Critical Gentrification: A Study of Regeneration Strategies in Xi'an "Old Market", China

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Abstract: The gentrification in the process of urban regeneration has its two sides. On the one hand, it injects new vitality and creativity into urban development and promotes rapid urban economic growth. On the other hand, gentrification has caused a shift in social classes, forcing the low-income and disadvantaged groups to relocate and lose their equal access to the city's quality spatial resources. However, after a period of development, gentrification has taken on a different character than before. That is gentrification based on the elimination of negative impacts, which this paper defines as "critical gentrification" and its seven characteristics are summarized. In order to clarify how critical gentrification can play a positive role while eliminating negative effects, "Jianguomen Old Market" Cultural and Creative District in Xi'an is taken as a cut-in point and a series of regeneration methods driven by the concept of critical gentrification are analysed from the perspectives of the industrial economy, demographics, social culture and physical environment. Aiming to provide a reference for the rational development of gentrification regeneration. Finally, propose the prospect for further research development.

1. Introduction

Urban regeneration is a concept that emerged in China in the 1990 s. As a necessary process of urban development to a certain stage, it is of great significance in the process of urbanization. In the following two decades, the city is shifting from rough and outward development to intensive and connotative development, and urban regeneration as an important socio-economic development approach has gradually shifted from an emphasis on large-scale physical transformations to addressing urban sustainability, diversity, livability, and equality in the city [1]. In 2011, China's urbanization exceeded 50%, realizing urban transformation [2], that is, the focus of regeneration began to focus on small-scale and gradual urban restoration and ecological restoration, emphasizing the people-centered approach [3]. Gentrification is a phenomenon in urban regeneration, compared to urban regeneration which emphasizes improving the physical environment, it includes the enhancement of the physical environment, but also pays greater attention to social concerns like social equality and residents' interests. Therefore, gentrification deserves more attention as it relates to social equity and justice [4]. Generally speaking, gentrification is known as the replacement of land users with higher socio-economic levels who take over the formers, accompanied by improvements to the built environment and capital reinvestment [5]. The objective of exploring gentrification is to propose a new method of thinking and a solution that takes into account social equality and residents' concerns.

In recent years, gentrification has been frequently mentioned in discussions of urban criticism, urban regeneration, and social mixing [6]. This is also a typical practice formed in the process of global urban development, aiming at changing the spatial form through commercial means, so as to counter the urban recession [7]. Many scholars have analyzed the middle class from both positive and negative aspects. Gentrification has certain advantages in the development of a large number of old cities, as it can bring new businesses to an area, promote the local economy, clear and organize dilapidated neighborhoods and enhance the overall spatial quality of the city. However, while the inner city's material environment and economic development have been improved, there is also negative effects of middle class, which generally promotes the development of urban spatial forms from a natural

evolution mode to abrupt mode [7]. This leads to the destruction of culture and networks, residents' isolation, inconvenience and conflict in the inner city community. In this case, it is particularly important to reflect critically on gentrification. Surprisingly, with the development of middle class in the world, a new phenomenon has emerged. For example, many cities in China have seen the urban regeneration of humanism on the basis of eliminating the negative effects of gentrification, in which local people's emotions are taken into account and new businesses are implanted. There is no conflict between newcomers and local people, and local culture has been protected and developed. Therefore, this type of gentrification urgently needs to be defined. Furthermore, gentrification involves urban equity and class issues, so it is very meaningful to continue to study it in-depth, especially from the perspective of the emotional changes of the locals and social equity in urban development, to build social harmony and spatial justice.

2. Related definitions and concepts

2.1 Definition and conceptual evolution of gentrification

The concept of gentrification was coined by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 [8], then director of the Centre for Urban Studies at University College London, which originated from the description of architectural succession and replacement in central London [9]. She thinks gentrification is a process, and the middle class replaces the old community by transforming the declining residential areas in the city. A decade later, Glass added a definition of gentrification as a process that incorporates residential regeneration, home ownership privatization, prices of rising houses, and the emergence of a "new middle class" to replace the working class [10]. According to Grasse's description, three changes in the block can be attributed to gentrification: (1) the regeneration of natural environment, such as residential houses, and the change of the cultural and architectural landscape. (2) the commercial economy, living expenses, and real estate prices are rising in the block. (3) Middle class's invasion of working-class neighborhoods caused the changes in demographic structure [11]. The process of inner-city change described by her is considered a classic concept of gentrification.

