Deconstructing a Landscape Out-of-Place
the Afterlife of Rural Hollowing

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Landscape Architecture,
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by

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Pablo Perez-Ramos

The Afterlife of Rural Hollowing
Deconstructing a Landscape Out-of-Place: the Afterlife of Rural Hollowing
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Thank you to my advisor Pablo Perez-ramos for your guidance and critical feedback throughout.

Thank you to my friends for your continuous positivity and enthusiasm.

Thank you to my parents for your everlasting support.
The Phenomena of Rural Hollowing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic 1</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small and Fluxtuating Population Size</td>
<td>Unpredictability and Low profitability from Agriculture</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Decrease in level of consumption</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Change in Cultural Landscape</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic 2</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of Infrastructure and Services</td>
<td>Low recognition from regional government</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fading public services, public infrastructure, public institutions</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic 3</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominant non-active local Population</td>
<td>Lack of Public Service and Educational Institution for Younger Generation</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Home Abandonment and Relocation</td>
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In China, highlighten in red, 0.38 billion people are floating population. These people left their hometown for most months of the year, typically return during intensive harvest seasons.

**Data from National Bureau of Statistics**

**[Statistical Data from ReserachStep]**

**The Afterlife of Rural Hollowing**

**[Floating Population in China]**

**[Rural Labor Study]**
In China, as a result of population loss and integration of rural villages, rural public service such as education, health, and local administration continue to close.

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Rural China is dominated by a junior and elder population, as adults seek better wages elsewhere and senior take care of their young.
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Yongding County Population from 1980-2020

Planning Map of Yongding in 1980s

[Yantai Demography]
Population With Residency: ~2000
Residing Population: ~200
Dominant Senior Prominence

Population of Yongding from 1980-2020

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The reality is that many of these buildings in the center of the village are unoccupied and left to ruins. Many of the drivers are legal reasons and economic reasons.

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- Not occupied Houses
- Occupied Houses
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- Tulous
- Modified Tulous
- New Houses
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In Longyan, average income generated from rural resident versus urban residents is: 20150 yuan / 30403 yuan. Urban residents earn 151% of rural residents.
Hollow Village Reform

Reutilizing Abandoned Land

Project 1
Building Economy:
Remediating Abandoned Terrace, Starting Profitable Economy

Project 2
Investing in Public Service:
Repurposing Village Vacant Space, Establishing Community Program
Interactions between multiple agents in the village are studied and included: these members grounds and catalyze the village’s revitalization.

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Two sites are selected to rethink depopulated villages, one inbetween unoccupied houses in village center, one above the village’s terrace elevation at the village’s edge.
Project 1

Remediating Abandoned Terrace,
Starting Sustainable Economy

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Agricultural movements in the 1960s-70s brought young labor from urban areas to remote rural villages. Rural hills and forest land were cultivated in these movements to create large areas of agricultural production.
As a long-term solution for village revitalization, landscape with aesthetic value is kept as working landscape in a settlement with population less than 200. Similar situations exist in many villages.
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Herbaceous
Groundcovers
Bamboo Forest
Conifers And
Deciduous Forest

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1988
Yongding Distilled Spirit sold to Germany

1990
Chendong Village obtain highest rice yield in the province

[Pages from Yongding County Record]
Limited by limited rain season, Yantai cultivate single season crop per year, limiting its productivity and profit.
Considered average warm temperature, early planting and extension of farming season allow two season rice planting.
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Runoff Collection at Reservoir vs Water need for enviror village agricultural production

Villagewide runoff vs Water need for enviror village agricultural production
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Regenerative Farming
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Mix Planting
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The Afterlife of Rural Hollowing
Reforestation

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Project 2

Repurposing Village Vacant Space,
Establishing Community Program
Due to the hilly condition and inattentiveness to this unvalued space, the fields are difficult to access and creates barrier in the center of the village.
Declining villages like Yantai is lack of infrastructural updates and public services at all edges of the settlement.
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Soil Making Mounts

Wood logs cut into 1-1.5m trunks and bury partially into the ground.

Inorganic materials crushed into medium size gravel mix to build mount core.

Organic materials of wood chips and dirt mixed to build mount top layer.

Overtime logs breaks down into organic matter.
In rural areas, Yantai residents use outdoor spaces and share private equipments as a community.

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For example, in a tulou shared by multiple households, unoccupied rooms are shared and courtyards are occupied constantly by different families.
This project propose an outdoor movie theatre, a well loved passtime that fade away in the past ten years.
During monsoon season, storm sweeps the village’s floor. Rainwater is either carried to lower level across bare agriculture fields, paved floor, or domestic cattle backyards.
Runoff is collected from eaves and fill the pool and use for terrace farming on nearby village gardens.


**Parties Involved**

- **Patron**
  - Longyan Municipal Government

- **Local Group**
  - Yantai Village Committee

- **Third Party Firms**
  - Distribution, Publicizing Agencies

- **Village Collective**
  - Local Villagers

- **New Local Firm**
  - Local Villagers

**Connections**

- **Land Conversion, Funding**
  - Patron ➔ Local Group
  - Patron ➔ Third Party Firms

- **Business Collaboration**
  - Local Group ➔ Third Party Firms

- **Represent, Negotiation, Form**
  - Village Collective ➔ New Local Firm

- **Produce, Distribution, Publicizing Support**
  - Third Party Firms ➔ New Local Firm

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Zhai Ji Di
These are housing land owned by the villagers collectively. Each household is allotted one zhaijidi to build on for dwelling.

Rural Land
There are three types of land in rural China: Farmland, Construction Land, and Unoccupied land.

Rural Construction Land
There are three types of construction land in rural China: Public Welfare Land, Public Facility Land, and Housing Land (Zhaijidi). Public land are managed by the villagers’ collective. Zhaijidi are managed by the villager.
农村宅基地管理法律政策问答

农业部门与农村合作经济指导司

Land Ownership
Land is owned by villagers collectively. Undistributed land is legally managed by an entity or organization that represents the villagers’ collective or an equivalent of the villagers’ committee. Villagers receive farmland and zhajidi from the government and can’t be used for other purposes. Violation results in confiscation of the land. Zhajidi is intransferrable.

Villagers’ Collective
The villagers’ collective could be represented by a village’s for-profit organization or a villagers’ committee that legally represents the members of the village.

Land Appropriation
Zhajidi can be recovered by the villagers’ collective due to violation of landuse and neglect. Once recovered, land can be re-distributed to villagers or use for public interest by the villagers’ collective.
More to be done
Image Sources

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Bibliography