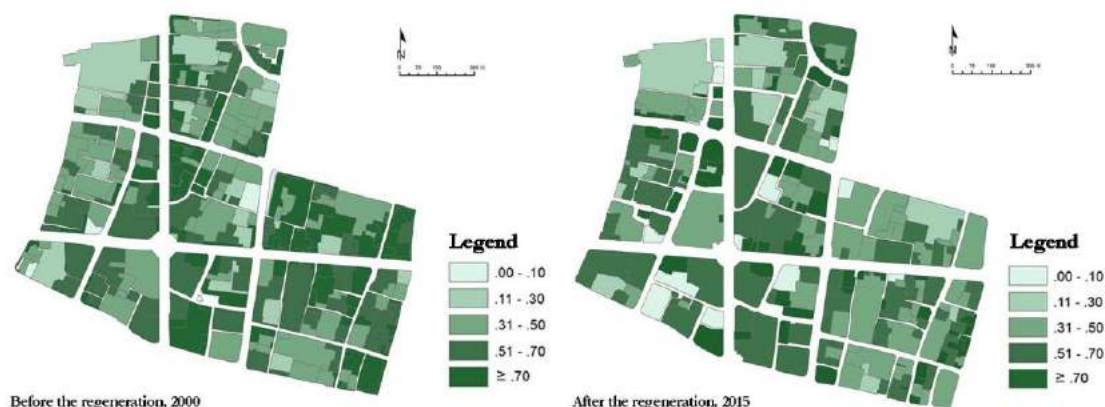


Figure 5 - Building Density Change. (Source: Created by the Author Based on historical maps)

Through the analysis above, we can conclude that the overall spatial morphology variation trend of the central area is from high density and low plot ratio to the low density and high plot ratio. Under this trend, the quantity of outdoor space has been improved obviously, which provides the basic condition for the increase of public space.

3.2 PUBLIC SPACE EVOLUTION

3.2.1 QUANTITATIVE CHANGE IN PUBLIC SPACE

Whether the increase of outdoor space means the increase of public space, we need to judge it according to the definition of public space. Through comparative analysis of regenerated plots accessibility before and after (Fig.6), the new residential areas, hotels, administrative offices and educational facilities are all under closed management, which means that a large amount of the public space has been privatized. As a result, although the outdoor space has increased by 5.8 hectares, but actually inaccessible outdoor space has increased by 3.5 hectares, and accessible outdoor space only has an increase of 2.3 hectares.

Compared with the land use map it can be found that, the new public spaces with high accessibility are all the additional products of public facilities such as commercial, business, office, culture and entertainment use land, especially internal and peripheral areas of office -commercial mixed use land.

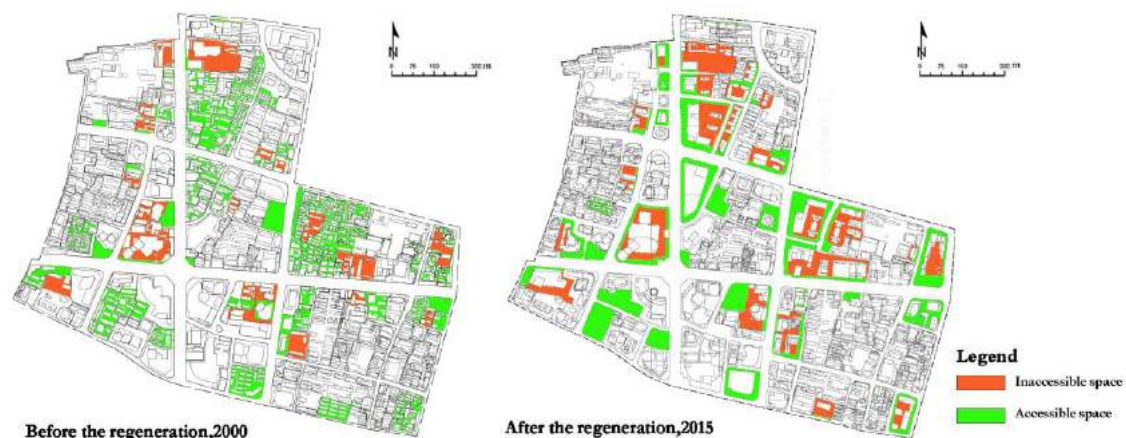


Figure 6 - Comparative Analysis on the Accessibility of Regenerated Plots Public Space.
(Source: Based on Author's Survey)

