

# INTERPRETAION OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT PATTERN OF TRANSFORMATION FROM 'TOWN' INTO 'SMALL CITY' IN CHINA

## A case study based on 27 pilot towns in Zhejiang Province

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### **ABSTRACT**

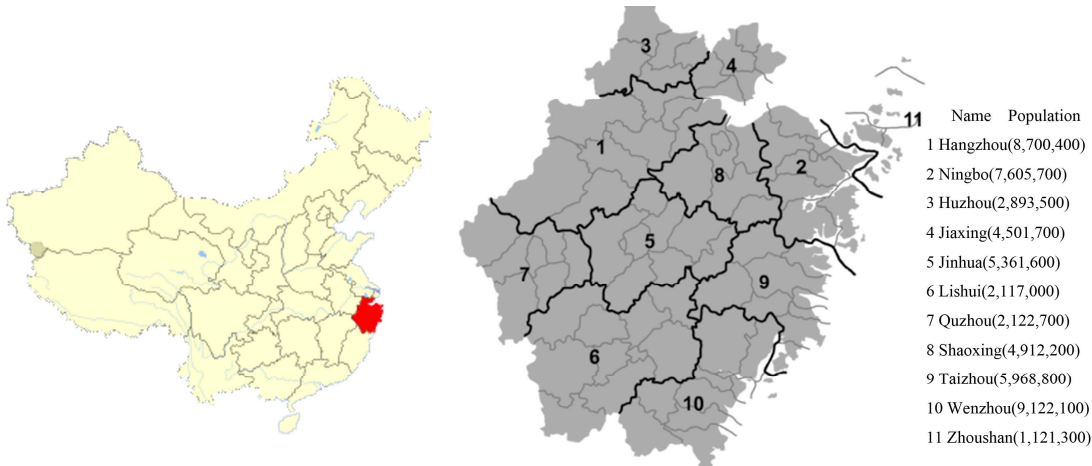
In the process of urbanization in China, the biggest challenge is how to transform the 'town' into the 'city'. It is also a vital link in urbanization. The Chinese government put forward the strategy which aims on speeding up the urbanization development in November 2013. Meanwhile, China has selected some pilot towns, which are intended to become cities in the end, for tentative transformation. Zhejiang Province, which ranks top among the country in economic strength, amount of village and development level and quantity, has become an important national pilot carrier. So far there are 27 pilot towns. By analyzing the development situation of 27 pilot towns, this paper analyzes this particular phenomenon of urbanization and summarize its characteristics.

**Keywords:** Chinese contemporary urbanization strategy, Small City, Pilot Cases, Zhejiang Province

## BACKGROUND

### Ancient Zhejiang: China's 'civilized nations' epitome of history

As the birthplace of Wuyue Culture, Zhejiang Province is typical and famous for its economic prosperity, developed industry. It has walked in the forefront of China for a long time. It is also a region of China city in the ancient times. As early as in the Southern Song Dynasty period, Zhejiang Province has become the most developed areas for towns and villages. The quantity, scale, or tending to the pattern of urban distribution network of towns and villages in Zhejiang were at the highest level.



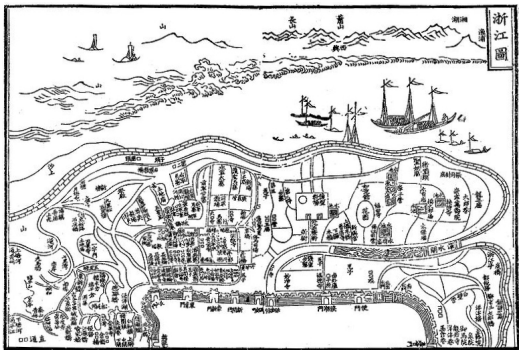
#### Location of Zhejiang Province

([http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:China\\_Zhejiang.svg](http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:China_Zhejiang.svg))

#### Map of Zhejiang Province and its cities

(by author)

The development of towns is the product of Zhejiang ancient social developments, as well as a strong driving force to promote social developments and progress of Zhejiang. Research on the development of the city, Zhejiang province, although it is focusing on an area of city development, it is focused on the overall trend of China's future urban development.



