

Urban Renewal Planning Practice and Form in Early-modern Guangxi (1925-1936)

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Aiming at the old cities renovation planning practice by Guangxi Government with their military and political power from the 1920s to the 1930s, who were local warlords before and formed the New Kwai Clique ruling with Three People's Principles and Material Development Planning under the guidance of Sun Zhongshan, the paper analyzes the evolution Characteristics of urban form in the four major cities, which was Wuzhou, Liuzhou, Nanning and Guilin, includes that demolishing the walls, constructing ring roads at the original sites, straightening streets of cities, expanding and changing them to roads, then building arcades on both sides to escape the rain and the sun, and finally adding the public facilities with drainage, docks, water and power supply, and so on, that could be considered as existed old city reconstruction with gradual developments. And it also shows that planning criss-cross roads network in a new district outside the old cities of the jumping rhythm by with new urban core. Either the former or the latter were both applying western planning theories for the purpose of improving and beautifying the urban environment. While presenting different urban forms, it could be sum up that the pattern went to the style "Streets City → Arcades City → Roads City", with which presented the modernization appearance by the way to "Streets → Roads → Roads Net", that Presenting a new look of the Roadism characteristics of urban renewal planning, and which had important significance and influence on its subsequent urban planning. Investigate the reasons of urban changes, on which it has an important impact the dominant ideologies of the government leaders to mobilize the social forces and achieve modernization quickly, belongs to the subjective consciousness of municipal decision-makers, just the "City will", which has a special effect in changes for functions, space and pattern of cities, participated in urban planning management and led the development trend.

Keywords: Chinese early-modern city planning, Guangxi, city renewal, new city planning, the New Kwai Clique

Introduction

On November 7, 1911, Guangxi, a province of China was independence. Lu Rongting, the leader of the Old Kwai Clique, established Guangxi Military Government, and moved the provincial capital from Guilin City to Nanning, on which the political power sphere formed centering. Although Office of Demolishing Walls and Building Roads was set up in in 1917, which brought an initial development for Nanning, but the construction emphasis was still on the army's reorganization. Untill March 1925, Li Zongren, Huang Shaohong and Bai Chongxi, who defeated the Old Kwai Clique by wars, and teamed the warlords group too, the New Kwai Clique, and established the new military provincial government affiliated to Guangzhou National Government, and began a comprehensive construction practice in the fields of politics, military, economic and culture. They founded the Guangxi Military

Political Council and Guangxi Kuomintang Political Army Joint Conference for making decisions on the important civil affairs, formed a semi-autonomous local regime confronting with Jiang Jieshi's dictatorship of Nanjing National Government until October 1936, when and which the Guangxi Provincial Government Committee replaced and belonged to became the most influential provincial government. During the period, they responded to Sun Zhongshan's calling to carry out industrial construction, and made the first task to cities construction at the same time. With the rapid growth of commercial ports trade and population, the pattern of the existed traditional urban had become cramped because of space expansion, walls sealing and dense streets, the traditional urban form changed greatly. This paper would focus on the urban renovation planning and practice from 1925 to 1936 in major cities of Guangxi Province with the intent to discuss the evolution characteristics of modern urban planning under the role of local administrative subject in China.

Ruling Ideas of Guangxi Military Government and Practice of Early-modern City Planning in Guangxi

1. Ruling Ideas of Guangxi Military Government

In January 1923, after sending troops against Chen Jiongmeng, who was one of the warlords in Guangdong Province, Sun Zhongshan returned to took the oath as generalissimo in Guangzhou, pointed out the political slogan "Unifying Guangxi and Northern Expeditions" as the action mission. And through a second war wage in Guangdong and Guangxi Provinces, the forces of the warlords outside were removed successfully, especially Shen Hongying, Lu Rongting's former ministry, and TANG Jiyao, the warlord in Yunnan Province. In the period of February to July in 1925, the remnants of the Old Kwai Clique were eradicated completely. The New Kwai Clique was supported to control the whole territory of Guangxi Province by Sun Zhongshan. And Guangxi Provincial Civil Affairs Bureau was established subordinate to Guangzhou National Government. And then the military and civil administration authorities were both controlled by the commander-in-chief, Li Zongren, after which Guangxi Provincial Government was set up according to *Unified Plan of Guangdong and Guangxi* voted through the Kuomintang Central Political Conference in June 1926, the unification was finally officially realized. But due to Sun Zhongshan's will, Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi must be sent to the northern expedition, had no attention to provincial affairs. So Huang Shaohong, the representative of Kuomintang Army VII and the 15th Military Commander of the National Revolutionary Army previously, had replaced him to be the chairman of the government, managing civil affairs as a soldier. The military and political rule in Guangxi was revealed.

