

Article

Place and memory: exploring the future possibility of urban public space

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Abstract: Originating from the Industrial Revolution in England in the middle of the 18th century, the rapid development of cities in the past 100 years has had a great impact on the balance of the natural environment. Pollution, crowding, and noise are all reducing the happiness index of people living in cities. The wave of modernism is blowing all over the world, and demolition and construction are carried out on a global scale regardless of the local culture, especially in the third world countries. The loss of regional culture has led to the homogenization of cities. And the decrease of Communication between people in cities has made them more indifference to each other to some extent. The urban public space integrates political and economic functions. In order to pursue a certain economic value, the public space in the city has become a place of commercial game to some extent and is constantly being privatized. Urban public space is an important space carrier for the formation of regional context and characteristic culture, and it is also an important place for people to communicate and experience the connotation of urban culture. How to design and update public space under the background of urban renewal has become very significant.

Keywords: urban renewal; public space; place memory

1 The problems and challenges of contemporary urban public space

With the rapid development of urbanization, many problems have been left in the process of extensive urban development in the past half century. Influenced by the internationalism of modernism, the cities from Tokyo to New York have gradually emerged with similar architectural styles, and the cultural heritage of the city is disappearing to some extent. The appearance of high-density buildings in the city neglects the construction of public space landscape, resulting in insufficient utilization rate of rainwater and low



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landscape coverage rate. In rainy season, the city will be flooded. In order to make the residential area have more houses, urban planners will use the standardization of architecture to design, but it is also fatal. The unreasonable design of urban public space often leads to the increase of houses in the city, but the urban public space is constantly compressed, and the compression of road space further leads to the situation of urban traffic jam. The use of urban public space becomes monotonous since it can not be effectively used by citizens, to some extent, resulting in great waste. Lindheim and Syme (1983) and Kuo et al. (1998) suggested that resident participation in planning and design itself can enhance health and well-being. Lin Dehai and Samuel stressed that there is no single model for a "healthy" life environment, on the contrary: the most healthy urban design may be to provide basic services such as public buildings, parks, structures, and to provide connectivity, and a series of opportunities at the same time to shape their homes and community, according to their specific needs and preferences [1]. If the design and planning of urban public space cannot be reasonably planned and designed, the city will lead to a series of urban problems. As the product of man-made environment and earth civilization, the city exists for a better life. While some cities are carrying out large-scale urban renewal, urban managers have deviations in how to protect and renew historical and cultural blocks, which is ignored in pursuit of economic benefits in the process of protection and renovation. Regional culture is the overall embodiment of historical context and natural landscape. The unique urban culture of a place benefits from the living environment. However, the design of public space is an important role of urban culture. With the rapid development of the city, the public space in the city presents a semi-private state, and the urban public space plays a more commercial role in the rapid development of the city. Some social problems continue to arise in the urban areas due to some misdecisions made by managers, and, public the abandoned public space did not play its role to some extent, for the sake of the image of the city, city managers ignores the relevant functions and its original attributes of the public space. The design of public space blindly pursues the so-called formalism and artistic sense while ignoring people's personal experiences.

2 The spiritual reshaping and expression of public space

The term "genius loci" was first mentioned by Norberg-Schulz, a Norwegian architect, in his book *Spirit of Place: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. The concept of "genius loci" existed in Ancient Rome, providing a new perspective for architecture, and proposing that the environment is the place, and it's more about behaviors and events [2]. The differences between eastern and western cultures also lead to deviations in the understanding of space. Events occurring in urban public space in different times and spaces all have meanings. The occurrence of events and the relationship between places to some extent constitute an internal spirit of place. It is very important to use different scene elements to shape the public space in different regions so as to concretize the genius loci. In the context of urban renewal, one of the original cultural characteristics of the city is integrated to embody a unique spiritual experience. In the Document of the European Commission, open

