Place Spirit, Visual Expression and Spatial Experience of Architectural Heritage—Take Pingyao Ancient City as an Example

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Based on the research background of Pingyao ancient city and its ancient residential buildings, combined with architecture and space research, folk culture and sociology research, visual design and other related theoretical research as theoretical basis, this paper studies the unique place space experience and place spirit expression of Pingyao ancient city through theoretical analysis. This paper analyzes from the perspective of space theory, from the regional culture, the relationship between people and places, extending to the shaping of visual environment, architectural decoration elements and means, etc., and explains it with the help of relevant theoretical basis. At different specific levels, the expression of humanization, rationality, applicability and humanistic value of ancient city space is introduced from the spirit of place, and it is used as the basic theoretical basis and theoretical guidance of related theoretical research, which makes the research process tend to be possible, realistic and operable.

Keywords: place spirit, spatial reading, narrative, regional culture, urban context

Introduction

CHRIS TIANNORBERG-SCHULZ, a famous Norwegian urban architect, put forward the concept of "GENIUSLOCI" in 1979, and emphasized the cultural value of space and people's sense of control over space. The functional needs of architecture determine its limitation in cultural symbols and symbolic expressions. Space is limited and determined by its external and internal objects. We can understand space as a negative entity. Place mainly refers to restricted regional scales, such as a corner, a grass, a square, all of which arise from the way they are connected. Place suggests a center of attention, such as independent furniture, a carpet on the ground, building facade and so on. Place suggests a special value attached to the space. The transformation of space into place is the space given by its users, giving events and contents (Herzberg, 2003, p. 17). We can say that space is a trait that contains a whole new content, which can be given content to create place. Space and place are interdependent, making each other exist as a phenomenon.

The significance of our space construction is not only to achieve functional, commercial and interests, but to pursue a goal closer to art and human civilization. "Place" and "place spirit" have become a basic condition for us

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to achieve this meaning. "PLACE" is literally translated as PLACE in English. The meaning of PLACE can be interpreted as "base" in a narrow sense, and it can be interpreted as "LAND" or "CONTEXT" in a broad sense, which is LAND or CONTEXT in English. The "place" referred to in this paper refers to the spatial composition containing material factors and human factors, and refers to the area with certain spiritual connotation composed of space and environment. Only when material entities and spaces express specific cultural, historical and human activities and make them full of vitality can they be called places.

> From the perspective of the relationship between people and the environment, people settle in a specific 'place' is a 'place', which has a direct cultural connection with our existence. The internalization system of our life content and aesthetic symbols has injected many elements of 'place'. Therefore, The 'place' is the 'site' for browsing the memory of the city and the memory of life in the behavior of life. It is precisely because of these 'sites' that life has so many refuges and touching details, and the space has become a 'living space' full of life symbols. (Ma, 2008, p. 24)

In the book *Spirit of Place-Towards Architectural Phenomenology*, Nobschutz mentioned that there was a theory of "Spirit of Place" as early as ancient Rome. "Spirit of place" was originally Greek, that is, the spirit of place. In a sense, "place" is a sense of identity and belonging to a place. Another characteristic is its content, that is, a place with extension and inclusiveness. Aristotle combined "space" with "place" and thought that space was a field of directional and qualitative forces. And he also found a psychological or spiritual space. Sujia, an American geoculturist, summarized the definition of "place" by Giddens, a famous British sociologist: an enlightening concept of place, that is, a bounded area, which focuses on behavior and condenses all kinds of things in social life (Yin, 2008, p. 171). This shows that the formation of places is the regional significance of the formation of people and space (Ma, 2008, p. 276). Secondly, the formation of places lies in the "effectiveness of presence" of the interaction between people and space. At the same time, place is also the physical space of material existence, and there are various ideologies and historical and social connotations extended in the form of time and space.

Architecture has its spirituality, that is, "place spirit". Spirit of place has a wider and profound content and significance than place. The famous Norwegian urban architect CHRIS TIANNORBERG-SCHULZ put forward the concept of "GENIUSLOCI" in 1979.

Place Experience and Spiritual Penetration in Space Reading

Architecture is a narrative way, a symbol, technique and discourse. In this sense, architecture becomes a language and a way of telling stories. In another sense, architecture is a process in space, a process of experience and behavior, and a construction in space. The core problem in the spirit of place is that besides space, there should be environmental characteristics, and the emergence of environmental characteristics depends on the spirit of place to a great extent (Yin, 2008, p. 52). "We will see that as long as all contact with artistic language is contact with something unfinished, and this contact itself is a part of this thing" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 128). Place theory is the theory that adds to the study of space the expression of factors such as the relationship between man and space, the needs of man, and cultural, social and natural in space. Place theory grasps the spatial form and its internal factors by analyzing these factors that affect the spatial composition. Buildings such as the Jewish Memorial Hall in Berlin designed by Daniel Libeskind, the Langchamp Church designed by French architect Le Corbusier, the Fallingwater Villa designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and traditional Chinese houses are all exact

cases of the spiritual expression of the place. Chinese traditional architecture, whether it is royal gardens or various types of ancient architecture existing all over the country, including the characteristics of folk houses, is unique in the history of ancient architecture in the world, and Pingyao Ancient City is a typical example.