This is a relatively narrow definition. With the social transformation, industrial restructuring and economic globalization that began in the late 1970s in western developed countries, the connotation and scope of research on gentrification have been gradually expanded [12]. The academic literature trying to explain the development of gentrification is quite extensive, but it is based on three contradictory arguments. The first one, advanced by David Ley (1981,1996) and others, contends that gentrification is rooted in a change in industrial structure in large cities, with a transition from manufacture to service-based industry and a corresponding change in occupational structure [13], [14]. Secondly, David Ley (1980), Tim Butler (1997) and others think that due to the change of class composition, some new gentrification people have changed their cultural consumption, preferences and working mode [15], [12], which makes them prefer to live in the city center instead of commuting from the suburbs [16]. Thirdly, Neil Smith (1979, 1996) strongly opposed the previous explanation. In his opinion, the gentrification is not driven by the new gentrification (he denies the existence of the gentrification), but by the ever-widening gap between the house prices and land values in the downtown. He believes that during the growth of a metropolitan area, the level of potential land rent in the inner city is usually increasing. As buildings age and investment declines, real rents begin to shift to a trend of continuous depreciation, and the gap between real and potential rents grows so that capital begins to flow back when the gap is large enough that the profitability of redeveloping inner-city settlements can meet or exceed that of the suburbs. In Smith's words, gentrification reflects a movement by capital, not people, to return to the cities [17], [18]. However, there are some criticisms of Neil Smith's judgment in academic circles. Some scholars, including Professor Chris Hamnett (2003), put forward that "rent gap" can only occur in inner cities with prosperous potential, which should be accompanied by productive services, such as financial services, leading to an increase in space prices and create the conditions for the occurrence of the "rent gap" [10]. By contrast, the "rent gap" may not be possible to be created in places like Detroit and Liverpool where the inner city is declining, much less lead to further gentrification. Gentrification will only be mobilized as a primary

means of bridging the rent gap if there is sufficient effective demand for inner-city housing from the middle class, so "demand" is the key to the process.

Based on the above concepts, the discussion of gentrification in this paper chooses to stand on the perspective of demand. From basic needs: shelter, travel, safety satisfaction, and security, to quality needs: consumption preference, sense of belonging, humanized public services and compatible spatial environment, and finally reaching spiritual needs: realization of residents' life values, the experience of landscape and regional characteristics, ecological environment, landscape, and art. It reflects that gentrification pays more attention to the value of life, and has a strong demand for higher quality and more diversified public services. Therefore, in this perspective, the middle class and their preference for inner-city space are the main driving factors of gentrification, while the residents' emotional needs are one of the factors limiting the development of gentrification, and the two affect and balance each other. Therefore, it is important to explore the influence of consumer demand and the emotional needs of local people moving to the city on the development of gentrification and find a balance between them.

2.2 Positive and negative effects of gentrification

Gentrification has its positive and negative effects. The positive effects of gentrification on cities are reflected in many aspects. First of all, from the perspective of the urban environment, gentrification significantly improved the urban environment. In gentrified areas, neighborhoods can change from an initially run-down environment to an elegant one, such as revitalizing neighborhoods through investments in real estate, neighborhood landscaping, and building renovations, and changing the appearance of urban spaces by creating new architectural solutions, store designs, signs, artwork and excentre [19]. Secondly, in the aspect of urban economy, gentrification can bring about the effect of rapid urban regeneration through a large amount of capital investment, thus contributing to the development of urban economy. Thirdly, from urban industrial restructuring aspect, gentrification is a catalyst for industrial restructuring in cities. It is a process of replacing the low-income population with the high-income population. In this process, as the high-income population moves into the industrial parks, communities and tourist areas, it will greatly promote the tertiary industry in the area, and with the consumption demand of the high-income population, a large number of supporting industries will also move into the area. Finally, from the perspective of urban culture, gentrification can lead to the development of spaces and places with regional cultural characteristics in the inner city with a distinctive cultural orientation, increasing the visibility of the city [20].

