



**Politecnico  
di Torino**

# **Honors Thesis**

---

**Master of Science in Architecture Construction City**

**Abstract**

**From Urban Village to Urban Community:  
A regeneration proposal for Shixia Village in Shenzhen**

**Tutors**

**Prof. Marco Trisciuglio  
Prof. Liu Jian**

**Candidate**

**Riccardo Biondi**

**July 2021**

---

Although in the last years the Urban Villages in Shenzhen have been finally recognized as crucial to the city's past and present fast growth, their fate, especially for the ones within the former borders of the Special Economic Zone, is demolition. This work of thesis aims at proposing a design approach at the village local level that could possibly enhance its built-up and social capital, by-products of the rapid modernization, in order to allow Village residents to acquire a Shenzhen civic identity that represents them on the local scale, and to acquire the awareness that the "Shenzhen Dream" cannot consist of either success or failure, but of the slow organic identity construction of migrants inhabiting an urban context which they have dreamed of since its origins.

To do that, the thesis investigates the social and spatial conditions of urban villages in the city on a general level, verifies the results of theorists and practitioners on the topic, and looks at the specific case of Shixia Village, a settlement in central Futian, close to the Central Business District, which has not been of particular interest in the existing literature, but identified as remediable among the ones in the "Shenzhen Urban Village Comprehensive Remediation Plan (2018-2025)". In fact, Shixia has underwent a general outlook cleaning, and the demolition of one third of its surface just to house the umpteenth podium-towers complex.

Recognizing the demolition as necessary for the development of healthier living conditions for residents, the thesis investigates the history, the layout and the typological conformation of this Village, in order to develop a design proposal which establishes a certain relation with the preexisting parts and the new ones, providing the village with new public spaces accessible to all members of Shixia. Unlike the governmental proposals, the research does not relegate Shixia to a fixed past moment in time, but it keeps the place active and involved in its future development, continuing the stratifying metamorphosis of the Village started with its intensification in the 1980s during the birth of the Special Economic Zone.