In June 1928, Bai Chongxi brought the Gui Army to occupy Beijing and overthrow the Beiyang Government, the northern expedition won, and the national was reunified, which threatening the ruling power of Nanjing National Government directly established by Jiang Jieshi on April 18, 1927. The sharp contradiction led to the War Jiang & Kwai between March and May in 1929, ending with the failure and division of the New Kwai Clique. Then Huang Shaohong went separate ways from Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi. Also owing to the event of Hu Hanmin under house arrest of, who was a patriarch of the Kuomintang, and occurrence of the *Draft Law of the Democratic Republic of China* adopted at the National Assembly, an extraordinary session in the Central Committee of the Kuomintang was held, Guangzhou National Government was founded against Jiang Jieshi on 28 May once again. The army of the New Kwai Clique was reorganized as the 4th Army of the National Revolutionary

Army, and the Provincial Government rebuilt in Nanning on July 1, 1931, so kept being semi-independent from the state of Nanjing National Government consistently.

However, not long after the New Kwai Clique formed, under the introduction of Liao Zhongkai, the member of the Kuomintang Reshuffle and Interim Central Executive Committee, Huang Shaohong, Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi had contacted with Sun Zhongshan and joined the Kuomintang in August 1923 successively, given away two books, *Three People's Principles* and *Easy to Know* by Sun Zhongshan, emphasizing that the revolution and its spirit were the sources of all the Kuomintang motivation, in which the mission of sticking at the end of the revolution and rebuilding new Guangxi encouraged and the theories foundation for the new Guangxi government laid. Therefore, influenced by Sun Zhongshan's thoughts, by 1932, the Policies of "New Civil Society", "Triune Brain", "Three-self" and "Three Fable"¹ containing local characteristics were put forward, to be ruling ideology of the provincial government.

Until 1936, *Agreement of Salvation* was signed by the New Kwai Clique with Jiang Jieshi represent the Nanjing National Government, said that the Central Government must stop its forces and maintain the existed provincial regime of Guangxi, with a slogan that "stopping civil wars and organizing a broad national united front against for Japanese invaders". Because of the appointment of Li Zongren to be the director of Appeasement Government and Bai Chongxi to be a standing committee of the Military Commission in Guangxi accept orders from Nanjing National Government on September 6 of the same year, they must conduct military operations in war zones and central government, Huang Xuchu had been recommend to be the chairman of Guangxi Provincial Government, who was the new member of the New Kwai Clique after War Jiang & Kwai. They moved the provincial capital back to Guilin City, which was also the hometown of Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi. At the same time, being the highest public decision-making body, the military nature of the of Guangxi Provincial administrative subject was ending and towards civil affairs². That is to say, it had truly achieved the governance of Nanjing National Government.

2. Urban Renovation Planning and Construction Practice in early-modern Guangxi

On December 7, 1921, when leading Northern Expedition, Sun Zhongshan gave a speech on the welcome reception of the 76th Military Government Groups in Guilin, had suggested to study and improve the streets style in Guangzhou with building running roads and enhance land value. On October 8 of the same year, Wuzhou City Hall established, which was the second city after Guangzhou in China, and Dai Ensai as the mayor, who was Sun Zhongshan's son-in-law. But the initial form of the municipal system was short-lived. In 1922, the Municipal Engineering of Wuzhou sut up and started the urban construction, to be the first city in early-modern Guangxi. In July 1923, Li Jishen was appointed to be the Supervision for Subsequent Affairs in Xijiang river system by Sun Zhongshan. In order to improve the congestions and walls barrier of Wuzhou City, he proposed to learn from Guangzhou for a city reconstruction planning with which the redevelopment model was building new roads on the site of the demolition of ancient walls, and streets pattern and building specifications were imitated through widening streets to roads and building the arcades on both sides, the new roads net network was emerging, and continued (Figure 1). With the promotion of Wuzhou's municipal

¹ TAN Zhaoyi. Three-self policy and the Military Government of the New Kwai Clique, http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_61e149480100kshd.html (Sina Blog, 2010).

