

The transmission of the spirit of Archaeological Sites

-- the Research on the Interpretation and Presentation of Urban Cultural

Heritage of Xi'an

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Abstract: Archaeological sites are the main bodies of Chinese culture properties, carrying a large amount of historical and cultural information, which acted as the functions of communication and development for civilization. The interpretation and presentation to the public is the important way to express the spirit of archaeological sites. This essay based on the material cultural theory, analyzing the different ways of the transmission of cultural information of archaeological site, the different acceptable ways from the society, and the different demands from the public visitors, discussing the necessary and feasibility of rational and scientific interpretation and presentation, put forward the principals for interpretation and presentation practically, dues to the different levels of researches and techniques what we have nowadays.

1. The problem of the archaeological sites interpretation and presentation

Archaeological sites are the main bodies of Chinese culture properties. Especially some ancient city and the palace ruins is the outstanding symbol of the architecture art. As the city and palace group of the most glorious Chinese history, the Hanchangan city, Tangdaminggong palace stand for the highest architecture art achievement of ancient China and the Orient. Promote the development of world civilization, influencing immensity and far-reaching, also having the symbolic significance to the China and the world civilization. Today the glory only have a proof of her existence—the sites, rich and colorful history and culture—wisdom, vision, courage, skill, emotion and so on. Like all the civilizations of that times, have been infiltrated into the remains, then who will always be admired and different to be known the details of her great charisma.

Because of the ancient Chinese architecture mainly be made up by wood and soil. Now there isn't have any wood structure exist, just have some soil structure exist and incomplete architecture structure. Some wooden structure have gone, retain most of the base of the architecture—the remmed earth, and some remnants of building components, such as column footing, tile-end, the floor tile, and so on. There have huge different between the Orient and the Occident which is representative by the Rome that is mainly consisting by the stone, especially the different of the interpretation and presentation.

The core elements of the interpretation and presentation is the architecture form and its surrounding

culture,natural environment,and other historical and cultural information. The preservation of the china status,it's difficult to know about the ancient architectural form and scale intuitively by the ruin.as difficult to understand,it is also difficult to attract tourists to watch,and to bring significant economic benefits,leading to difficult to enhance the person's enthusiasm of the ruin protection.The basic way to solve this problem is the ruin's interpretation and presentation,that is we take what kind of ways to interpret and present the sites,improve the viewing of the site, enhance the visitors'participation,thus expanding and economic site efficiency, mobilizing the government's attention to the sites.

If we have the full information and data about of ruins, image display technically does not have a special difficulty.Like the Scarlet Bird gate(the south gate)of the Nara palace site,have the complete information. will strictly rehabilitate in accordance with its historical image and the traditional process.But the majority display of the ancient ruins only the part of the ancient civilizations information and archaeological information is also not completely reflect the true appearance of historic buildings.

The heritage conservation must strictly abide the principle which is integrity and authenticity. Under such a premise, rehabilitate building on the site is difficult. Governments at all levels invested heavily in the ruins and adopt scientific methods to protect, as ornamental not strong, it is difficult to have the public's acceptance and recognition, can not achieve its social and economic benefits effectively. While the others lack a scientific basis, the low level of rebuilding construction is not only failed to solve the problem of viewing, but also has caused a tremendous waste of resources, send the wrong historical information and other adverse effects.

Whether we should do to the community to resolve on Monuments and Sites in the infiltration of information about ancient civilizations

2. The inspire of 《2006 • Festival in Xi'an"》

The October,2006, approved by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, the Xi'an Government held the large-scale performances-the "2006 • Festival in Xi'an" successfully in the Hanyuan temple of the Daming Gong palace.The organizers accord to the experts study about the construction of the Hanyuan temple,use of modern light structural materials, set the stage for performances after the protection of the Hanyuan temple.The performance had a strong social reflection. A majority of the audience applauded, they watched the performance,knew about the spectacular scenes on the site,directly felt the imposing Daming Gong palace,tasted the great Tang Dynasty Chinese civilization.