Pingyao Ancient City is located in the middle of Shanxi Province in northern China. It was built during the period of King Xuanwang in the Western Zhou Dynasty (827 BC ~ 782 BC) and expanded in the Ming Dynasty. It has a history of more than 2,700 years. Up to now, Pingyao Ancient City still retains the basic features of the county town in the Ming and Qing Dynasties (AD 1368 ~ 1911), and it can be called the most complete existing ancient city in the Han nationality area of China. The plane, space, structure, the relationship between man and nature and the relationship between architecture and man of Chinese traditional architecture have been perfectly reflected in Pingyao ancient city. Although it can't cover all the characteristics of Chinese traditional architecture, it has involved many aspects such as the layout, structure, decoration, decoration and culture of Chinese traditional architecture. In 1997, Tanaka Dan, a special expert of UNESCO, happily wrote the inscription "Pingyao Ancient City is the best in the world" when he visited Pingyao Ancient City. UNESCO's evaluation of Pingyao Ancient City is: "Pingyao Ancient City is an outstanding example of Chinese Han nationality cities in Ming and Qing Dynasties. Pingyao Ancient City has preserved all its characteristics, and it has shown people an extraordinary complete picture of cultural, social, economic and religious development in the development of Chinese history". With its great appeal, it attracts people from all over the world to visit it, feel its rich space experience and show the profound charm of Chinese traditional architecture.

"In any case, every person who has experience with works of art undoubtedly incorporates this verified place into himself, that is to say, into his whole self-understanding, and only in this self-understanding can this experience have some meaning to him" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 5). Taking space as an ideological and conceptual research field, the meaning of place is summarized and refined through space reading and experience, which leads to the aesthetic cognition of the environment and the communication perception of spiritual meaning, thus affecting people's behavior. As an environmental design, architectural space is full of a continuous and discontinuous spatial consciousness, just like a narrative story. It has become a complex of various places, allowing people to roam and experience in many intertwined places. The environment can inspire people's spiritual thinking, that is, the temperament of space, which embodies a kind of "place spirit". However, the establishment of the spirit of place requires the experience of spatial reading to be conveyed. The essence of space does not allow itself to be defined or described. The storytelling of space is accomplished through people's reading and experience. Italian architectural theorist Saivi said, "Although we may ignore space, space affects us and controls our spiritual activities. Most of the aesthetic feeling we get from architecture comes from space." The spatial experience of Pingyao ancient city acts on the audience to become the reality and life of people's feeling and sharing of spiritual meaning, and it is perceived as an organic whole.

Behaviors and Ways of Spatial Reading

The space and place of spatial reading form "situational spatiality". We need to think about when, where and under what background the environmental elements have, and what kind of influence they have on what kind of people? Why do these effects occur? How to produce?—This process of "choosing a place to live" is the key to the environment's action on people. "Being a consciousness, rather an experience, is the inner world, where the

body and others make connections, being with them, not next to it" (Merleau-Ponty, 2001, p. 134). This is the process by which the Spirit of Place fully realizes the differences and individualities embodied by each space participant. The environment can adjust or inhibit certain behaviors, cognitive processes, emotions, etc. The effect of the environment on people can be direct, and the attributes and quality of the environment can directly affect people's activities, emotions and so on (Kals, Elisabeth, & Markus, 2012, p. 128). Space reading is the reconstruction of the spirit and value of the place, and it is the public emotional appeal of people in communication. "Meaningful things and their understanding are so closely linked to the actual physical properties of language that comprehension always involves an inherent speech activity" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 211). The environment will suggest its richness and attributes, that is, what kind of environment the viewer is in. If we pay attention to the prompts in our environment, we can be clearly discernible and culturally adaptable in the complex communication of information.

Content and Level of Spatial Reading

> Good taste characterizes itself in such a way that it knows to suit itself to the trend of interest represented by fashion, or, on the contrary, it knows to suit what fashion demands to its own good taste. Therefore, the concept of interest includes: we master the scale even in fashion, not blindly follow the changing requirements of fashion, but use our own judgment. People master the 'style' of interest, that is, they connect the requirements of fashion with the whole that their own interest looks at, and accept what is suitable and compatible with this whole. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 48)

The content and level of spatial reading includes three structural levels of space: material environment, functional activities and cultural values. Material environment includes people's feelings of ancient city environment, cognition, perception and understanding of ancient city space environment, and functional activities include adaptation to space and comfort level. With the enrichment and change of human reading objects, contemporary human visual experience and reading behavior have gradually changed into interpretation based on visual images. The experience and "viewing" of space is no longer a simple behavior, no longer "seeing" and "reading" in the general sense, but specifically refers to interpreting some concrete and connotative objects in space places, paying attention to their meanings: cultural ideas, humanistic stories, and other important aspects of space, as well as the appeal caused by the space environment, sensory characteristics and their significance, evaluation of the ancient city's environmental perception, and choice waiting. "All understanding reading is always a kind of reconstruction and interpretation" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 211). Thus, the visual aesthetic of the ancient city becomes an insight into the "place spirit", and the process of spatial reading and aesthetic experience can be fully realized.