3.2.2 PUBLIC SPACE MORPHOLOGY EVOLUTION

Comparing the plots texture before and after the regeneration, the public space form has changed remarkably (Fig.7). In aspect of form, the public space shows a change trend from decentralization to agglomeration, from complexity to simplicity, some plots are even completely demolished. In aspect of location, the public space is characterized by the change from the center of the plot to the edge and from the interior to the exterior. Morphological changes, to some extent, will make space loose attraction, and be not conducive to the set the space for stay. The transformation in location, as a result of accessibility, seems to be conducive to enhancing the publicness.

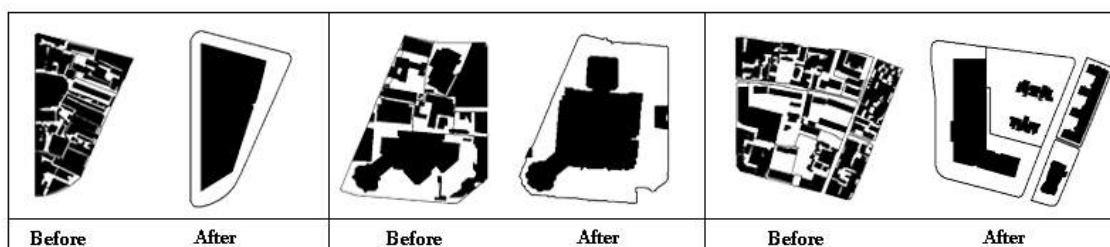


Figure 7 - Typical Plots Texture Analysis Before and After Regeneration.
(Source: Based on historical topographic maps)

4 THE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SPACE

Whether the new public space is more public, and can it embody wider social justice? In May 2016, we conducted on-site observation and questionnaire survey of the new public spaces on the day and night of the working days, the day and night during the holidays, so as to analyze the gender, age, income and occupation of the population and the types of their activities to evaluate the social performance.

4.1 TYPES OF ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC SPACE

Based on investigation result, it can be found the main types of activities in new public spaces are traffic and business, and there is 6.85 hectares public space only having traffic function, 5.57 hectares of public space is only with business and traffic functions. There are only 2.78 hectares of public space for daily activities such as rest, recreation, sports, landscape and public welfare activities, and these spaces are fragmented and immethodical (Fig.8).

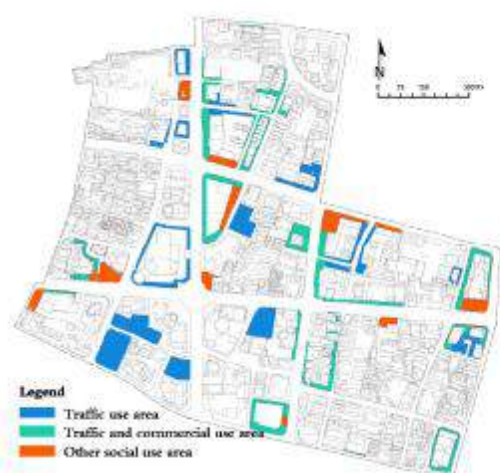


Figure 8 - Spatial Distribution of Activities. (Source: Based on Author's Survey)