² HUANG Shaohong. *Memories at the Age of Fifty*. (Changsha: Yuelu Book Club, 1999),162.

construction, Municipal Preparatory Offices in Nanning and Liuzhou were both set up in 1927 by the provincial government of the New Kwai Clique. The city construction of Nanning started from the transformation of existed urban areas, there were 7 streets broadened in the 1920s, excluding Minsheng Road, Delin Road, Xingning Road and Minquan Road and so on, but the demolition of walls had been slow, which was completed until 1951. However, because of having a good geographical location, the construction of Liuzhou began at a new urban planning in 1928 located in the Da Longling area near the southwest bank of Liu River³, according to Huang Shaohong's proposition of moving the provincial capital from Nanning to Liuzhou, where the economic construction and the practice of "industrial center" were actively carried out, and the old urban streets on the same as the new district side was promoted too. But the plan had met with a lot of opposition in the provincial administration, Forcing Huang Shaohong to take another detour to order Guangxi Provincial Construction Department to go ahead with the construction of Guangxi Products Exhibition firstly preparing for the relocation of the provincial capital. The previous venue was to plan the new administrative centre of Guangxi Province in the future. Relatively later, Guilin Municipal Office was established in 1932, which the city streets were widened by 8 to 30m wide standard, the south of city walls was broken to expand combining with mountains and rivers outward, the landscape pattern of mountains, waters, and urban formed. On May 26, 1940, Guilin Municipal Government was officially established, it also the only one city in Guangxi Province before liberation in 1949.

Evolution and Characteristics of Urban Form of Major Cities in Early-modern Guangxi

Through the analysis of the planning and practicing process of the four major early-modern cities (Table 1), Nanning, Liuzhou, Wuzhou and Guilin, it can be concluded that the evolution process of modern urban form generally included the following two characteristics:

| City | Key Time | Major Planning and Construction Activities | Description of Urban Form Evolution |
|---------|-----------|--|---|
| Nanning | 1917 | Office of Demolishing Walls and Building Roads set up, West Gate and West Street Opened, East Gate demolished | Initial expansion of urban space |
| | 1920 | Municipal Agency set up, Zhongshan Road Opened | |
| | 1926-1927 | Guangxi Provincial Government set up, Municipal Agency established, Zhongshan Park and Commercial Port Park opened, Cangxi Gate and South Gate demolished, Great Road opened outside the city | |
| | 1931-1934 | Municipal Works Bureau set up, area of Guangxi Provincial Government Offices built, Minquan, Delin, Minsheng, Gonghe, Minzu and Taoyuan Roads opened, residential and racecourse in Taoyuan Area and Ting Zixu Road in south of Yong Raver | Urban streets renovation, Extending along the edge of the city town |
| Liuzhou | 1917 | The path outside the city expanded to be Wenhui Road, South Gate opened | Breaking through the core of old town, Roads Planning with Baroque and Grid methods |
| | 1926.7 | The First Executive Council Meeting of Liuzhou and Qingyuan held and Peixin Road opened, | |
| | 1927 | Municipal Preparatory Office set up, Jiahe Road opened | |
| | 1928-1929 | Construction Affairs Office after Fire set up, Plan of new town and streets drawn, Yufeng and Gubu Roads opened | Initial expansion of urban space, Renovation of traditional interior streets |
| | 1930-1933 | Liujiang County restored, and construction bureau established, North Gate demolished, Beida, Dongda, Qingyun, Yingshan, Luoichi and Xingren Roads opened | |
| | 1933-1936 | Municipal construction committee set up, Liuyin Road and Sha Street opened, South Gate, Small South and West Gate demolished, South Xiaonan and Xida Road | |
| Guilin | 1932-1936 | Municipal Engineering Office and instead of Works Bureau set up, Ningyaun Gate, Bell and drum towers demolished, destroy the bluestone streets, western-style buildings rebuilt, Beiji, Guibei, Zhongbei, Zhongnan, Guinan, Nanxun, Guidong, Guixi, Huanhu, Dongzhen, Diecai, Furong, Fengbei, Xihua, Donghua, Zhonghua, Lequn and Taiping Roads and so on, Remove illegal buildings, Provincial Government moved back | Urban streets renovation, Extending along the edge of the city town |
| Wuzhou | 1921.10.8 | Wuzhou City Hall set up | Town center area expanded |
| | 1922-1926 | Wuzhou Municipal Engineering Department set up, Urban Renewal Programme by LI Jishen, North Mountain Park and Zhongshan Memorial Hall opened, Arcade Building Regulations formulated | |
| | 1927-1933 | Wuzhou Municipal Government and Works Bureau set up, Wufang, Jiufang, Sifang, Guilin, Zhu'an, East Great, Juren, Changsha, Hedi, Pingle, Dazhong, West Great, Danan and Xiaonan Roads Widened, the docks Transformed and planned, HeBin park | Urban streets renovation, Extending along the edge of the city town |