However, gentrification also has negative consequences in practice. In addition to the change in the urban physical space, it also brings social and cultural changes, which are most important in this paper. First, in terms of urban spatial patterns, gentrification has accelerated spatial heterogeneity of residence. It makes the high-income group migrate to areas with high living advantages, while the low-income group are forced to migrate to areas with poor living conditions. Eventually, the spatial clustering of low-income and unemployed people in the urban periphery may lead to new poor communities [21], which may increase social divisions and intensify inter-class conflicts. Second, in terms of social interactions, most of the literature points to the divisive, negative effects between the newly moving class and the original community. Original communities have strong social cohesion attributed to their solid social networks, and this relationship is weakened during gentrification, so residents may lose some of their social networks after gentrification [22]. Thirdly, gentrification may have an impact on cultural heritage. This process may lead to a change in the use of some buildings, the replacement of the original community will make the dissemination of local culture lose its carrier, and the excessive commercial atmosphere may threaten the true expression of traditional way of life. Finally, in terms of commercial consumption, gentrification has mainly crowded out traditional stores and local people. When space commercialization occurs, the new stores target middle-class consumers and are not suitable for the original low-income class. This may lead to two types of divided commercial spaces within the community. With the increase of store rent, shops serving the low-income class are gradually excluded, and may move to the periphery or even close down, challenging the urban rights of low-income residents [23].

2.3 A "critical gentrification" perspective

By illustrating the relevant concepts and positive and negative effects of gentrification, a critical reflection on them emerges. In the early studies, the gentrification theories of Ruth Glass and Neil Smith and others were only analyzed at the socio-economic level, lacking the analysis from the perspective of architectural physical space and urban memory space. However, the development of gentrification today has taken on new derivations, such as commercial gentrification and rural gentrification. With the urban development mechanism in China continuing to be complicated, gentrification is showing new spatial characteristics and social impact. Therefore, previous theories are not enough to analyze existing urban problems, and it is necessary to consider gentrification from a more diversified perspective. In this paper, the new term "critical gentrification" refers to a theoretical attitude, which uses the geographical environment information of urban blocks to oppose the lack of identity and lack of place in urban renewal. Gentrification is one of the most common means of urban regeneration in China in recent years. In the past, urban constructors have only focused on the benefits of gentrification and ignored its negative impacts, while many urban regeneration projects are now considering mediating the negative impacts of gentrification, such as paying attention to the emotions of local people and preserving the humanistic features or historical atmosphere of the neighborhood. The current mainstream method is trying to improve the environment through small and micro-community participatory regeneration, to avoid the social injustice brought by large-scale urban regeneration. It is worth noting that there have been some regulations and examples of this practice. For example, the 《Shanghai Urban Regeneration Regulations》 which adopted on August 25,2021, insists on promoting "retention, replacement and demolition" simultaneously and focusing on protection and preservation, encouraging the micro-regeneration approach [24]; Another example in Xiamen Shapowei old city regeneration plan, the government insists on the principle of "land ownership untouched, spatial texture basically unchanged, residents unchanged, and human ecology unchanged", and encourages young people and artists to spontaneously carry out small-scale and progressive micro-regeneration [25]. Thus, the negative impact of gentrification is being corrected. .