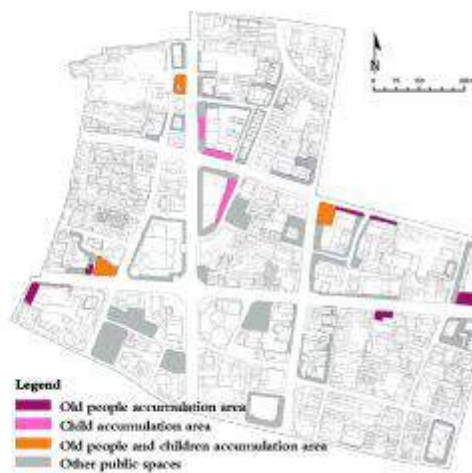


Figure9 - Spatial Distribution of Children and the Old. (Source: Based on Author's Survey)

4.2 PEOPLE WHO USE THE PUBLIC SPACE

4.2.1 GENDER

Overall, the proportion of female in the public space use population in the central area is about 64%, higher than that of male. At night and on weekends, this tendency is more pronounced due to the increase of business activities (especially shopping). Spatially, the public space that female use mainly concentrated in the surrounding area of commercial facilities, and the male ratio is higher around the office, hotel, parking facilities, the sex ratio is basically equal in the periphery of culture and tourism facilities. According to the census data of the population sampling survey of Nanjing in 2015, males in Nanjing's permanent population is 4.24 million, accounting for 51.52% of the total, higher than that of female (Table.1).

Therefore, this paper argues that, because of the increase of commercial use land, the public space in the central area becomes more attractive to the female population.

| Sex | Working days | | Weekend & Holidays | | Overall result of the survey | Nanjing population census data |
|--------|--------------|--------|--------------------|--------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Daytime | Night | Daytime | Night | | |
| Male | 35.95% | 33.91% | 34.65% | 31.67% | 35.88% | 51.52% |
| Female | 64.05% | 66.09% | 65.35% | 68.33% | 64.12% | 48.48% |

Table 1 – Gender distribution in Public Space. (Source: Based on Author's Survey)

4.2.2 AGE

The population of Nanjing has shown an aging trend since 2000, in the light of the census data of the population sampling survey of Nanjing in 2015, compared with the sixth national census in 2010, 0-14 years old population proportion increases by 0.71 percent, the proportion of the population aged 15-64 decreases 2.27 percent, the proportion of the population aged 65 and over rises 1.56 percentage points. The age distribution of the population using public space in the central area does not agree with that of the city, the age of the population is 15-40 years old, accounting for about 78%, and the population under 15 years old accounts for about 4%, and the population aged 65 and above is only about 6% (Table.2). The spatial distribution of children under 15 years of age is more concentrated in the place around commercial buildings where people are less crowded, they mostly engage in simple recreational activities under the supervision of their parents during waiting for the other relatives. People over 65 years old are distributed in parks, green spaces and the places where is less crowded and there are seats, around business and

commercial buildings, mainly engaged in activities such as fitness, conversation and waiting. So we can find that, spatial distribution of the two age group shows a trend of marginalization (Fig.9).

| | 0-14years old proportion | 15-40years old proportion | 41-64years old proportion | Above 65 years old proportion |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nanjing population census data | 10.21% | 79.10% | | 10.69% |
| Research area data | 4.12% | 78.26% | 11.35% | 6.27% |

Table 2 – Age distribution in Public Space. (Source: Based on Author's Survey)