³ Ibid., 35.

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|--|-------------------------------|--|
| | and Guangxi University opened | |
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Table 1: Reform Planning Practice and Urban Morphology Evolution of Modern Cities in Guangxi.

1. Gradual Breakthrough of Traditional Urban Contour and Existed Old City Reconstruction

The Sino-French War broke out in 1883. The imperialist powers entered Guangxi. The commerce ports of Longzhou, Wuzhou, and Nanning were opened up in 1887, 1897 and 1901 respectively. France and the United Kingdom successively set up the consulates to carry out foreign trade, resulting in the gradual disintegration of the self-sufficient natural economy. In 1901, Zhang Mingqi, Guangxi Provincial governor of the Qing dynasty responded positively to the “New Policy” of the Qing Government, by means of developing economy, setting up education, and strengthening local rule. It promoted the rapid development of industry and commerce, which made the drawbacks of the ancient towns in major cities of Guangxi had gradually revealed. Walls had become an obstacle to the development of urban space, the abuse of narrow streets was hit by the emergence of early-modern advanced transportation so in the 1920s and 1930s, the renovation of the old city planning and practice in major cities of Guangxi was launching, which shows removing walls and building new roads firstly. It was going on opening new city gates, even the demolition of the city walls, and the construction of roads around or outside the city to realize the modernization of the cities’ image preliminary. And then, after the establishing of municipal administration, it was continued for achieving the modernization of city’s functions at the same time to widen and straighten the streets into roads, pull down residential buildings and construct arcade blocks. Finally, to demonstrate the modernization of the urban landscape fully, it was finished up with the expansion of urban space, district planning, and roads group construction.

From Table 1, it could be seen that the spatial forms of the major cities in Guangxi were separating in and out once because of the walls. Through the transformation from gates to large area of the city walls gradually, and the closed space of the existed old cities had been opened up step by step. Simultaneously, the streets of inner cities had also expanded increasingly, which strengthened the connection between the inner and external traffic. Where occupied a large area of walls base former had been lied new roads, the space was saved, and the openness of the cities was immediately apparent, with which the urban land utilization rate was improved, and established material foundation for promoting to modernization entirely. In the process of removing walls, the traditional urban structure centred on political and religious architectures serving the feudal regime was played down steadily, and the nature and layout of urban lands had been adjusted. Among them, there were modern transportation buildings such as stations and wharfs appeared, and the basic facilities planning of bridges, water supply, drainage, public transportation and street lamps system and so on, which drove the development of surrounding commercial areas, also changed the lands use of cities and improved the quality of urban lives significantly. The new urban extension axis gradually was framing, and instead of which the urbanized public spaces were replaced. In addition to the original commercial streets, the recreational, entertainment, educational and cultural activities areas in urban space were transformed and planned one by one, for examples, Zhongshan Park, Botanical Garden, Library and Theatre constructed in Nanning City, adding to Guangxi University and Beishan Park built in Wuzhou City etc., which made the required functional structure of modern cities was completed gradually, it could be comprehended to a gradual breakthrough reconstruction of Existed Urban Contour.