Continuity and Presence of Spatial Reading

In the reading of spatial places, a series of architectural facades expand our understanding but still rely on our memory. People's memories turn time into a free narrative process. Thus, architecture is recalled to be transformed from time to a kind of space (Yin, 2008, p. 126). Thanks to cultural memory, time is "imagined" as space. As an important expression medium of architectural space, the organization of time is an effective strategy to construct the sense of space, which can arouse the feeling, fantasy and memory of the experiencer, and further deepen and express the spirit of space in architecture. The water flow of the flowing villa, the glass window

rotating around the spiral of the Guggenheim Museum, and the different scenery of the city due to the change of time, thus forming the continuity of time and space.

In the architecture of Pingyao ancient city, we are surrounded by a motion perception experience, just as in the art gallery, as a medium of information exchange, we are perceived by the constantly walking visitors who watch the images in turn. The ancient city is a huge spatial area with structural continuity of spatial form. Different from single buildings, the spatial area cannot be browsed as a whole in an instant, but can only experience its orderly spatial transformation through a time period. The reading process of the ancient city space is not completed at the same time point. The structures and other environmental contents in the process together form a rhythmic route. When people and architectural structures become one in a space, the ancient city becomes a public media for people to communicate with each other, and through this media, the aesthetic values and information such as cultural and artistic information in the ancient city environment are conveyed to the public. "It is not an empty space, nor a real space, nor a space for preaching, nor a space for people to worship, but an ethereal space, a platform and a public space where everyone returns to self-examination through objects and objects", thus constituting the characteristics of presence (Ma, 2008, p. 80). "Our experience of watching and walking on an old street of Ming and Qing Dynasties is different from that on a newly-built street. The cultural symbols and historical precipitation activated in this sense will provide richer and richer life connotations" (Ma, 2008, p. 124). The formation of each independent space is not for isolation, but to form a spatial scope for ornamental interpretation.

Third, the Function of Place Spirit Expression in the Spatial Environment of Pingyao Ancient City

"Space is a medium independent of our existence, including subjects within human beings and other living things that exist in space according to the basic laws of nature" (Orom & Chen, 2005, p. 20). Everyone has their own ideas about the ideal space, and we can all recall a large number of spaces that have left a special impression on us. Although we sometimes can't express in accurate words what makes a space beautiful or impressive, Here, it can be understood as a kind of "inner" accompanied by depth and perspective. Everyone will have some memories that are influenced or moved by architectural or urban space. In the space, visual impressions can be placed in people's thoughts and feelings. This feeling comes from the meaningful spatial composition. The author believes that architecture embodies ideas, and an architecture without ideas is a building without souls. At best, it is just a "house or structure", not an architecture, let alone art. The purpose of our design practice and cultural thinking is not to express ourselves "artistically". Designing buildings and other tangible environments should be based on the understanding of human nature, and tend to be reasonably expressed and in line with human nature.

What kind of "meaning elements" are organized for the ancient city environment in space is an important aspect of the research. Space is between objects. All architectural spaces serve functions and people's related activities. The most spiritual and symbolic space objects in the space form a distinct place of meaning, giving purely materialized space a spiritual and humanistic visual focus of meaning, providing direct, vivid and pleasant spatial feeling elements. In the design of ancient cities of cultural and creative industries, the organization of people's activities is an important part of the reconstruction design of old industrial buildings. Through

reconstruction and reorganization of architectural space, it can promote the activation of new functions of space, make people participate in architecture, and enhance the communication between people and buildings and people. From the following aspects, we can see the importance of creating meaningful space for the ancient city of regional cultural and creative industries.

Identifiability of Spatial Types

Any space or occasion can be called a behavioral occasion as long as its users realize that it is most suitable for a certain activity, whether it is consciously designed by people or not. A behavioral occasion is a combination of a stable behavioral pattern and a phenomenal environment (Ma, 2008, p. 291). Bruno Zevi, a theorist of Italian organic architecture school, divides urban space into: material space: streets, blocks, squares and parks; Cultural space: symbols, symbols, aesthetic images, life imprints; Behavior space: workplace, living place, space of practical object organization; Performance space: a place where people interact and so on. All these spatial categories are inseparable from human judgment and recognition. The streets, shops and dwellings in the ancient city of Pingyao all maintain the traditional layout and style. The streets are cross-shaped, and the space of the ancient city is not just a grid for people to walk, but an "aesthetic place" with a certain meaning. The spatial material of these places, urban history, culture, nationality, regional characteristics, living customs, etc., have a series of "meaningful aesthetic spaces". Our behavior towards the environment is to consciously establish this meaningful aesthetic space (Ma, 2008, p. 191). This meaningful space is the reason why we can distinguish the different functional categories of Wangfujing and 798 in Beijing, and the different spatial characteristics of Ming and Qing Pedestrian Street in Pingyao and Houhai in Beijing (Ma, 2008, p. 192).