public space is defined as "public" living room. The most important thing about the construction of urban public space is to use urban space to effectively reevaluate the historically formed architectural and urban environment, which is the epitome of the historical urban community [2]. For some blocks with history, the original relics should be preserved as far as possible to show the urban cultural deposits and reflect the spiritual connotation of the site through restoration. Through the abstraction of local regional cultural symbols combined with local traditional construction techniques to express specific cultural connotations, and to arouse people's attention and thinking by the shaping of public space landscape. Based on the inherent cultural characteristics of architecture and environment, visitors can feel the vitality, charm, influence, and enlightenment of a certain culture [4]. The similarity of the urban public space landscape has been pursued because high technology neglects the local culture, and the urban memory is somehow fading away, especially in some historical districts, which carry the important task of showing the culture and history. In the past, a large number of industrial plants were left in the city, and the designers used new designs to focus on the original special landscape and demonstrated the beauty of humanity and nature through ecological methods such as preservation, renewal, and reuse [5]. The reconstruction of industrial sites takes into account the local culture, combines traditional construction techniques with modern design techniques to show the inner spirit of the place, and reproduces the unique landscape of industrial parks by updating the landscape of special areas in industrial parks. In the rapid development of the city today, it is necessary to do urban landscape design while fully exploiting the cultural characteristics of the characteristics and thus fully reflect the spirit of the inner places of public space.

3 Conjectures and suggestions for the future urban public space

In the early 20th century, with the publication of F.T. Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto*, human exploration of future cities began to sprout in the imagination of the high-tech school [6]. Mankind has entered the information age. In recent years, smart city, 5G and other emerging technologies have been constantly emerging. Which are profoundly changing the pattern of urban development, and the conflict between cities and natural ecological environment is further intensified. In Vietnam, the use of Agent Orange caused genetic disaster; in Nevada, bone cancer and leukemia were caused by living downwind of the atomic energy experimental station; in the age of consumption, too many profit-oriented designs were based on the destruction of the ecological environment [7]. The public space in the game of commercial capital is being privatized. The appearance of high-density housing leads to a decrease in the dialogue between people and nature. With the accelerating process of urban renewal in the future, the landscape of urban public space plays an important role in health and well-being, city needs more and more private space to be transformed into shared space, to form a new green grid of cities. And the city needs more and more professionals and the public to come up with measures and strategies for landscape improvement. The landscape elements such as open lawns, specific garden flowers, and water in the urban public spaces help to make people more calm and somewhat reduce the number of sub-healthy people in

cities. Thousands of years later, it still feels good to take a walk in the park and see birds singing or colorful flowers and leaves. However, the cement, forest, noise and garbage in the city are in stark contrast to the natural environment. In the process of urban renewal in the future, people will gradually realize the connection between greening and improving public health. Every city has different buildings in different historical periods. If every building can be protected and reasonably transformed, the city will be an active museum. In the process of urban development in the future, full attention should be paid to some specific historical architectural heritages. If some areas in the city are opened to the outside and turned into public Spaces, they will exert a subtle effect on the masses. The memory of history does not require too much cultural background, and the emotional appeal to historical space is innate. People who once lived in historical blocks also have feelings for passing away, which can become a way of experience and leisure activities [8]. Public art will gradually play an important role in the future development of urban public space, Art appreciation is mostly found in art galleries and exhibition halls, Art can only exert its potential value in the city can more people be recognized. Let more people experience a different culture, rather than just keeping art locked up in city galleries and exhibitions-public art will change as technology evolves from visual to auditory and further change the way people live. Abandoned industrial parks in cities will also be redeveloped as public spaces. Landschafts park is a recreational area located in the north of Duisburg, Germany. It was planned by Peter Ratz in 1991 with the expectation that it would recover and understand the modern past, rather than try to discard it, and the recreation center focused on linking itself to the past use of the site [9]. In the process of urban renewal and development in the future, the urban boundary will be redivided, and the public space of the city will be re-emphasized. Architects and landscape designers need to conduct research in different fields and strive to promote certain exchanges. The exchanges between people will be more frequent, and unique regional culture will be formed to some extent.

4 Concluding remarks

No matter eastern civilization or Western civilization, urban public space has been playing an important role in the process of urban development since ancient times. With the deepening of urbanization, it is necessary to pay more attention to the dialogue between human and environment. Urban public space plays multiple roles in the process of urban renewal and development in the future. Environmental sustainability should be considered in the design of public space renewal, and the design of functional requirements should pay more attention to the needs of the public. As people have higher and higher requirements for the quality of public space in residential areas, the functional attributes of public space need to be taken into more comprehensive consideration and pay more attention to the human experience, no matter for the renewal of old urban areas or the expansion of new urban areas, and promote the communication between people through public space as a community communication link. The meaning of place and cultural connotation is an important part of urban public space to reflect the quality of the city. In the process of urban renewal, more

attention should be paid to the architectural cultural heritage to fully explore the historical context. The cultural connotation of place in public space will also become an important part of identifying urban culture.

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