In this paper, the revised attitude can perhaps be defined as "critical gentrification" and summarized in the following: (1) "Critical gentrification" although as a critique of gentrification, does not reject the positive aspects of gentrification in urban regeneration, it prefers small and micro rather than large-scale planning. The small-scale structure is also conducive to the reconstruction of urban self-organization and spatial spirit, and strengthens the emotional bond between the city and people. (2) When "critical gentrification" occurs, there will be changes in the local population, but unlike the class exclusion and replacement of Glass's theory, "critical gentrification" emphasizes the introduction of new residents while preserving the local people, and emphasizes more on the "addition" and "retention" of people rather than "replacement". (3) "Critical gentrification" emphasizes spontaneity and maintaining the vitality of the area, encouraging people to pay attention to other urban qualities beyond the visual, recognizing that people's experience of the city is not limited to the visual. It is equally sensitive to other cognitive functions such as smell and hearing, and it is the memory and recognition of urban space with content that creates a sense of intimacy, identity, and belonging. For example, the smells from plants in different parts of the city represent the olfactory memory belonging to that specific place, while the sounds from different public places in the city, such as food markets, bazaar, amusement park and excentre, represent the auditory memory. (4) "Critical gentrification" values the cultural needs and consumption of the gentrified group that David Ley emphasized, however, does not encourage elite culture but local culture with characteristics, emphasizing cultural originality and inclusiveness. (5) "Critical gentrification" tends to consider local regional culture and human characteristics in urban design, rather than encouraging the reduction of urban neighborhoods to pre-determined gentrification scenes (i.e., the "ABC" model of gentrification outlined by Sharon Zukin (2015): art galleries, boutiques, and cafes [26]), and promotes diversity over homogenization. (6) "Critical gentrification" perspective aims to guide a balance between future urban regeneration and the existing urban stock (including newcomers and local people, old and new commercial businesses, future urban construction and natural ecology, and excentre.). The way of interfering with them is as minimal as possible. As for the bringing in of new content, the form can be updated to encourage the

integration of the old and the new. (7) While "critical gentrification" opposes the kind of imitation of places and neighborhoods with feelings, it does not oppose the occasional interpretation of local elements and their injection into regeneration as a selective and detached technique or piece.

3. Case Study: "Jianguomen Old Market"Cultural and Creative District Regeneration in Xi'an, China

This paper involves two main concepts: urban regeneration and critical gentrification. The purpose of this paper is to explore the enlightenment of the old city renewal strategy under the perspective of criticizing the gentrification to the old cities reconstruction, so the selected case must satisfy both conditions. This case is chosen as the object of this research mainly because it meets the following conditions: firstly, its geographical location is in the built-up area of Xi'an, which is an old city with rich historical resources rather than an urban fringe area. Secondly, it is an urban regeneration activity led by the government and invested by developers. In addition, the value of the land here has increased after the regeneration. Most importantly, the practice of critical gentrification in urban renewal has been well illustrated here. It inherits the improvement of the physical environment brought by gentrification, mainly by investing in improving neighborhood relations, building quality and infrastructure level, while avoiding the negative impact of gentrification, keeping the original city memory and social characteristics of the neighborhoods unchanged, and achieving a balance between the newly relocated classes and the original residents.
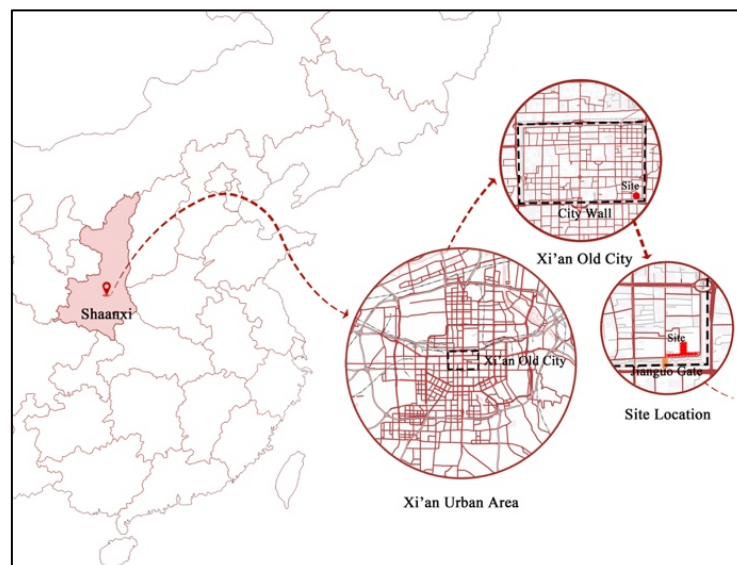
3.1 Overview

Figure 1. The location of Xi'an "Old Market"