Balance of Motivation and Space Requirements

Kevin Lynch believes: "The environment should adapt to its corresponding cultural type, or should try its best to meet the needs of the people living in it" (Lynch, 2001, p. 69). The urban environment we live in is created by people. It is a long-standing habit of human beings to actively adjust the environment to the environment. Survival and development need to be based on this feeling

Adaptability. Space is the place where people's behaviors and events occur at a certain time and place, and all kinds of behaviors and activities will naturally occur in appropriate scales and places. In this way, it is necessary to actively adjust and find the rules and methods between the form and characteristics of space and people's experience and functional requirements of space. The layout of ancient city walls, official offices, markets, dwellings and temples in Pingyao ancient city, the enclosure of space, the level of space, the sequence of space and other factors adapt to people's needs. Pingyao folk houses are mostly a combination of masonry cave dwellings and wooden brick houses, and most of them are two-entry and three-entry quadrangles with closed appearance. It is a physical specimen for studying the development of China's politics, economy, culture, art and religion.

People's Trust and Security in the Environment

(USA) Oscar Newman put forward the "domain level of space" in the 1973 edition of *Defensible Space: Preventing Crime through Urban Design*. His theory is that a complete domain level of space helps to increase privacy and sense of neighborhood, and form a defensible space. "In fact, a unique and readable environment not only brings a sense of security, but also expands the potential depth and intensity of human experience" (Lynch,

2001, p. 3). That is, it takes concrete living people as the fundamental starting point, meets people's needs, and is based on people's psychological and physiological behavior. To emphasize the significance of space, we should pay attention to the connection between various elements in the ancient city space. This connection lies not only in organizing the routes of the ancient city, but more importantly, in the internal information communication in the space. Architecture is essentially a visual shape of living space. Modeling becomes a symbol, that is, a meaningful narration. Environmental psychologist J. LANG (1974) believes that people have six needs for environmental behavior: physiological, safe, communication and belonging, respect and being respected, self-realization and cognition and beauty. People can feel clear structural clues in a familiar environment, which makes every space experience individual can feel the space through their needs, pay attention to the sense of place and belonging of the city, each urban space has its specific natural and humanistic environment, and the internal functions of spatial places correspond to each other, forming the overall spatial characteristics of the region and the identifiable characteristics in people's memory, This spatial atmosphere of belonging constitutes the "place spirit" referred to below.

Materialization and Visual Expression of the Spirit of Pingyao Ancient City

Functional Interweaving

"In any case, everyone who has experience with works of art undoubtedly incorporates this verified place into himself, that is, into his whole self-understanding, and only in this self-understanding can this experience have some significance to him" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 5). Architecture is a narrative method, a symbol, technique, discourse, and a way of telling stories. In the final analysis, architecture expresses people's "reading" of architecture through symbolic images, and it is carried out through memory, association, memory, nostalgia and fantasy. The ancient city is embodied in the space, structure and route of the building, which makes people experience the movement in the space and time of the building, and feel a "spiritual" cultural meaning from the "material" symbols such as concrete components and forms. Fuzzy boundaries between architectural structures enable functional interweaving. The goal of interweaving is to explore the internal relationship between functional buildings and make them organically connected, and finally realize the continuous change and diversity of space. Ancient city walls, ancient temples, ancient market buildings, ancient streets, ancient shops and ancient dwellings are integrated into one, forming a magnificent and huge ancient building complex. Architecture and humanities are organically organized into a series of pictures, which makes architectural beauty and natural beauty blend with each other.

Context Transformation

Pingyao ancient city was established according to the cultural thought and architectural style of Chinese Han nationality. Traditional architectural forms and historical architectural vocabulary are the connection between ancient city architecture and spiritual memory. Italian architect aldo rossi said: "The city is not only a space, but also a place of meaning. The city embodies a spirit of place, and all architectural types and events are closely related" (Ma, 2008, p. 142). The elements form a broad dialogue relationship with people, many of which are generalized, metaphorical and symbolic, stimulating the rich experience of space people. The explicit expression of traditional forms, symbols and elements, regions, folk customs and other cultural contexts in ancient city architecture makes the spatial form maintain a reasonable architectural pattern, and the connection with local

attributes, aesthetic characteristics and cultural characteristics realizes the harmonious dialogue of various contexts in the transformation. In the inheritance of each nation from generation to generation, it will form its own unique structure to observe and understand things. The most intuitive expression of the identifiability of a nation's traditional architecture is characteristic components, or "architectural symbols". The architecture of the ancient city presents traditional, local and folk contents and forms. Some specific traditional symbolic elements organically combine the tradition and culture of the space architecture of the ancient city. The architectural layout is rigorous, the axis is clear, the left and right symmetry, the primary and secondary are distinct, and the outline is undulating. With exquisite wood carving, brick carving and stone carving, the perfect unity of use function and architectural art is achieved.