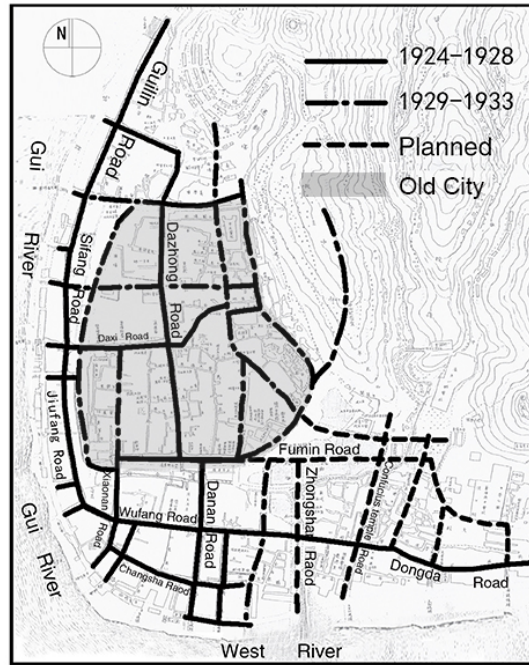


Figure 1: Map of Early-modern Roads Planning and Construction.

2. Connotation Reconstruction of Urban Spatial Structure and Planning New Additional District

According to the analysis of the urban form by the reconstruction planning of early-modern cities in Guangxi, there were two main forms and methods for the urban space expansion by the governments, that were updating inward and jumping outward respectively. Under the regulation of urban land market, the former emphasized the growth of the interior transformation, which was based on the constant external outline and urban form through the adjustment of the city's internal function structure, to improve the spatial distribution and economic benefits of urban development, and make the edge of urban space expanded along the original urban contour steadily, by which the internal modification of old cities was doing step by step for the basic purpose of progressive urban renewal ultimately, just like the Wuzhou City, because of the commercial superiority of old town in the east of Gui River, the urban form expanded gradually around the old city, and the city quality had been improved too (Figure 1).

Contrast with the latter, jumping outward often keeping a certain distance far from the city town, often showed to be on edge-like or enclave-type gathering, and also generally grouped. It often accompanied by a faster contact path, that resulting in the dual core of urban space structure, which could promote the rationalization by guaranteeing good environmental quality in a certain area, and accomplish the basic purpose of extensional urbanization rapidly, such as the Guilin City (Figure 2), due to the late start of planning, which construction was slow, the form of city jumped, but showed a slow expansion. And also the Nanning City (Figure 3), the Commercial Area was developed itself earlier in QING Dynasty was redeveloped in 1933, the outline of the city expanded gradually too. Not quite like them, because of the construction of province removal, new district plan of Liuzhou City was more prominent (Figure 4), the form was expanded outside the existed urban area. And across the Liu River to the south bank, there were roads planned and reconstructed in blocks with the administrative centre region project, which was draw up by the typical baroque classicalism planning concept, had earned its first pattern.

On the other hand, neither the former city reconstruction nor the latter new area planning, in detail, Guangxi Provincial Government had made the reconstruction plan for widening and straightening the inner streets, focusing on building the old street into a road in the form of a central lane and sidewalks on both sides, which style could protect you from the sun, wind and rain, called arcade road, paving the material of asphalt, triads or cement to improve the road conditions, for examples, Zhongshan Road planning in Wuzhou (Figure 5), still in the drawing stage, the arcades and the sewers below the streets were both designed, and Yufeng Road built in Liuzhou, which was the widest road in Guangxi(Figure 6). Like this method planning and constructing the streets from a street to a road, could be constituted a coherent “Arcade City”, that was the one character. Through the “arcade-style” transformation of the streets in cities, supplemented by modern municipal facilities, the businesses, banks, entertainments and other new material factors were gathered with the capitalist nature, and formed the embryo of the “central business district” of modern cities in it. And the centre of “arcade city” continued to spread and renewed, showing the progressive expansion of urban planning characterization.