Xi'an is the central city in western China and the capital of Shaanxi Province (Figure 1). Xi'an City Wall is the most complete ancient city wall remaining in China. "Jianguomen Old Market" Cultural and Creative District is located in the southeast corner of the old city of Xi'an Ming City Wall. It used to be a collective textile enterprise, and its velvet workshop and finished goods warehouse have become market, and now it has a history of 20 years. However, with the development of the city, the serious aging problem in this region makes it lack of urban vitality. As an initiation point, the original food market was completely preserved.
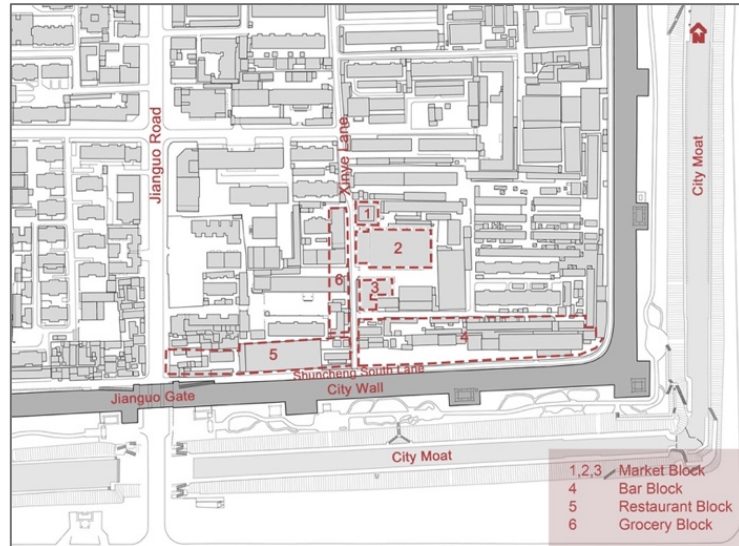
Figure 2. The plan of Xi'an "Old Market"

On the one hand, the strict regulations within the city walls and the limited funds of the investor do not allow large-scale demolition, but more importantly, the project hopes to maintain the living atmosphere and delicate balance of the original food market and introduce new functions, spaces and personnel on the basis of the existing community. Thus, the Jianguomen Old Market has been micro-regenerated and light-reconstructed, under the aims of "preserving the original living conditions of the residents" and "maintaining the market's urban appearance". The regeneration project covers Shuncheng South Lane, Xinyi Alley and the original food market, which is in the shape of a "T" on the map (Figure 2), consisting of five areas with a total construction area of 12,000 square meters.

3.2 The regeneration scheme

The Jianguomen original market was formerly known as Xi'an City Velvet Factory, which was established in 1952. In 2000, Xi'an City Velvet Factory ceased production, then the factory director led the staff to start a secondary business and established the original Jianguomen Market which only occupied an area of 7.5 acres at that time.

In 2004, due to the government's goal of widening roads, the Jianguomen market was faced with a demolition crisis. Xi'an Velvet Factory used the original vacant land and factory buildings to transform nearly 50 business rooms and several sales desks. The first floor of the original office building was transformed into a business area, adding garment area and catering area outside the original production building. After this transformation, the market expanded to 5,000 square meters, which can meet the living needs of nearly 100,000 residents in the surrounding area, and also solved re-employment and pension problems for many laid-off workers of the velvet factory. .

Figure 3. Comparison before and after regeneration (Source: [27])

In 2019, the regeneration project was put on the agenda, and the government began to upgrade the old building where Jianguomen old market was located, with the overall volume of the project reaching 12,000 square meters. Based on the concept of "micro-regeneration + light reconstruction",

Jianguomen old market has been transformed into the cultural and creative area of the old market (Figure 3).