4.2.3 INCOME AND OCCUPATION

The survey result does not indicate the spatial injustice in public space caused by income, but the vocational differentiation phenomenon is obvious. According to research statistics, population whose monthly income less than 6000RMB accounts for the main proportion (about 68%), that below 2000RMB accounts for 34.12%, and that over 20000RMB only accounts for 4.56% (Fig.10). The results of the occupation survey indicates that students are the main users (30.56%), while the proportion of migrant workers and retirees is low, accounting for 3.12% and 7.89% respectively (Fig.11). Income conditions does not show spatial injustice for two reasons, first of all, student belongs to the group of which monthly income is less than 2000RMB, but their annual consumption is far more than China's annual per capita disposable income, the main reason is that, under the family's indulgence, the only children have abnormal consumer behavior such as blind consumption, excessive consumption, comparison consumption and hedonic consumption (Zeng, 2012); secondly, that is related to the consumption characteristics of high-income group, according to the research of Hu Xiaochun et al. (2010), China's high-consumption group's survival consumption (food and clothing) and public consumption (public entertainment and shopping) gradually reduced, and their development consumption (education, health care) and minority consumption (consumption that seeking privacy and novelty, non-localized consumption) gradually increased. Therefore, they prefer the quiet, natural, healthy and novel places, so the central area public space, dominated by mass and inward consumption, loses its attraction to the high-income group, and it also can not provide fitness, natural health and leisure functions, which results in lower high-income group proportion. The imbalance of occupational categories shows the nature that the public space in the central area lacks the attention to the rural migrant workers and the elderly groups with lower consumption ability.

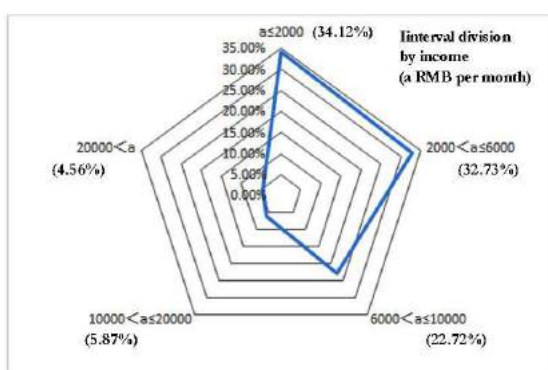


Figure 10 - Income Distribution in Public Space.(Source: Based on Author's Survey)

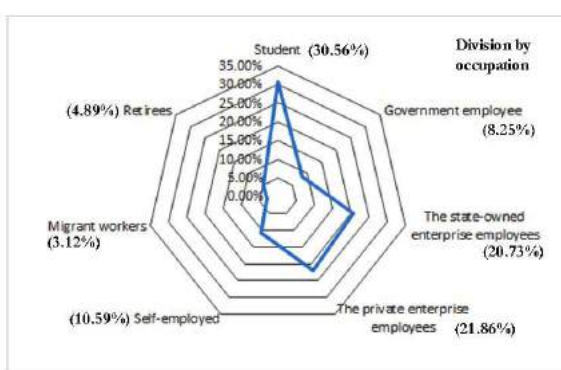


Figure 11 - Occupation Distribution in Public Space. (Source: Based on Author's Survey)

5 THE PRODUCTION MECHANISM OF SPATIAL INJUSTICE

The theory of Spatial Justice shows that, the imbalance of social performance is due to the imbalance of space production and governance power. Therefore, this paper analyzes the mechanism of injustice in public space from two aspects: the development mechanism and management ownership.

5.1 THE DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM

5.1.1 THE PROCESS OF PUBLIC SPACE PRODUCTION

China is a country with public ownership of land, and the land belongs to the state or collectives.

After the reform and opening up, the state breaks the original land allocation system, and gradually allows the local government to transfer the use right of land, separating the land ownership and use rights stripped. So the central area land of inner city has become the focus of land transfer because of its significant asset value. In order to regulate and control the transfer market, to achieve the planning objectives of government better, use the land resources rationally and improve land use efficiency (Wang and Yong, 2011), at the end of the 1990s, China began to establish land banking system to manage the regeneration and new development. In this system, the urban regeneration process is divided into three stages: formulating controlling plan, land transfer and formulating constructive plan, so public space construction has the corresponding task in different stages (Table.3).

| Stage | Task and related content |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Formulating controlling plan | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the event of public space under independent construction, determine its location, size, greening rate and specific facilities 2. In the event of public space under non-independent construction, only determine its approximate size by building density, offer construction proposals through flexible design guidelines |
| Land transfer | The content determined by controlling plan should be embodied as indicators and transfer conditions |
| Formulating constructive plan | The construction entities carry out specific spatial design according to the transfer conditions, and determine the specific forms, layout and styles of greening, paving, furniture and water |