Scenes of Zhejiang Province in South Song Dynasty  
(<http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Zhejiang.JPG>)



### Zhejiang today: typical cases of central towns development

Central towns in Zhejiang, which scale has expanded fast, have developed rapidly in economic since 2006. So far, central towns of Zhejiang Province have turned into regional important nodes. They have become an indispensable force in urban system of Zhejiang, They connect the cities and the countryside, and are the connections between urban and rural economic and social development, resources, culture, information elements. They play an important role in the surrounding area of industries and population agglomeration and radiation.

# 1 INTRODUCTION OF 27 PILOT TOWNS IN ZHEJIANG

## 1.1 Locations and basic situations

Large towns in Zhejiang Province share the characteristics with other towns in China : they do not exist independently, but as one of the city area and can be divided into district. For example, Guali Town belongs to Xiaoshan District of Hangzhou City, which is the capital of Zhejiang Province. 27 pilot towns accounts for 3.9% area and 4.5% population of Zhejiang province.



Names of the cities	Amount of the large towns
Hangzhou	4
Ningbo	4
Wenzhou	4
Huzhou	2
Jiaxing	3
Shaoxing	2
Jinhua	2
Quzhou	1
Zhoushan	1
Taizhou	3
Lishui	1

Map of 27 pilot towns in Zhejiang Province (by author)

## 1.2 Opportunity: small cities are vividly portrayed

On 18th Party Congress held in November 2013, the Chinese government has clearly put forward the strategy of speeding up the development of urbanization and began the construction of pilots in transforming towns into small cities. Large towns in Zhejiang, with large population, large scale, strong economic strength, completed facilities have sprung up with a form of small cities. However, due to the restriction of the factors such as the current management system, further development of the large towns is faced with some difficulties and problems. To resolve these difficulties and problems, to accelerate the development of large town to small urban transformation, We study in 27 pilot towns in Zhejiang.

# 2 GOALS OF 27 PILOT TOWNS IN 2015

## 2.1 Construction scale

The built up area in a small city is more than 8 square kilometers, which forms a rational layout of residential, industrial, trade, ecological function zoning. Built up area population is more than 60000 people, or the resident population of 100000. Population agglomeration rates above 60% in built up area . The built up area also needs to form a relatively complete water, gas, electricity, road network infrastructure, environment protection, etc.The population will not blindly but structurally changes.

## 2.2 Economic strength

The annual fiscal revenue is made to 1 billion yuan of above, with rural residents per capita net income of 20000 yuan of above. Industrial zone industrial added value accounting for more than 80% of the whole town industrial added value, the value added of the tertiary industry accounting for more than 40% of GDP, the proportion of second and third industry practitioners for more than 90%.

### 2.3 Service Level

Facilities of science and technology, education, culture, sports, health, family planning requires to be completed, and can be formed into a relatively perfect social development network. Business and financial services such as network layout is reasonable. Gradually, the social security system, security level improved steadily. Basic public services, residents and mutual assistance services, business services market series of community service system is further improved, forming the convenience and benefit of the community service network.

### 2.4 Management System

To be adapted with the small cities development administration system, it requires to establish an effective system of administrative law enforcement, promote pilot work and administrative punishment, administrative law enforcement to extension. It also requires improving the mechanism of community autonomy, and forming a community management and service system.

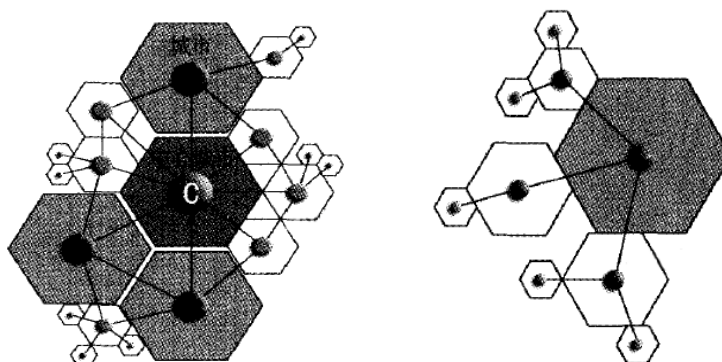
## 3 ANALYSIS & INTERPRETAION OF TRANSFORMATION

### 3.1 Formulate urban planning for small cities

According to city planning, land use planning of relevant technical specifications and standards, small city master plan and regulatory detailed planning need to be prepared, along with urban system planning, the ecological environment function area planning, land use planning, the comprehensive improvement of the rural land planning phase. In accordance with the requirements of the development of characteristic, agglomeration, we need to perfect the urban design, systematically formulate of small urban infrastructure and other special planning and layout planning, with emphasis on the central part. So far, planning of 27 pilot towns have been finished.