3.3 Regeneration methods driven by critical gentrification

3.3.1 Industry Economy

In the aspect of business restructuring, the main core lies in the three dimensions of "addition", "replacement" and "reservation", so as to carry out reasonable integration between old and the new. The "plus" is to introduce new commercial types and increase the number of merchants. The project caters to the needs of young people in terms of recreation and daily life. More than 20 new stores were introduced to the project, followed by the introduction of new commercial types such as cafes, bars and photography studios. The most important is to combine the unique historical space environment to attract young people and tourists from the cultural heritage. "Change" means to replace the original homogeneous stores. Previously, the shops along the street mainly sold noodles, halogen products, dried fruits, roasted seeds and nuts, etc., which had a high coincidence rate with the market and had little impact on improving passenger flow. Therefore, coffee shops, bars and B&B stores were introduced to meet the needs of young people. "Retaining" is to preserve the original stores that carry the city's memories. In other words, retaining stores with memories means retaining the consumption needs and lifestyles of local people. For example, the original market which has been operating for 20 years is preserved, so that people can still hear the sound of the market and feel a sense of belonging, and fully embody the critical gentrification that emphasizes the quality of the city beyond the visual: the sense of hearing; And the "Old Bookstore Under the City Wall " is a second-hand bookstore with only two or three square meters but has been operating for many years, and the project is not overly designed but only environmental improvements to preserve the urban memory.

About 70% of the investment has now gone into the Old Market. buildings 4 and 5 are stores along Shuncheng South Lane, mainly restaurants including both local and foreign food, and are now largely rented out, building 6 retains traditional stores on the first floor, and adds a bookstore, barber store and grocery store on the second floor, buildings 1, 2 and 3 are mainly studios, private cafes and hand-buying stores. The original food market (building 2) is not included in this regeneration. From Table 1, it can be seen catering is still the main commercial, accounting for 57%, while the other four categories: culture, studio, retail and B&B respectively account for about 10%.

The regenerated market meets the differentiated needs of the original middle-aged and young consumers and is also in line with the rational integration of old and new businesses encouraged by critical gentrification. These businesses make the old market become a complex cultural space. The preservation of the original market also echoes the emphasis on preserving the memory of urban space in the critical gentrification. In addition, the newly implanted bars, restaurants and B&Bs bring a vibrant night-time economy to the old market, bringing in and retaining the young consumers.

3.3.2 Demographics

Through the article 'Research on the Renovation of Xi'an Jianguomen Market' written by Chaoyang Li (2020), it can be found that the original population in the Jianguomen Market area mainly consists of three types of people: residents, consumers, and vendors. Population type is limited, with consumers as the mainstay, followed by residents and vendors. The customers who come to Jianguomen Market basically live near the residential area, and the majority of them are middle-aged and elderly people. Because of the cheap rent and relatively advantageous location, many immigrant workers are attracted to rent here. In the population structure survey, there are more middle-aged and elderly people over 60 years old, accounting for 36%, aged 46 to 60 years old account for 22%, those aged 30 to 46 years old account for 25%, and aged 18 to 30 years old account for 17% (Table 2). In his interviews, he found that most of the elderly people are used to living here and do not want to move out of the area, but their children move out due to the poor living environment. The vendors are mainly immigrant workers from outside the area, and they mainly rent in the neighborhoods. Most of the young residents in this area have been evacuated, so the young people in this area are mostly tenants. Therefore, it can be seen

that the surrounding areas before regeneration are seriously aging, and the young people there will not enter such areas or participate in the daily life of this area [28].

Based on the issues above, the Old Market responds to the critical gentrification that emphasizes the "addition" and "retention" of people rather than "replacement" in terms of demographics. In order to preserve the emotional interactions among the local people, an experimental "Vegetable Market Conference" in 2018 brought together vendors and community residents through various art forms such as exhibitions and performances. This is a multi-actor project that brings together different social forces, with the support of the government, many former factory workers, operators and local people, but also designers, artists, architects, and new store owners who have intervened in the project to discuss the next step of the transformation. By cooperating with the residents at an early stage and respecting their original lifestyle, the city authorities introduced new fashion elements, such as cafes, bars, B&Bs, exhibitions and photo studios, which attracted a large number of young people, including tourists, craftsmen, artists, university entrepreneurs and excentre.

