Research on the method of open expression in urban culture: A case study in historic city renewal plan of Shenzhou, China

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PAPER ABSTRACT: This paper is to explore the city cultural heritage and experssional methods of openness, taking the historic city renewal plan of Shenzhou as an example. This author puts the “Level” theory of open building into the historic city renewal plan of Shenzhou, and build the “Level” system of the city and its coordination principle. Firstly, build the city’s “Support” and “Infill” on the aspect of material; secondly, set up the city’s cultural structure from three cultural types of symbiosis, conflict and fusion, based on the coordination principle with material basis. It will inherit Shenzhou’s regional culture effectively through this kind of planning method.

KEYWORDS: Urban Culture; Open; Expression; Level; Support; Infill

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1 The brief introduction of Shenzhou historic city

Rapid urbanization makes China’s urban forms changing quickly, however, characteristics of regional culture in many cities are disappearing increasingly. The issue China’s cities facing is how to inherit regional culture in development, also the author focuses on it for a long time too. It provides the case and evidence in practice to explore the method of open expression in urban culture though the historic city renewal plan of Shenzhou the author presided over.

1.1 Location

Shenzhou locates in the southeast of Hebei Province, 90 kilometers from the provincial capital Shijiazhuang, 230 kilometers from Beijing; It is located in the lower reaches of the Yellow River, the center of the North China Plain (e.g. Fig. 1).

1.2 History and Culture

Shenzhou has a long history, administrative divisions can be traced back to the early years of the Western Han Dynasty, about 2200 years ago. It’s culture originated in ancient Jizhou, which was Zhongshan’s territory, between the Yanzhao culture circle, west of Qilu culture. Therefore, Shenzhou is a traditional culture hinterland in the North China, which has a profound culture.

1.3 Urban Construction Situation

Shenzhou was founded in the early Han Dynasty, the city construction area was 3 square kilometers in the Ming Dynasty Yongle ten years (1412), then developed slowly[3]. The historic city of Shenzhou, which is based on the ancient city, still still has a considerable historical relics. In the planning pattern, with a moat water in the city, is a typical Chinese ancient city form, which can be clearly seen in Google maps (e.g. Fig. 2,3). In addition, the city has historic buildings – Yingyi granaries and Dadechang bank which were built in Qing dynasty (e.g. Fig. 4). However, these historical and cultural resources has not been fully tapped, the moat was
only used to collect rainwater, not to participate in urban landscape development. Two historic buildings did not get full protection and effective utilization.

In recent years, the city developed with a small scale, less matching, unsustainable mode\(^2\), not based on a reasonable and systematic planning of urban culture heritage. The status of the city has a large building density, the function layout and the architectural image are mixed. (e.g. Fig. 5).

2 City’s “Level” system and the principle of coordination

In order to express the cultural characteristics of Shenzhou, this paper put the “level” theory of open building into the city system, which launched the analysis and design from two aspects of material level and cultural structure (e.g. Fig. 6).
2.1 Material Level

On the aspect of material, we divide the city into three levels of "Urban tissue", "Support" and "Infill". Urban tissue refers to the city's geographical location, it will determine the regional attribute and cultural foundation of the city. The "Support" level elements include the arterial road, city moat, large squares, parks and important public buildings, which can decide the main urban framework and give the basic urban space personality. The "Infill" level elements include various types of buildings and alleys, small open space to form the city open image and expressions. At the same time, landmark buildings and city water system form an organic, opening contact with "Infill" as the control of "Support" elements.

2.2 Cultural Structure

Culture is a recognized attribute attached to the city's "Support" and "Infill". The author divides the cultural forms exhibited by the city's "Support" and "Infill" into three types of Symbiosis style, Conflict style, Fusion style. Symbiosis style refers to the regional culture forms of the city; Conflict style refers to the exotic culture forms; Fusion style refers to the integration of the former two culture forms, has dual features of regional and exotic culture (e.g. Fig. 7).

The cultural structure planning aims to use these cultural types to describe the city's material forms, so as to guide the city's cultural expression.

![Image: Fig. 6. City’s “Level” system]

Fig. 6. City’s “Level” system

![Image: Fig. 7. Three types of culture]

Fig. 7. Three types of culture

2.3 Principle of coordination

It will be more reasonable and effective for the expression of city culture, through organizing and designing cultural structure to coordinate with the city "Support". A good city cultural structure should allow the changes of "Infill" to make the city can be updated with demanded changes, which can not damage the structure.
stability. So it can accumulate the memories in shared environment with the times, and inherit the city’s regional culture.

3 Historic City Renewal Plan of Shenzhou

According to the principle of city "Level" above the planning system, the historic city renewal plan of Shenzhou start from the material level planning and culture structure planning two aspects.

3.1 Material Level Planning

Renewal plan starts with the "support" of the historic city of Shenzhou, unfolding in four parts (e.g. Fig. 8). Firstly, combing the status road in city and increase the main road of the city, to form a new city trunk road network; secondly, planning of the river system landscape, these scattered historic site of city moat open connect, core city moat landscape system is formed; thirdly, construction of large public open space, plan the large park and square in an important node location; fourthly, planning important public buildings, there are Cultural Center, Exhibition Hall, Stadium, schools and so on in the city. To the planning of the "Infill", following the city needs, we plan the residence, slip roads, small park and municipal buildings in different blocks (e.g. Fig. 9). Combination of those two is the complete planning of the historic city of Shenzhou (e.g. Fig. 10).

Fig. 8. “Support” planning of Shenzhou

Fig. 9. “Infill” planning of Shenzhou

Fig. 10. Plan map of Shenzhou

Fig. 11. Culture structure planning of Shenzhou

3.2 Culture Structure Planning

Material level planning of the historic city of Shenzhou is the foundation of the culture structure planning, the spirit of the principle of coordination, the culture structure planning is based on all kinds of material level, then give them different cultural attribute.
The city moat landscape and two historical buildings as center, the "support" planning as city image will be symbiosis style and fusion style in cultural attribute. In the same way of gradual change, the "Infill" planning as city open look will be planed as fusion style and conflict style in cultural attribute.

As can be seen from Figure 11, the cultural structure of the historic city of Shenzhou will be divided into three levels, the city moat is center regional culture expression, in order to spread out symbiosis style, conflict style, fusion style. Thus, After the cultural structure planning, The appearance of the city of Shenzhou are developed in outside and inside two aspects, inside city show the regional culture characteristics, outside city show the activity style of the ancient city.

4 Conclusion

The historic city renewal plan of Shenzhou based on the "Level" theory, trying to provide a feasible idea and method of city cultural inheritance and expression method. However, The implementation of the concept of urban planning is more complicated than the construction of a single building. There are many uncontrollable factors. Among them, exploration on the planning concept of city culture is the first step of the city cultural inheritance, also the most critical step. The author thinks, the related researches not only have theoretical significance, but also have practical significance.

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