Table 3 –The Task of Public Space Construction in Different Stages. (Source: Created by the Author)

5.1.2 THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The government has absolute control power of three stages, its nature should be to protect the public interest, however, under the background of decentralization, marketization and Globalization, the pursuit of economic interests and political interests has become the core of the local government's concern, it presents a significant state of entrepreneurialism (Zhang et al., 2006; Huang and Cao, 2011). Urban spatial resources, as the competitive capital directly controlled by local governments, become the main guarantee for their interests (Fig.12). When the government gets rid of the representative of the public interests and has its own interests, it will inevitably reduce its input and attention to the public interest (Huang and Cao, 2011), so it impute the construction responsibility of public space to the developer and lower the construction standards (Table.4).

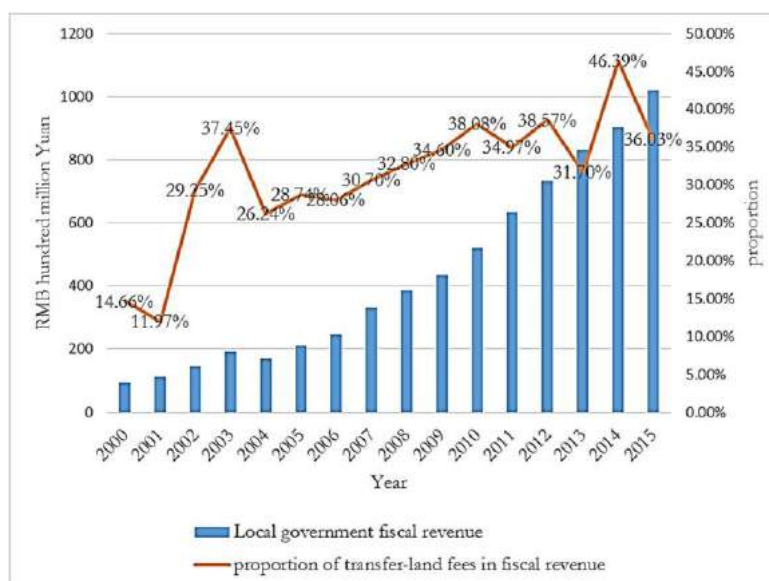


Figure 12 - Proportion of Transfer-land Fees in Nanjing Local Government Fiscal Revenue Change Trend, 2000-2015.(Source: Nanjing City Statistical Yearbook, 2001-2016. Available at: <http://221.226.86.104/file/nj2004/njtnj.htm>)

5.1.3 THE ROLE OF THE DEVELOPERS

As the main body of market capital, developers are seeking maximum benefit as much as possible. Therefore, how to reduce costs and how to create and use conditions for value output is the main consideration. Its role should only be limited to the organizers and implementers of constructive planning, for obtaining more profits, because of capital advantages and the local government's desire for revenues, some large developers can participate in the controlling plan phase, negotiate or exchange conditional with the government to modify design standards and reduce input on public facilities (including all aspects of public space) (Wang, 2014). In the constructive plan stage, taking advantage of the power of the organizer and executor, the developers control the designers and the constructors to make the outdoor space as "so-called public space" to attract the consumers and exclude the other people who belong to "ineffective-use" group. Hence, the public space in the plots constructed by developers is entirely the production under the guidance of the capital, and it will often only have commercial and traffic functions.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Stages | The government shows a disregard for public interests of public space |
| Formulating controlling plan | Impute the construction responsibility of public space; The indicators of each plot is conducive to commercial profitable, only setting rigid requirements through the building density index |
| Land transfer | Raise the price of land as much as possible, thus to force developers to do everything to reduce public facilities construction |
| Formulating constructive plan | Have close supervision on the rigid design conditions, be in a muddle over the elastic demand for the greening, paving, furniture and water |

Table 4 –The Role of Local Government in Different Stages. (Source: Created by the Author)