3.3.3 Social Culture

On the basis of respecting the market culture, the old market embeds diversified art and local cultural activities into the space to create a good social and cultural atmosphere. This reflects the tendency of critical gentrification to consider the local culture and human characteristics in the regeneration process, rather than reducing the Old Market to a pre-determined gentrification scene, protecting the cultural attributes of the Old Market and its surroundings. The location of the Old Market is in the old city of Xi'an, surrounded by many historical attractions, based on this, the Old Market from the culture as the cut-in point to create city image, artistic activities related to the local culture was introduced to there and the abandoned factory on the third floor was transformed into an art exhibition hall where regularly held various art exhibitions and flash activities of art history. Art interventions, also known as "field interference" plan, aims to attract more local community residents to know the surrounding environment and pay attention to social affairs through the planning and implementation of art activities, so as to be perfectly integrated with public art activities [29]. So far, the Old Market has held different forms of art interventions such as Terrace Theater, second-hand market, Tang dynasty cultural performance, art exhibition and independent coffee festival, increasing the external attractiveness of the public space, thus attracting a large number of young people back to the market and greatly activating the spatial vitality.

3.3.4 Physical Environment

In terms of shaping the physical space, the Old Market combines the architectural symbols of the old industrial style with modern elements through micro-regeneration, while retaining a community space with a living atmosphere, it also introduces the capital space dominated by gentrification, which illustrates the characteristics of critical gentrification without rejecting the positive aspects brought by gentrification, and tends to be involved in small and micro situations (Figure 4).

(1) Making use of existing buildings for space light reconstruction. Instead of just overturning and rebuilding, the original façade and structure of the Xi'an Velvet Factory in the regeneration were retained, and factory rooms were put into use again after transforming their functions. Some of the old equipment was also made into emerging the landmarks, such as wells, rooftops, terraces, and so on. What is more, the Old Market uses the existing spatial layout to divide the block into four major sections, forming a system with courtyards as units. The open steps and graffiti hanging garden create a comfortable social environment, moreover, from the perspective of the landscape, the hanging garden has an open view and various functions, and a view corridor with the city wall is established. Besides, the new step square connects several elevations of the public corridor and No. 1 and No. 2 buildings, providing a good place for people to communicate. (2) Adding landscape elements and pocket parks at street entrance spaces and turning points. A landscape fountain and steps are set up at the entrance of Xinyi lane to create a good entrance space and attract people. A pocket park was built at the corner of the street to provide a place for people to rest and communicate. (3) Retaining the location and pattern of the original shops, redesigning the signboard to make it unified but unique. On the left side

of Xinyi lane is a row of traditional stores, after the regeneration, each store has a small logo designed by the Old Market operating members hanging on the top, which is both unified and distinctive.
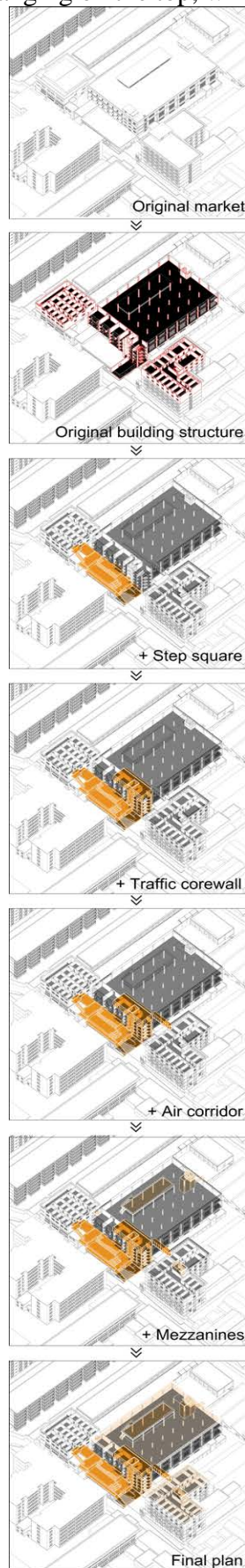

Figure 4. Plan generation (Source: [27])

4. Reference and Inspiration

In the process of critical gentrification carried out in the Jianguomen Old Market in Xi'an, many experiences can be used for reference by other cities. First of all, in the aspect of the physical environment, there is no large-scale demolition and construction, but the use of existing buildings for some micro regeneration. In terms of business format, it also has reservations and has added stores with elements interested by young people at present, while stimulating the night economy. In terms of social and cultural construction, art activities are often held to enable tourists, merchants and the locals to participate at the same time. In the early stage of the project, it cooperated with local residents and the merchants to hold a meeting to solicit the transformation intention, respect the lifestyle of the locals, and ensure that the living conditions of the locals will not be disturbed when the new population enter. At the same time, the new population will stimulate economic development. It is a suitable interpretation of achieving a balance between population and business format brought by the critical gentrification.

