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WHETHER CHINESE RURAL REVITALIZATION THROUGH VILLAGE TOURISM EXPERIENCE RELEVANT TO POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION OF UKRAINIAN COUNTRYSIDE?

Since 2010s, the Chinese government implemented policies that placed greater emphasis on rural areas than urban areas with a view to reversing the slow economic growth and low productivity of rural services. In 2017, the government put forward the overall requirements for rural development of "prosperous industry, livable ecology, civilized rural style, effective governance, and affluent life". These five aspects, which resemble a structure, form an organic unit that complements each other.

In order to reduce poverty and promote the sustainable development of rural areas, the Rural Revitalization Strategy was first adopted. This strategy is regarded as one of China's most important national development strategies. Among the strategy benchmarks were the agriculture modernization and village revitalization. It was for the first time when the agriculture and village development tasks were put on the same strategic level.

In 2018, the "Opinions on the Implementation of the Rural Revitalization Strategy" (hereinafter referred to as the "Opinions") was officially released, and rural tourism was included in the Central Document No. 1 as an important area for realizing the rural revitalization strategy.

The table below outlines other important events in the development of rural revitalization policies.

Table 1

**The key points of regional policy on the development
of rural tourism**

October- November 2005	The fifth Plenary Session of the 16th central committee of the CPC proposed to promote the construction of a new socialist countryside in accordance with the requirements of 'production development, affluent life, civilized rural customs, clean and tidy villages, and democratic management.'
2012	the 18th Congress of the CPC proposed the overall layout of socialist construction: It referred to 'five-in-one,' a catch-phrase that defines five key development priorities for 'comprehensive promotion,' namely: Economic, political, cultural, societal and ecological.' It also re-emphasized the 'four modernizations': To strengthen the fields of agriculture, industry, defense and technology.
2017	The 19th Congress of the CPC formally introduced the rural revitalization strategy, explicitly incorporating agricultural green development as a core component. This policy direction was further operationalized through the Ministry of agriculture and rural Affairs's; 'Notice on the implementation of the five major actions for green agricultural development' (2017), which provided specific implementation guidelines.
2018	Government Work Report: 'National rural revitalization strategic plan.'
March 5, 2019	In 2019 Government work report, Premier of the State Council proposed that China should advance poverty alleviation and rural revitalization in line with the task of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. He stated that, by adhering to the priority development of agriculture and rural areas, strengthening the overall co-ordination of poverty alleviation and rural revitalization, and ensuring that the poverty alleviation goals are achieved as scheduled and farmers lives reach a comprehensive moderately prosperous level, in 2020, the goal of building a well-off society in an all-round way will be realized.
2021	Rural revitalization promotion Law
2021	Establish the national rural revitalization Bureau on the basis of the former state Council poverty alleviation and development Group Office.
2022	The 20th national Congress of the CPC proposes a strong agricultural country and high-standard farmland [1, p. 25].

The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy constitutes a major deployment strategy made by the government on the "agriculture-rural areas-peasants" work. As a distinct industrial manifestation, rural tourism is in alignment with the overarching standards of the rural revitalization strategy, encompassing economic, societal, cultural, ecological, and other pivotal domains.

In the period between 2010 and 2020, the urbanization rate exceeded 50%. Significant urban centers, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, exhibited rates that surpassed 90%. Consequently, there has been a discernible disconnection between urban residents and the natural world, a fundamental element of wellbeing.

A statistical analysis of the available data indicates that the per capita disposable income of urban households has increased at a rapid rate, representing a significant multiple increase. The Engel coefficient also underwent a substantial decline, dropping from less than 30%, which is indicative of a sharp decrease [2; 3]. With rising incomes and leisure time, the urban people spending on sightseeing, travel, leisure, and vacations has been increasing. This, coupled with improvements in urban and rural roads, and transportation, has created favorable conditions for the development of rural tourism.