5.1.4 THE ROLE OF THE PLANNERS

Planners are the executors and proponents of controlling plan and constructive plan, and they have the dual identities of the public and the professionals (Zhang, 2004; Wang, 2014). As the public, they have the social morality of pursuing social equity, but they also have the pressure of life, and must to obtain economic benefits by selling their own skills. In fact, planners always have nothing to do with the plots they design, because of the government and developers' monopoly power, in order to gain economic benefits faster, higher and longer, they become "service staff" to meet all the needs of employers (Zhou and Sun, 2006; Wei et al., 2012), as far as public space is concerned, they lose the attention to its publicness. As the professionals, planners should have the ability to provide professional technical advice to realize the public attribute of public space. Nevertheless, under the influence of the government and developers' behavior of concerning the image of public space and the consumption service level only, their professional skills also emphasize the aspects of physical economic attribute, ignoring the social attribute.

5.1.5 THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC

The public is the largest beneficiary of public interest, so the pursuit of public interest maximization is the only goal of the public, they should have been important participants, supervisors, advocates and stakeholders at all stages, but in fact they have been marginalized. There are two reasons, firstly, because the public interest is made up of different personal interests, in the period of economic rapid development, the public usually pays more attention to their own individual interests and economic interest, but ignores the public interest and social interest (Wang, 2014), residents in the original plots of central area are almost all moved to the other places (Yuan et al., 2010), therefore, the public space in the central area, which is supposed be completely public, has become the matter has something to do with everyone, but no one cares about it; secondly, because of the monopoly of power and the pursuit of economic efficiency, local governments have neglected the importance of public participation for a long time, which leads to the limitation of the public participation in the three stages. At present, public participation is divided into two forms: elite participation and general public participation. Elite participation means that, in the planning process, experts and scholars are invited to offer consulting, but the local government control the invitation right, in the meantime, experts and scholars are also planners, so to some extent they are dependent on the local authorities (Wang, 2014), and they show mercy at consultative meeting, with care only about the hard bottom line and neglect of the elastic requirements. The general public participation in the planning stage is currently limited to questionnaires, forums, notice of planning results and public comment, although the state has promulgated the policy to emphasize the status of public participation, but that only

enrich the methods of notification, information and consultation (such as media and network), not changing the participation level (Yang, 2011). Since the public does not have the right to make decisions and veto, the true public space can not be realized.

5.2 THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE

After the construction of public space, to some extent, its management also determines the use of public space (Mitchell, 2003; Low and Smith, 2006; Madanipour, 2013). In accordance with the regulations of “Nanjing Urban Governance Regulations”, “Regulations on the Administration of Nanjing City Appearance” and “Measures for the Administration of the Area in Front of the Buildings in Nanjing”, each operator have the responsibility to keep the ground and the façade clean and facilities neat and orderly within the scope of land that they have the use right, including trees, lawns, furniture and pools. If they are contaminated, damaged or missing, the operator should clean and repair them in time, otherwise the administrative penalty will be imposed. Therefore, in order to avoid unnecessary investment and maintenance costs, the operators often set barriers to keep visitors away from the trees, lawns, water and sculptures, and they also try their best to reduce the seats and the place where activities other than consumption may be carried out. In research area, only the independent-construction public space is managed by the government, in which there are more diverse social activities and population, but of the 60 regenerated plots, only 5 are under independent construction with a total area of 1.3 hectares.



Figure 13 – Public Spcae Management. (Source: Created by the Author Based on the Map of Land Right in Nanjing)

6 CONCLUSION

Through historical evolution analysis and current situation investigation, this paper conduces the qualitative and quantitative analysis of spatial injustice in public space of Nanjing Xinjiekou city centre, and from the aspect of regeneration system and management ownership, the internal mechanism causing injustice is discussed.