Some regeneration inspirations on critical gentrification can also be learned from this case: (1) From government-led to multi-party participation. Critical gentrification is an activity involving multiple stakeholders such as the government, developers, middle class, and residents. However, China's top-down planning and construction makes the negative impact of gentrification in the process of regeneration not get real-time feedback and control, which is not conducive to social equity and integration. In order to realize the maximization of social benefits of critical gentrification, the value orientation of regeneration strategy should be from government leading to multiple participation, and promoting multiple stakeholders corporate together. In addition, "multi-party participation" provides an effective way for vulnerable groups to express their own interests, which makes the previously neglected development needs to be reconsidered; On the other hand, it also causes the residents to think about the improvement of living environment, and then participate in urban construction. (2) Balancing the interests of middle-class newcomers and the locals, realizing integration and sharing. In the process of gentrification, there is no doubt that the realization of the interests of the newcomers, in this process, they occupy the high-quality urban spatial resources at low cost, and transform the area into a place that meets their own living and consumption habits, such as promoting the transformation of the traditional industrial structure of the area, driving the upgrading of cultural and recreational facilities and public spaces [30]; Although some local people have enjoyed the "trickle-down effect" brought by the gentrification [31], such as infrastructure upgrading and landscape restoration, they are more often forced to migrate under the influence of rising property prices, industrial upgrading and higher consumption levels, and lose their rights to use high-quality spatial resources, while at the same time, the unbalanced urban social and spatial structure is formed. Therefore, balancing the interests of both in the critical gentrification and fully protecting the interests of local people is the key to effectively control urban regeneration and promote healthy critical gentrification development. Balancing the interests of newcomers and local people can be achieved through government control, local community participation, and restraining market development methods. Besides, based on balancing interests, integration and coexistence should be promoted, such as building mixed settlements and sharing public space, so that critical gentrification regeneration can become an urban construction activity that benefits all social classes, rather than a capital operation tool for the elite. (3) Intervening in local cultural activities and reproducing the urban space spirit. In the context of urban micro-regeneration trends, critical gentrification should insist on the exploration of humanities. Through the intervention of public art related to local culture, creative regeneration on the original appearance can be carried out, which is a progressive and humanistic-oriented approach. Whether it is the placement of artworks into the space or the intervention of art activities, the essence is the combination of the local culture and the modern trendy culture, mobilizing public participation and interactivity. At the same time, the traditional urban space is given more possibilities, such as changing from a traditional commodity trading space to a cultural field with public meaning, and carrying more

functions for the daily life of residents, in order to activate community vitality and make the city warmer.

5. Conclusion

Since the 1990 s, urban regeneration has been carried out in parallel with urban expansion in major cities in China, but it is often spontaneous and lacks systematic and clear target value orientation, leading to more problems such as insufficient attention to urban history and culture, which makes the cultural characteristics of some cities disappear. Nowadays, urban regeneration has become the main content of urban construction and development, and has entered a new stage of quality enhancement, which has begun to focus on urban connotation development, urban quality improvement and industrial transformation and upgrading. As an important attitude of urban renewal, critical gentrification is important to learn from the development of existing cities, maximize its positive role and avoid its negative impact on urban social space. Critical gentrification driven urban regeneration is still in the exploratory stage. This paper focuses on the impact of critical gentrification on commercial spaces in old cities, so the impact of critical gentrification on other spaces such as education, tourism, historical districts, or villages can be continued to explore in the future. In addition, in other cities in China, even in a more complex international background, different social systems, development stages, humanistic environment and economic levels will make the forms and trends of critical gentlemanliness more diverse, complex and contradictory. Meanwhile, these converging but diverse responses will continue to enrich the theory of critical gentrification - pursuing a balanced development of urban equity and urban efficiency.

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