In the experts strict opinion, although there are many difficult discussions of the structures of the stage performances, as a temporary stage set and the artistic image of the Hanyuan Temple,is not strictly equivalent to The true history structures of the Hanyuan Temple,so the structures of the stage performances here are understandable.In this way,we can further to understand why this non-authenticity heritage display can recognized by the community

After all,she is based on the results of archaeologists and architects'scientific research to structures,the site construction show results of people to understand the history in a certain extent;and objectively cover the inadequate of the form and ways inthe current. To meet the need of the the ordinary people to visualize the essence of the history and culture.This is a inspire to us, also a problem:if we can do the display of archaeological data can not be fully determined structures,the display may be not authenticity

3.The existence and communication of the historical and cultural information

1). the existence style of cultural information

In the course of history,the site contains a large amount of historical information,the existence form of the historical information into the form of physical and non-physical:

Physical form: (1) firstly, the ruins contains information. Cultural heritage workers have the direct understanding about the ruins' layout, shapes, size, building materials, construction techniques through exploration, archaeological excavations. (2) the sites, the unearthed or the handed-down cultural relic which have relative with the heritage also reflect some of the information in some aspect of the site. like from the unearthed pottery house of Han dynasty, the portraits brick, it can give us a direct impression of the Han Dynasty architecture. we also know about the Tang Dynasty architecture information by the Nara palace ruins which is tremendous impact by the the Chang'an city of the Tang Dynasty. we can also know about the Tang Dynasty architecture information through the discovery of the the Tang Dynasty tomb murals.

Non-physical form: (1) the historical information recorded in the literary works. In the course of history, a number of important history books have been reflected, recorded the information at the time of construction, can reflect the prevailing pattern, and the size and the materials, construction technology, etc.; the information in the art literary works. Some literary art works are also have a large number of ancient architecture description. Such as Du Mu's poem "A Fanggong Fu" have the literature description of Fanggong, so that future generations can know about its size, building shapes, admire the wisdom of the ancients and the huge projects. (2) some information carried by the traditional process, like we can know about the process and the technic of the ancient architecture rammed earth through the architecture technic in nowadays village. (3) the historical information contained in the custom of people's lives

2). The cultural information communication and accepted way carried by the sites

The sites display is a message works, the core of convey content is its historical and cultural information. the way of the people acceptance the information is divided into direct and indirect. Direct way through visiting the ruins get the intuitive feelings, to know about the the ruins sites, shape, building materials, and so on. Indirect way have many ways to get the information through read the relevant history books, research books, literary and artistic works, and view the relevant television works, know about the traditional technic, experience the custom and so on. The level of the people accept the ruins information depends on their cultural values. Cultural heritage values is a system of the judgement, whether is the existence of the ruin status useful for the people needs or whether it is conducive to human development, it is the important content of the values and cultural heritage. In short, the heritage values is the people's overall views and behavior about the heritage. It decided the people fundamental attitude to treat the cultural heritage, affect people's heritage of performance.

Government's heritage values may depend on policy-makers, workers of cultural heritage values will normally show a relatively advanced nature, enthusiasm and stability, the general public's heritage values will depend on national policies, public opinion-oriented, personal cultural factors and so on. In real life, people's cultural heritage values are not necessarily as clear as workers and experts, often show the general, illegibility understanding.

3). The different need for cultural message between the public and the experts

The general public is the main our targets of historical and cultural information dissemination, satisfied their need for the history and culture information is the important purpose of our cultural heritage protection. Experts study historical information mainly rely on the information from the site Archaeological research, support by the research of the related sites, cultural relics and historical information, in order to understand cultural sites in the history of the true image. And the general public mainly through visit to get some sensibility, visualization information, The public understand relevant information is the relatively superficial, general, they rarely possible to conduct in-depth study.

For the general public, they have access to historical and cultural information relative is less and indirect

with the experts, the image information of their understanding of ruins and cultural is the most direct means, is essential. Experts often have been requested to know the details of historic buildings to a point, and in-depth, the issue is to be repeated studies, discussion. The eyes of the public for its historic buildings and experts recognized the image is different, the public are only asked know about the historical construction's main functions, probably shapes, size, color, and some the most basic information. The different needs for historical information decide the different levels of demand between the experts and the public on displaying the sites. Why the public have accept to set the stage on the site? it is the reason that this set structures to meet the public the needs that is the public want to know about the basic information. Relatively, the archaeology experts pay more attention to the the true original of the heritage, and the public satisfied the the historical buildings carrying the modern cultural image