### 3.2 Improve the urban functions

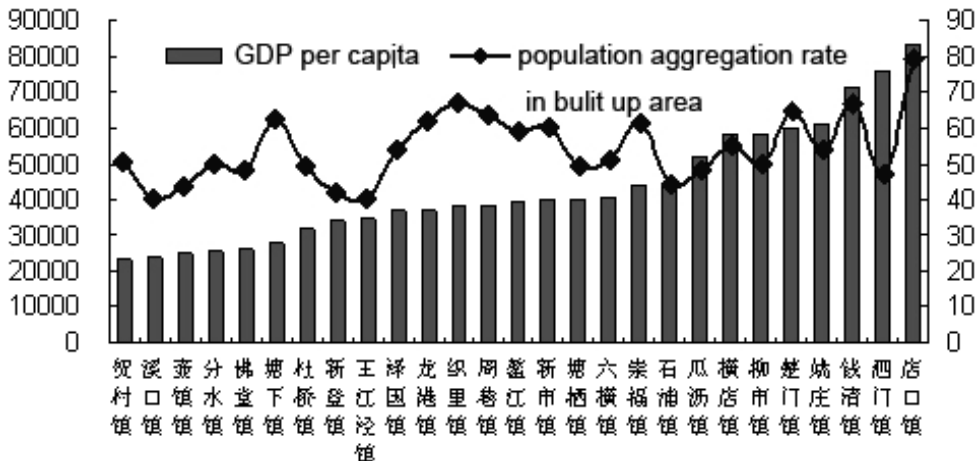
Municipal infrastructure construction, environmental protection infrastructure, education, health facilities, cultural and sports facilities and commercial complex, efforts to improve the level of infrastructure network and comprehensive carrying capacity. Constantly we need to improve small urban public management and service level. The modes of towns are shown below.



Spatial relationship of city driving small towns; Spatial relationship of guided small towns  
(by author)

### 3.3 Develop small cities' economy

27 pilot towns rank secondly in the added value of production, fixed asset investment, regional GDP, fiscal revenue and accounts for 7.2% of the province, respectively, 7.2%, 5.8% and 4.3%; Fixed assets investment growth, GDP growth, fiscal revenue growth rate, such as the proportion of non-agricultural industry practitioners were higher than the province average level of 37.4, 8.6, 5.0 and 1.2%. Small urban agglomeration rate and level of economic development has a strong positive correlation.



**Table of relationship between GDP per capita and population aggregation rate in built up area**  
[http://www.drri.gov.cn/32747-1439/66825\\_14763.html](http://www.drri.gov.cn/32747-1439/66825_14763.html)

### 3.4 Speed up the agglomeration population of small cities

We adhere to the principle of intensive economical use of land, and strive to improve production and living conditions. Besides, the towns vigorously promote the comprehensive improvement of the rural land and rural housing construction; promote the building of small urban community, and actively promote the reform of housing system and housing security system construction, promote the rural population to concentrate in small cities. Household registration management system innovation, speed up the low threshold located, enjoy treatment equal to local urban residents for the farmers into the city of incentive policies, accelerate the urbanization of farmers.

## 4 CONCLUSION

27 Pilot towns in Zhejiang Province have some common features: mostly of are labor-intensive towns which mainly focus on labor-intensive industries and have accumulated more floating population; To develop the local industry, these small towns, has strong service consciousness and have the basic characteristics of small government, big society. Small towns are facing the expansion of township, improving business, entertainment, sports and cultural infrastructure level, the construction of strong investment demand; Disposable income of urban residents and per capita net income of farmers is generally high, consumption potential is big, but urban commercial service industry development lags behind.

This is a bold attempt for Chinese urban form and structure. Unlike the new rural construction, to realize the transformation of urban and rural areas, we must adjust land configuration; The transformation also asks for the approval and support from the government. We cannot simply define the transformation with urban or rural planning. Big cities need to be under strict control. Meanwhile, we should accelerate the development of small and medium-sized cities. By 2020, the urbanization rate of 27 pilot towns will be 80%;By 2025, the urbanization rate of 27 pilot towns will be 85%.This is an attempt, which we will conduct more researches to find the better way of urbanization.

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