In the context of overall spatial evolution, the outdoor space in the central area has increased significantly, but the increase in public space accounts only half of the increase in outdoor space, and most is located at the commercial and office use plots. The public space form shows a change trend from decentralization to agglomeration, from complexity to simplicity, and the location changes from the center of the plot to the edge and from the interior to the exterior. Through the research on the social performance of new public space, this paper finds that new public space has spatial injustice such as function injustice (ignoring social function), gender injustice (ignoring male), age injustice (ignoring children and the elderly) and hierarchy injustice (ignoring migrant workers and retirees).

Based on the analysis of the regeneration system, we find that, the government holds the absolute power of public space development, but its entrepreneurial behavior make it get rid of the role of public interests guardian, and to turn public space a subsidiary product of the pursuit of profit, with no guarantee of its publicness. As for the planners and the public, the former have become the echo of government decisions because of their own income interests, and the latter cannot play a decisive role because of the limited degree of participation.

From the aspect of management ownership, after the construction, most public spaces are managed by the business operator. Under the restriction of the city management regulations, business operators try their best to reduce the social function of public space in order to minimize the investment and maintenance costs.

Through the analysis of injustice and internal mechanism, if we want to improve the publicness of public space and pursue the real spatial justice, we may proceed from four aspects. First of all, the fundamental change in the current injustice is to get the local government out of the shackle of the land economy, making it move back from the enterprising government to the public government; Secondly, we can set up the statutory design guideline of public space, and bring it into the transfer condition of the land; Thirdly, we should reclaim the management right of the existing public space, improve the public space environment and increase social space and facilities; Finally, the degree of public participation in the design and construction should be promoted, and the public should be ensured the decision-making power.

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ID 1400]- INTEREST AT STAKE: A NON-SUBSTANTIAL READING OF COMMUNITY

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1 INTRODUCTION

Talking about community is becoming more and more dangerous, and the reason for this danger is quite simple: the concept of community seems to resonate with the post-political warning emerging from our times (Zizek, 2003). In a post-political perspective, a community is an assemble of individuals who share – more or less explicitly and overtly – a so called “commonality” which can be variously stated: a place, a purpose, a cultural feature, a context, a practice. Thanks to this commonality we can find a certain degree of homogeneity among those individuals, and thanks to this homogeneity we can find a certain degree of compliance through which we can define, or even predict, their actions. What we lose in this frame is the political dimension of community as «the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here-and-now» (Massey 2014: 140), washed away and reduced to a mere contractual dispute on supply services and management. The (non-obvious) happy end is widely known: government becomes governance, politics becomes administration, class struggle becomes a neighbours’ scuffle and, consequently, the space of resistance leaves room for the end of history to unfold (Fukuyama, 2003). The underlying utopia is the emergence of self-regulating subjects who are able to recognize, despite their different interests and needs, the best of all possible worlds: a world where efficiency is simply more advisable. Following this path, it is worth to wonder how we can regain a proper political dimension of the concept of community.

In planning theory, we can find two main ways which can lead to this regainment. On one hand, we have the deliberative tradition of the communicative turn: from this point of view, the community is first and foremost a community of speakers who are able to recognize, through argumentation, the greatest good (though a context-grounded one) translatable in a normative rationality. In this case, the judgement about what is good is no longer emerging from the individual conscience of each subject but rather from dialogue, the means through which the political is unearthed according to the Aristotle’s quotation of human beings as “social animals”, who can become proper citizens only in the context of a discursive arena (the agorà).

On the other, we have the radical tradition of critical theorists: here the community is not the ontological place of rationality but the proper milieu of multiple conflicts. Thanks to thinkers like Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and Jaques Rancière, just to mention a few, the Marxist class struggle overflows the limits of the economic field to reach the many overlaps of intersectionality (race, gender, social class, age etc.). The community becomes the perfect place of variously articulated struggles for hegemony, that outline different and transversal political subjects through likewise different and transversal logics of equivalence (Laclau, 2008): what we lose in this case is the chance to indicate a unique fundament (e.g. rationality) through which we can describe the core of a proper political action (e.g. a shared purpose reached through