Spatial Flow

Corbusier wrote in *Towards a New Architecture*: The moving line is the initial embodiment of human existence and the intermediary of every human activity. Architecture is the basic moving line. Due to physical and cultural memory, people endow architectural meaning in this place of time, which is how people experience and read architecture. In the ancient city space, by establishing the interactive relationship between space and physical activities in a flexible and variable system, an architectural community with dynamic spatial experience is created. At the same time, this courtyard-style grouping and layout generally adopts a balanced and symmetrical way. The more important buildings are placed on the vertical axis, and the secondary houses are placed on the horizontal axis on its left and right sides. This layout is closely related to the patriarchal clan and etiquette system of Chinese feudal society. With the assembly of activities, the transformation of spatial sequence, and the creation of rich spatial movement experience, we can feel the continuity and spiritual context of spatial progression. The space facade of the ancient city is in a state of constantly changing information, and there is no completely consistent wall form copy. Every time people go to a place, they come into contact with different information. Different activities have different place characteristics and cultural connotations, and different places have different prompts and place atmosphere, so they also have corresponding place characteristics of humanization and human culture.

Materials and Elements

Material is an indispensable part of architectural space, and any kind of physical expression in space is inseparable from the bearing of materials. Materials are not only media and carriers, but more importantly, materials themselves are used and their physical properties are used for aesthetic expression. "Like other forms of visual choice, the choice of materials is based on inclusion and exclusion" (Braun, 2007, p. 109). Each material has its own unique aesthetic texture and texture, but also limitations. Suitable use of materials will fully demonstrate the spirit of the place because of its aesthetic charm. Pingyao Ancient City has a history of more than 2,700 years since its own city-building activities. In the long process of development, numerous cultural relics in Pingyao Ancient City not only represent the architectural forms, construction methods and material standards of ancient Chinese cities in different historical periods, but also reflect the artistic progress and aesthetic achievements of different nationalities and regions in ancient China. The diversification of materials makes it more possible to extend the expression of forms. Building skin material is the main material feature that determines the regional characteristics of the ancient city, which is reflected in various components: skin texture,

form, architectural details, signs, etc. Many local materials are both materials and symbols carrying memories. They are simple, natural, symbolic and delicate in shape to express historical connotations. Materials and elements are the main materials that embody the spirit of place in the ancient city and facilitate space reading. The basic formal elements are the constituent elements of spatial form beauty in the place. They interact in a comprehensive spatial system and borrow their respective influences to construct a rich spatial experience. The relationship between elements makes the integrity of the ancient city constructed, and the architectural forms with different characteristics are gradually enriched in the close relationship, which makes the embodiment of the spirit of the place stronger, resulting in typical regional characteristics and spatial experience of the ancient city.

The Overall Characteristics of the Ancient City's Space and Place Spirit

Decorative

"This comprehensive position of architectural art relative to all other arts involves a dual intermediary process. Architectural art, as a space plastic art, is not only shaped in space, but also vacated in space. It not only includes all the decorative views of spatial modeling, up to the decorative pattern, but it is itself decorative according to its essence. The essence of decoration lies in the fact that it creates these two intermediaries, that is, it attracts the attention of the viewer to itself, satisfies the viewer's interest, and at the same time introduces the viewer from itself to the larger whole of the life relationship it accompanies" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 208). Lynch said in Urban Image that environmental image consists of three parts, namely, personality, structure and meaning; Personality can be understood as the external expression of regional characteristics and place spirit, structure is the architectural structure in space, and meaning can be regarded as the value experience and expression given by people to this building-the symbolic interaction between people and the environment. Building outline, architectural environment characteristics, architectural form language, color characteristics, regional inherent tradition and specific color symbols and folk connotation of architectural language, the design and construction of psychological space, and the relationship between vision and psychological reading effect all play a related role in the materialization and visualization of place spirit. The folk houses in Pingyao ancient city are mainly wooden quadrangles with brick walls and tile roofs, with rigorous layout, symmetrical left and right, and orderly respect and inferiority. Big families build two-entry, three-entry courtyards or even larger courtyards, and the courtyards are often separated by ornate hanging flower doors. Most of the residential courtyards are beautifully decorated. The entrance door is usually built with brick carvings, the beams under the eaves are replaced with wood carvings, and the pillar foundations, doorposts and stone drums are mostly decorated with stone carvings. In addition to the traditional, local and folk contents and forms, the spiritual expression of the ancient city also presents many symbolic elements with great symbolic significance, which are endowed with visible, tangible and readable construction language in architectural space and landscape elements, and permeate and solidify the visual vocabulary rich in humanistic thinking in the carrier of space.

Symbolic

Chinese traditional architecture shines with the magical brilliance of symbolism everywhere, from conception to plane planning, architectural modeling and decoration. The ancient city wall of Pingyao is shaped like a turtle, and the two wells outside the door symbolize the turtle's eyes. In Chinese traditional culture, the turtle is a symbol of immortality, and the shape of the city wall shows the profound meaning that the ancient

Chinese hoped to make the ancient city of Pingyao rock-solid and last forever with the power of the turtle god. Pingyao ancient city was strictly built according to the hierarchical ritual order and traditional customs of ancient Chinese cities. From the layout of the whole ancient city to the courtyard houses of folk houses, they all embody the ritual sequence formula of Han culture, such as five directions and four images, highlighting the center, strengthening the central axis and respecting the south. There are also 72 enemy-watching towers on the city wall, and 3,000 crenels on the outside of the top of the wall. Legend has it that it is a symbol of 3,000 disciples and 72 sages of Confucius. The biggest feature of Pingyao residential buildings is its roof, which is made of flat bricks. In front of the house is a single-slope wooden structure eaves corridor, with exquisite patterns and unique ingenuity at the square head and finches. There is a tall parapet wall around the roof. It is said that Pingyao people live in the sky, avoid natural disasters and bless good luck and peace.