4. The reproduction of the image of the culture.

1). Original appearance of historical and cultural image of the differences

The appearance of history is the truth of the history, all the physical data must be true; the expression of the cultural image is the meaning of the cultural heritage and the fundamental philosophy, their physical data is close to the historical image but not exactly the same, the image of Cultural and historical is to show the culture consistency, but there will be local differences, although these differences is to strive for the elimination; historical appearance of the performance is strictly true, because of the limitations of historical data, the performance of the history appearance is often incomplete, but cultural image for transmission, will often do a certain presumption of archaeological data considering the interpretation and presentation of the heritage, the added is also on the basis of the scientific.

Historical appearance of the building structure, materials, production technology, and other aspects is entirely true history, is a science, the true of archaeology; in the pursuit of cultural image is the true of the culture which is acceptable by the public, as in film and television works in general, although not equivalent to the history, but the same historical image with the mass of information can be to determine. Historical appearance is relative stability, she rely on in-depth scientific research and development, and cultural image while also based on the results of scientific research, but her close to the times' social and cultural values, and different historical periods, the degree of the public awareness have, a relative of the changes. Such as the cultural image of Confucius during the "Cultural Revolution" and now have a huge difference, despite the historical appearance of Confucius is the only confirm.

2). the possible of the cultural reproduction technology

To interpret and present the cultural image of the heritage is the more effective way to the reproduction of the history and explore its profound meaning in a certain degree. It is also the deep-seated use on the basis of science the protection, is the expansion interpretation. In the past, we are rigidly insist on the interpretation and presentation concepts, materials and technical limitations, the most protection of the site is built to protect the main hall, masonry protection, enclosure, and other technical means, using some steel, cement or antique materials. If we display the ruins, while we rehabilitate some construction, some building components necessary structures on the body site can make some destroy to the ruins, so the traditional technical means difficult to meet the requirement.

Cultural image reproduction is not a simple, low-level imitation to build and rebuild some ancient buildings any more, but through scientific and artistic design of the rehabilitation, reconstruction of the technical means to reproduce its historical character. In this way, the need to collect scientific data, on the basis of serious analysis, active use of new technology and new materials to display historical building form and style. In the rapid development of modern science and technology of today, access to these new technologies, new materials have been no difficulties, the use of many new technologies, new materials,

modern building with its specific form an impact on people's vision, became a symbol of modern urban construction Landscape. In particular the wider use of the electronic information technology, digital technology, photonics technology, provided us with a very broad choice of technology. Japanese experts even believe that the cultural image display is the special requirements of engineering and technical areas, it is a challenge, the challenge may hasten the birth of a new batch of technology and materials. The difficulty is that the heritage sector will have to display the cultural image of new ideas, bravely put forward this challenge.

3).the principle of the cultural image reproduction

The purpose of the protection and display is not to return the past, but to Smriti the heritage including the historical and cultural information. This does not mean that all cultural heritage sites are necessary to reproduce the image. The cultural image of reproduction is only applicable to the site which is the most typical representative of a period, the most outstanding architectural culture, apply to a significant contribution to the history of the construction sites, such as the Daming Gong sites, specially is the display of Its main hall-hanyuan dian. In this process, the need to follow the some principles:

Firstly, the original principle is respect for history. The core is respect for the heritage conservation principle which is the authenticity and integrity, on this basis to interpret and present cultural image. the part which is to be able to display historical appearance should be as the important part of the show, the part which is lack evidence can use the modern technologies as the supplementary display, the overall need balance.

The second is the principle of reversibility. we should pay attention to the principle of material reversibility, after the cultural heritage of historical information confirmed, we can do some reversible operation.

The third is the readability of principle. Because the presentation is about cultural image, the way of interpretation and presentation is as intuitionism as possible, it can give the public a clear cultural information.

The fourth, the "real" is clear. "Real" materials should be a clear distinction so that the public can understand what is the real part, which is to protect part with the display of new materials. This might have on the appearance of "conflict", "inconsistent", but as the science exhibition which is the primary purpose about a historical and cultural information transmission, is indeed a culture of harmony, is the expression of the modern history of rational respect and for its own conduct of the historic responsibility.