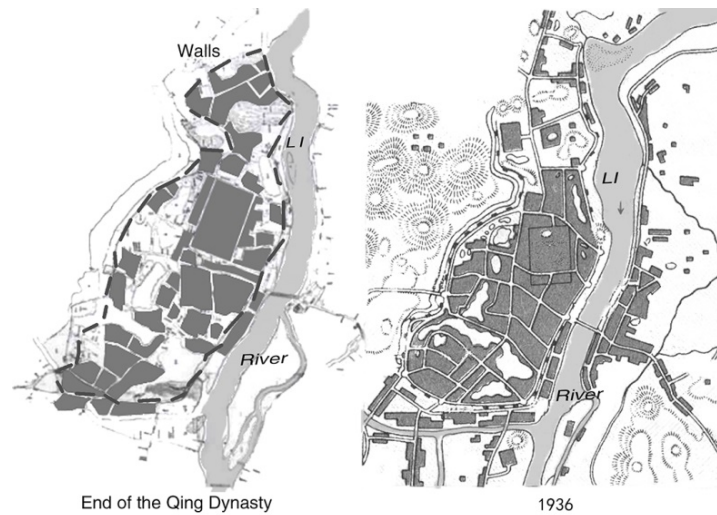


Figure 2: Evolution of Modern Urban Morphology in Guilin.

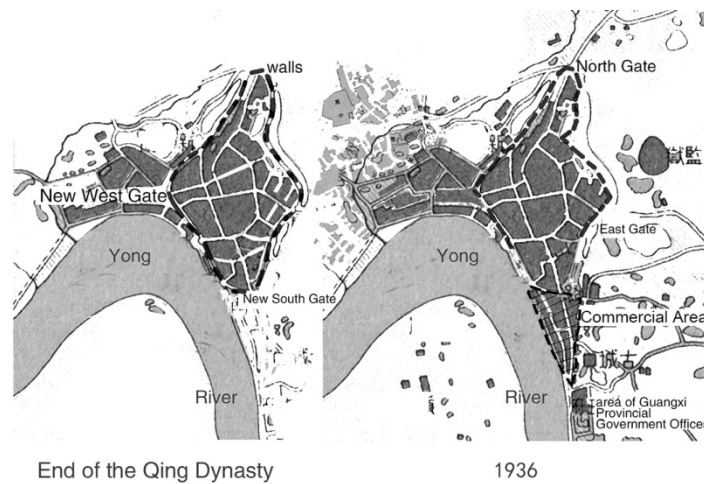


Figure 3: Evolution of Modern Urban Morphology in Nanning.

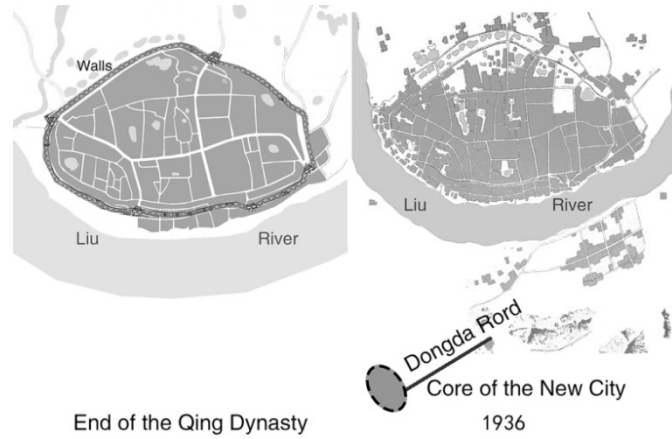


Figure 4: Evolution of Modern Urban Morphology in Liuzhou.

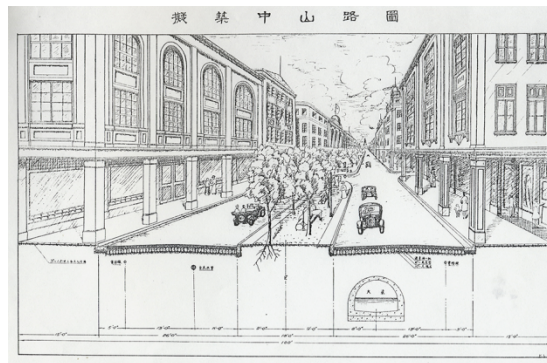


Figure 5: Section of Zhongshan Road Designed by Wuzhou Works Bureau in 1928.