Knowledge and Culture

Intellectual place expression emphasizes narration and expression, while cultural expression is more inclined to symbolic communication. The virtual cultural phenomena such as historical events and folklore that occurred in urban history are reproduced tangibly, forming a soft environment of context continuation, which is not only informative, but also conveys the content of regional culture.The conceptual expression and cultural implications in the architecture of Pingyao Ancient City emphasize the metaphorical use of symbols and materials. Drawing from historical elements such as graphics and symbols, these formal components convey spatial values that invite individuals to perceive and experience their narrative. By emphasizing the local cultural background and highlighting regional identity, the architecture reinterprets new spatial meanings within contemporary realities and cultural contexts. It presents a unique architectural language rooted in its cultural framework, showcasing its charm with distinct and recognizable identity characteristics. The names of the eight small streets and seventy-two centipede lanes in the ancient city have their own origins, some of which are named after nearby buildings or eye-catching signs, such as Yamen Street, Shuyuan Street, Xiaochang Lane, Helanqiao Lane, Qigan Street, Sanyanjing Street, Zhaobi South Street, Xiaochayuan Lane, etc. Some are named after temples, such as Confucian Temple Street, Chenghuang Temple Street, Luohan Temple Street, Huoshen Temple Street, Guandi Temple Street, Zhenwu Temple Street, Wudao Temple Street, etc. Some are named after large local households, such as Zhaojuren Street, Leijiayuan Street, Songmenghuai Lane, Yanjiaxiang, Jijiaxiang, Guojiaxiang, Fanjiaxiang, Shaojiaxiang, Majiaxiang, etc. There is a relatively closed city in the northeast corner of the ancient city, similar to the square in the ancient city. The four nearby streets are named Dongbi Jingbao, Zhongbi Jingbao, Xibi Jingbao and Baowai Street; There are also some streets and lanes whose names can't be explored, such as Renyi Street, Tianshui Lane, Bean Sprout Street, Huludu Lane, etc. Religious buildings such as temples and Taoist temples in the ancient city of Pingyao, such as extraordinary, simple and solemn cornices and bucket arches, suspended beams and davits, and yellow-green glazed tile roofs, are all external embodiments of Chinese traditional culture in ancient buildings. From these religious buildings from Song and Jin Dynasties to Ming and Qing Dynasties, we can see the historical evolution of traditional culture in different periods.

Folklore and Interest

The prosperity of the ancient city has fostered a distinctive living environment and preserved Pingyao's unique folk traditions, which have remained unchanged for centuries. These folk customs are deeply intertwined

with daily life, reflecting local characteristics and cultural practices. They evoke life memories, immerse individuals in the customs of the ancient city, and highlight a sense of belonging to the living conditions of its citizens. Drawing inspiration from ordinary life scenes, the design creates a simple yet meaningful aesthetic rooted in everyday experiences. This approach emphasizes the spatial characteristics and the spirit of place, forming a natural connection that resonates with humanity and interprets the spatial context. It harmonizes with local history and tradition, bridging the classical and the contemporary, and evokes a unique perception through the expressive charm of spatial language. Four streets, eight small streets, and seventy-two centipede lanes cleverly form a huge gossip pattern. Chenghuang Temple and ancient government office, Confucian Temple and Wu Temple, Taoist temple and temple are symmetrically arranged on the left and right sides of South Street. From here, we can see the realistic model of "co-governance between man and god" and "integration of three religions" in the ancient city architecture of Han Dynasty. The ancient city retains many traditional festivals with national and local characteristics. These traditional folk festivals include seasonal festivals, commemorative festivals, festivals of worshipping heaven and earth, festivals of worshipping ancestors, festivals of worshipping gods and ghosts, festivals of worshipping animals, etc. It fully shows the ancient working people's yearning for the harmony of heaven, earth, people, gods, ghosts and animals. It reflects people's traditional habits, moral customs and religious beliefs. Through these traditional folk festivals, we can explore the rich connotation and origin of the ancient city culture. The colorful mansions and ancient temples in the ancient city have inherited the essence of Han architectural culture. In the ancient city, the residential groups with blue bricks and gray tiles, high-walled courtyards everywhere, and prosperous families form the living circle in Pingyao City, forming deep houses with different forms and exquisite decoration. The door of the house is decorated with brick carvings, wood carvings, or auspicious characters such as "Xiang Kai Ji Di", "Le Tianlun" and "Ning Rui" written in paint. Some walls are also equipped with hanging fish and the roof is covered with Feng Shui walls; The stone carvings on the wall of the gate have profound meanings, and the columns in front of the house in the courtyard are painted with vermilion lacquer, carved beams and painted buildings, which are exquisite everywhere.