The beautiful natural environment, quaint village workshops, natural agricultural and sideline products, primitive labor practices, authentic folk customs, long-standing farming culture, and ancient village architecture have created a unique landscape of "ancient, original, authentic, and rustic" in rural areas. These areas offer integrating diverse functions, including ecological conservation, tourism and leisure, farming experiences, education and entertainment. The traditional agricultural production function of rural areas surrounding major Chinese cities has gradually weakened, while their tourism and leisure functions have become increasingly prominent. The added value generated by rural tourism in 2016 reached 570 billion yuan, which is equivalent to 2.9% of the total volume of agricultural production (6,377 trillion yuan in 2016). In the same year, the number of tours to villages reached 2.1 billion [2; 4].

The rural regions might see its agricultural production decline as its tourism sector grows due to factors like rural residents shifting to

the more lucrative tourism industry for employment and income, or a regional shift in economic focus from agriculture to services and industry. However, this decline isn't always absolute, as integrated agricultural and tourism development (agritourism) can actually boost farm income and promote new forms of farming, such as locally-sourced organic products [3, p. 171]

A new type of tourism operation utilizes the unique natural environment, rural landscape, production and operation patterns, folk culture, farming culture, and farmhouses and villages of rural areas to provide urban tourists with sightseeing, leisure, experience, fitness, entertainment, shopping, and vacation opportunities. Rural tourism encompasses both rural sightseeing agricultural tourism and rural folk culture tourism, as well as rural leisure and vacation tourism, and rural natural ecological tourism. It is a new type of tourism industry with regional and comprehensive characteristics. Based on the types of tourism resources it relies on, rural tourism can be divided into: sightseeing agricultural tourism, folk culture tourism, leisure and vacation tourism, and natural ecological tourism [4, p. 122]. Consecutively, they appear in Chinese media like “flourishing of production” 产业兴旺, “ecological well being” 以生态易居, “local (county) spirit civilization” 县风生命, “management efficiency” 治理优秀, “life wealth” 生活富裕. Since 2010s, prior the COVID-2019 outbreak the revenue growth from China's rural tourism growth was driven by increased rural tourism trips and favorable policies from the government aimed at poverty alleviation and developing leisure agriculture.

Data indicates that the total consumption (output value) of rural tourism in China was around 850 billion yuan in 2019 and exceeded 900 billion yuan in 2023, with the market gradually recovering after a decline during the pandemic. By the end of 2022, a total of 388 national leisure agriculture and rural tourism demonstration counties had been established nationwide, along with 1973 “Beautiful Leisure Villages of China” and 1597 national-level key villages and towns for rural tourism. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, China became the country with the largest number of “Best Tourist Villages” in 2024. The integrated development of

agriculture and tourism has become a crucial strategy for advancing rural revitalization in China [5, p. 3827].

The central and local governments have concentrated on the development of tourism in rural areas with a view to raising the living standards of those residing in poverty-stricken regions. The government has identified the eradication of poverty as the key task in the building of a moderately prosperous society. China aimed to raise 12 million people out of poverty through tourism before the beginning of the 2020s.

The findings of authors indicate that the revitalization of rural areas and the promotion of tourism in areas previously experiencing security and economic disadvantage can be achieved through the integration of rural tourism with village revitalization strategies.

The importance and implications of this subject deserve close attention. This research is not just theoretical; it offers a practical tool for fostering strong collaborations that can drive effective planning and programming aimed at establishing valuable partnerships with rural communities, tourism operators, property owners, and other stakeholders there. Its true value lies in its insightful perspective on rural tourism – a burgeoning field of study in China and Ukraine.

This assertion will be of particular pertinence in the process of revitalizing Ukrainian villages in the post-war reconstruction context. The utilization of Chinese qualitative and quantitative research methodologies has the potential to enhance the development of rural tourism projects in the Ukrainian countryside, particularly in regions where demining operations have been completed and local tourism initiatives are receiving substantial support from regional and local governments.

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