Figure 6: Yufeng Road of Liuzhou Built in 1930.

In this way, the mess in the old business district could be solved to promote the prosperity of commerce. In addition, the goal of the government to build and improve roads, and carry out unified transformation planning in existed urban areas, could be achieved, which emphasized the nationalism cultural connotation. By contrast, the planning layout of jumping outward selected a wider area as a new urban area, avoiding the existed old urban areas, relatively small cities, and then built new infrastructures and social service facilities, thus constituted a new city skeleton, which Urban spatial planning characteristics reflected. With this approach, it was feasible to reduce the difficulty of urban redeveloping while increase the overall sense of the cities and improve the stability of the layout and

the efficiency of planning implementation and construction. It was more advantageous to the opening formation of new urban spatial structure.

Conclusion and Implications

In urban construction, the modernization goal of government leader, the ruling regime and the cultural construction constituted subjective factors to dominate construction, it could be not ignored. On the contrary, the functions, space, and pattern of the city could reflect the “City Will” of the municipal decision-makers, which played a special guiding role in the development direction of urban forms. The leaders of the New Kwai Clique, with a solid idea of Chinese Development thoughts to establish the modernization cities by Sun Zhongshan, had obvious influence on the overall construction of early-modern cities in Guangxi. They made the key measures for improving the physical construction of Guangxi using of political power infused by western planning thoughts and technologies, especially the changes of urban material environment with their subjective for consciousness roads reconstruction and “Arcade City” appearance.

In view of the practice to planning and construction in major cities of Guangxi, could mainly manifested two ways. First, through the removal of walls and roads construction around the cities, the interior of the old towns was refined with function and decoration, the edge was extended along the contour line of the old cities, which can be summed up as “updating inwards” with a transformation of “streets to roads”. But homochromous, due to the diversity of functional requirements new urban areas were designated and developed far away from the old towns, and the new cities expanding outward leapingly, which was summarized as “jumping outward” with a larger scales planning of “a road to roads network”. In a word, the traditional urban form had been renewed fundamentally in the way to “Streets→Roads→Roads Net”, and the appearance presented went to the style “Streets City→Arcades City→Roads City” for modernization, which the Roadism⁴ characteristics of urban renewal planning were, and had important significance and influence on its subsequent urban planning.

The development and construction of cities cannot be separated from culture. The old city is just the product of historical accumulation and urban development, although whose function couldn’t adapt to the new basic material needs, the context of its features and value wouldn’t not disappear. The early-modern renewal of the old cities in Guangxi proved its certain historical limitations for lack of historical and cultural preservation by the removal of old walls, gates, buildings and other heritages. But objectively speaking, the city reformations were performed mainly by respecting for the texture of the old cities and maintaining the traditional street pattern for the infrastructure. The reconstruction of the arcade blocks brought changes in the urban landscape and enhanced urban pedestrian functions, which were left to the present day, how valuable the traditional urban culture implied and the regional characteristics of adaptability reflected for modern cities. Therefore, the old city renewal planning should analyze the location conditions and historical context, to protect old landscapes and create the urban features.

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⁴ LI Baihao, GUO Jian. Urban planning and Culture in Early-modern China. (Wuhan: education press, 2008),19.

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Disclosure Statement

I solemnly declare that the paper submitted is my research work and achievements. This paper does not contain any research published or written by other individuals or other organizations except as indicated in the text. Individuals and groups that have made important contributions to this study have been clearly marked in this article. I bear the legal responsibility of this statement.

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Figure 1: Draw according to Wuzhou Road Planning by Wuzhou Works Bureau, 1928.

Figure 2: Draw according to Map of Guilin in Maps of Chinese Provinces, 1936.

Figure 3: Draw according to Map of Nanning in Maps of Chinese Provinces, 1936.

Figure 4: Draw according to Map of Liuzhou in Liuzhou History Atlas and View of Guangxi, 2006 and 1935, respectively.

Figure 5: Selected in Wuzhou Works Bureau, 1928.

Figure 6: Selected in Liuzhou Old Photos, 2006.