The Practical Significance of Place Spirit in Pingyao Ancient City Architecture

Schultz said, "Theorizing architecture in concrete, real and existential fields" is the "spirit of place". Pingyao ancient city is a city built according to the traditional planning thought and architectural style of Han nationality, which embodies the historical and cultural characteristics of Han nationality around the 14th to 19th century AD. It has important reference value for studying the social form, economic structure, military defense, religious beliefs, traditional thoughts and ethics of human habitation in this period. The use function of the building, on the premise of satisfying the use, forms a meaningful place, which is an experiencable time series. Space and its rich expression contents such as materials, symbols and visuals form infinite diversity of space. This space, which contains places, behaviors, symbols and daily trivialities, constructs a common place spirit and makes places have the following characteristics and meanings:

Functional Construction

The city wall is an important military fortification in ancient China. Pingyao City Wall has a long history and is well preserved. According to legend, it was founded in the period of Ji Jing, King Xuanwang of the Western Zhou Dynasty, and has a history of more than 2,700 years. At that time, it was a particularly low city

wall. For the needs of military defense, it was expanded in the third year of Hongwu in the Ming Dynasty (1370) and transformed into the masonry city wall seen today. During the more than 500 years of the Ming and Qing dynasties, there were 26 repairs and supplementary buildings, so it has maintained the city wall style of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The existing Pingyao City Wall is one of the three existing complete county walls in China. It is large in scale and complete in architecture, ranking first among the three cities, with a total length of 12.8 miles. The wall is about 10 meters high, with six gates around the city, one in the north and south, two in the east and west, and barbs are built outside the six gates. Every 40-60 meters outside the wall, a horse face protruding from the wall is built. From the architectural point of view, it not only strengthens the wall and makes the whole ancient city strong, but more importantly, it is for the needs of military defense. There is an enemy building built on each horse. The enemy building provides shelter for soldiers on weekdays, and stores weapons and ordnance in wartime. With the help of these volley buildings, the defenders of the city can effectively organize firepower to fight against the enemy. There is a barbican outside each gate of the ancient city wall of Pingyao. The barbican is a small town built outside the big city, which is used to enhance the defense capability of the city. It has two gates inside and outside, and it is 90°. From a scientific point of view, the ancient city of Pingyao is located in the central part of Shanxi, in the Loess Plateau, where the wind and sand are relatively strong, so this construction can prevent the wind and sand from directly invading the streets in the city; From the military point of view, the soldiers guarding the city can commanding and form a cross-shooting net on all sides, giving a fatal blow to the enemy in the barbican city. For the functional construction of the ancient city, "a building defines itself in some dual way. On the one hand, it is defined by the position it must occupy in an overall spatial relationship, and on the other hand, it is also defined by the purpose it should serve" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 205). Pingyao City Wall is rigorously designed, majestic and magnificent. It is said that it was selected according to the method of "playing in front of the turtle, and the landscape rises in the sun" and built according to the principle of "controlling the block with danger". For hundreds of years, despite the erosion of wind and rain and the smoke of war, it is still as strong as ever, and it is said to be a "turtle city" with longevity and eternity among the people. The south gate is the head, the north gate is the tail, and the east and west gates are the limbs. In addition, the orderly arrangement of gossip turtle patterns in four streets, eight small streets and seventy-two centipede lanes in the city means that the ancient city of Pingyao is forever golden and auspicious for all generations. The whole urban area has an orderly layout and exquisite design. It is built in strict accordance with the etiquette system of the Han nationality and traditional urban planning ideas and layout procedures. It is a living specimen of the county towns in the Han nationality areas of China during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The center of the city is the city building, and the South Street is the central axis. The symmetrical layout of "Left City God, Right County Government, Left Confucian Temple, Right Wu Temple, East Taoist Temple and West Temple" is quite a legacy of the ritual preface of Zhou Li, "Left Ancestor and Right Society, Former Dynasty and Later Market". The whole city is a huge complex of ancient cultural relics composed of city walls, streets, shops, temples and dwellings.

Memory Continuation

Studying a space place and visual environment is not only to meet the daily functional needs, or to assume the existing usage characteristics, but more importantly, to act as a guiding and promoting role in new exploration. Hans-Georg Gadamer said, "Everything that can be called an experience is built in memory. But on the other

hand, there is also the opposition of life and concept in the concept of experience. Experience has a remarkable immediacy free of all intentions of its meaning. All experienced things are self-experienced objects, and together they form the meaning of this experience, that is, all experienced things belong to the unity of this self, and thus contain an irreplaceable and irreplaceable relationship with this whole life" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 086). The ancient Pingyao ancient city is brilliant, and today's Pingyao ancient city is still full of charm. The streets, pavements and city buildings within the city wall still retain the shape of 600 years ago; The process of urban transformation and construction is a process of urban memory loss. The densely urbanized building groups and the ever-changing process of urban construction have gradually blurred and erased people's cultural memory. The city is not built for one person. The ancient city serves many people with different backgrounds, personalities, occupations and classes. Different people rely on different elements of identity, cultural belonging and their favorite spatial forms. The layout of residential buildings is rigorous, the axis is clear, the left and right symmetry, the primary and secondary are clear, the outline is undulating, the appearance is closed, and the compound is deep. Exquisite wood carvings, brick carvings and stone carvings, with paper-cut window grilles with strong local flavor and subtle Weixiao, are vivid, forming a regional feature that enriches the spirit of the place. Different space experiencers will find their own perceptual materials in it and continue their inner humanistic memories.

Regional Characteristics

"Truly substantive and innovative actions must be rooted in our own cultural precipitation, take excellent traditional culture as genes and contemporary cultural spirit as elements" (Ma, 2008, p. 109), and take the unique regional spirit as nutrition, so as to create an ancient artistic city space with different characteristics and distinctive characteristics of the times and "locality". Kevin Lynch's book "The Image of the City" introduced environmental psychology into urban design for the first time, arguing that urban design should no longer be the subjective creation of architects or urban planning designers, but should explore the natural and historical conditions and characteristics of each city, and organize them. Make each city have its own identity. "The protection of place spirit means paying attention to the development of urban history and culture" (Zhang, 2006, p. 19). These preservations provide us with clues that design can borrow. Geography and locality constitute the diversity and richness of urban spatial forms. Pingyao Ancient City is a county town built in full accordance with the traditional urban planning ideas and layout procedures of Chinese Han nationality. In the closed city, with the city building as the center, there are four high streets, eight side streets and seventy-two alleys intertwined with longitude and latitude. They have distinct functions and well-organized layout. The ancient residential houses in the city are all quadrangles with blue bricks and gray tiles, with clear axis and symmetrical left and right, especially the brick cave-style houses have a strong local flavor. There are also some large and small temples in the city, and the old-fashioned pavements are row upon row. These antique buildings outline the prosperous style of the city in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The cities we live in are not more and more different, but more and more similar. One city is copying another city, and urbanization has become a competition to copy vulgar cities, without feeling the composition of unique space of unique regional culture. Therefore, we should explore the natural and historical conditions and characteristics of each city, organize them and give full play to them, so that each city has its own characteristics, focus on the specific local region and culture, extract more essential things in the culture, and express the local culture with advanced ideas and technologies.

Aesthetic Experience

Christopher Alexander's view in Pattern Language holds that architectural patterns come from human psychological and cultural needs. The so-called "experience" refers to the space where behavior, body, time, ritualization, process, etc., as symbols that people can perceive, can be understood by "cultural memory" (Yin, 2008, p. 43). Zaha Hadid boldly applies diagonal lines in various directions in her exploration of works, so that her design can see different image changes of the building in every moving experience, so as to prove the significance of the will power of time and space. This meaning becomes an existential meaning, the result of every effort in experience and reading. People seek to discover objective situations through feeling, mainly vision, touch and association, and constantly seek forms and "meanings" from various external objects (Yin, 2008, p. 45). The reading process of architecture is an experience, which is not one-sided and partial, but the feedback obtained with the progress of behavioral activities. Metaphor commonly used in literature is to supplement a visual language form. Architecture suggests a place through images, so architecture is metaphorical. What is realized is the meaning associated with buildings. Different styles and images produce different metaphors, and different recipients will also feel different metaphors. Space also achieves the purpose of metaphor through the spirit of place. "Understanding must be regarded as a part of the meaning event, and it is in understanding that the meaning of all statements-including the meaning of artistic statements and the meaning of all other circulating objects-can be formed and completed" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 217). Pingyao Ancient City, with national wisdom and tolerance, the vicissitudes and massiness of history, condenses the beneficial elements of the traditional classic culture of the Han nationality, and takes into account Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and respect for ancestors and saints. The treasures with high cultural relics and artistic value left by past dynasties inside and outside the city have pushed Pingyao's historical and cultural status to a new height. In the repair and construction after historical wars and natural damage, the regulation since the Ming Dynasty has remained unchanged, creating the glory of Shanxi merchants for more than 500 years since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and leaving a glorious page for the history of Han civilization.

Conclusion

"Architecture itself is a visual medium, so it is also a participant in the current visual revolution" (Braun, 2007). Through the exploration of ancient city space reading and its place spirit, this paper studies the humanistic information, regional information and spiritual information full of characteristics, and forms unique spatial intention and spatial memory; From the spiritual function, material function and ecological environment system of spatial layout, the update of spatial research is reasonably formed. In the long-term development, Pingyao Ancient City has shaped a people-oriented urban regional space, established a stable static and dynamic visual aesthetic system, which makes people's use and operation of regional space harmonious and unified, and perfectly integrates the relationship between people's activities and environmental places and space experience. Create the ancient city regional space with "ecology, cultural psychology attribute, artistry and integrity, innovation, times, uniqueness and uniqueness" (Zhang, 2002, pp. 291-298), and the research of place spirit of Pingyao ancient city, as a spatial practice of urban culture and humanistic environment, realizes the exploration of space humanization, rationality, applicability and humanistic value with the introduction of place spirit theory, which makes the research not only stay at the static level, but takes it as the theoretical basis of future practice.

The most important thing is to constantly look for the most essential place spirit, continue to study in concrete practice, and test whether it can form new research contents in related fields, combine space practice, inherit rich humanistic spirit and accumulate effective cultural value resources.

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