

Renewal Process of Baihuazhou Area from the Perspective of Urban Visual Art

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Abstract In the context of rapid urbanization, cities must leverage their unique advantages to enhance their competitiveness. It has become a prevalent practice to integrate Chinese cultural elements into a city's brand identity, as well as to transform and elevate the existing landscape. This paper examines the landscape evolution of Nanchang Bayi Park (Baihuazhou) and the associated measures for its transformation and enhancement. The findings indicate that, from the perspective of urban visual art, these transformations significantly enhance the city's aesthetic perception and more effectively address the needs of people. Consequently, this contributes to the ongoing improvement and development of the city's brand image. By modifying the urban structure, enhancing the urban environment, upgrading infrastructure, and elevating the cultural levels within urban areas, the objective of transforming and upgrading urban landscapes can be realized.

Keywords Urban visual art, Urban renewal, Baihuazhou area

DOI 10.16785/j.issn.1943-989x.2025.1.003

Currently, China is undergoing a phase of rapid urbanization, characterized by an accelerated pace of urban development and a continuous improvement in the urbanization rate. This acceleration in urbanization facilitates the efficient reuse of urban resources, while competition among cities compels them to redefine their urban values, establish their identities, and cultivate their images throughout the development process. Consequently, this leads to the emergence of diverse city images. In the realm of urban visual art, the construction of a city's brand image is of paramount importance, as the manifestation of this image serves as a critical representation of its cultural charm^[1].

Urban parks serve as the primary recreational spaces for urban residents, significantly contributing to the enhancement of both their physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, these parks play a crucial role in fostering a harmonious and sustainable social environment. The urban park landscape is a significant livelihood project, necessitating a focus on a people-oriented governance concept during urban development processes. A favorable urban environment is intrinsically linked to the establishment of urban green spaces^[2]. An enhanced ecological environment contributes to improved quality of urban life. People's Park and Bayi Park, both prominent parks in Nanchang City, offer residents of Nanchang valuable spaces for recreation, leisure, and connection with nature. Nanchang Bayi Park possesses a rich historical background, originating from the Han Dynasty, and is recognized as one of the oldest parks in Nanchang^[3]. The evolution of Bayi Park exemplifies

the ongoing transition from classical gardens to modern parks, and subsequently to contemporary parks. Its developmental course runs through the whole progression of gardens in Nanchang, establishing it as the most representative case in the development and evolution of parks within the region. This study presents recommendations for the renovation and revitalization of the existing issues in the Baihuazhou area by introducing the landscape development course of Bayi Park and integrating with the perspective of urban visual art.

1 Landscape evolution of Baihuazhou area in Nanchang

The landscape evolution of the Baihuazhou area in Nanchang serves as a representative example of the historical development of landscape architecture within the Donghu District, located in the urban center of Nanchang, Jiangxi Province. The Bayi Park, located in the Baihuazhou area, serves as a provincial scenic reserve that embodies the characteristics of classical garden design. It has transitioned from a government-managed garden to a public park, illustrating the historical evolution of gardens in Nanchang from ancient to contemporary periods.

During the initial construction phase, Yuzhang Park, which served as the predecessor to Bayi Park, as well as Zhongshan Park and Hubin Park, were progressively opened to the public, subsequently establishing themselves as landmark attractions in Nanchang. The construction of Bayi Park exemplifies the fundamental characteristics of Chinese classical gardens, while its distinctive

landscape design contributes significantly to the cultural atmosphere of the local history and cultural heritage.

The modernization of Nanchang has been significantly influenced by Western civilization, resulting in substantial alterations to the local architectural and garden styles. During the Republic of China era, the construction of Zhongshan Park and Hubin Park not only exemplified the characteristics of Western garden but also preserved local historical sites, thereby showcasing the distinctive charm of Nanchang's indigenous culture. Although significant advancements have been achieved in the reconstruction of Hubin Park, it is unfortunate that the historical site from the Qing Dynasty has been entirely dismantled, and the contextual significance of the Gongyuan has been overlooked due to an inadequate consideration of the original site's environmental context.

With the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the parks in Nanchang underwent significant transformations. Zhongshan Park and Hubin Park were amalgamated into Bayi Park, which subsequently underwent extensive reconstruction and development. This revitalization facilitated a remarkable resurgence of classical garden art in Nanchang's parks and perpetuated the traditional culture of Donghu. Following the re-planning of Bayi Park, the aesthetic appeal of Baihuazhou has been effectively showcased. This development harmoniously integrates traditional classical architectural styles, resulting in a distinctive landscape characterized by its ancient, simplistic,

tranquil, and elegant qualities.

With the onset of the 21st century, the construction of parks increasingly prioritizes the protection of the urban environment, the maintenance of ecological balance, and the realization of sustainable development. Nanchang Bayi Park is currently at a pivotal juncture, actively advancing ecological transformation to address the demands of social development and public services.

2 Renovation and transformation

The majority of China's historical urban parks are situated in significant areas of the city, occupying unique geographical locations and environmental resources, while also embodying the collective memory of multiple generations^[4]. The preservation of the historical significance of the site, alongside the integration of new functional requirements for the park, are critical considerations that must be addressed during the renovation and transformation of urban development^[5]. In the context of research on humanistic theory, several scholars have introduced the concept of humanistic care in the renovation of historical parks. They have analyzed the behavioral patterns of various users and proposed principles and strategies for the renovation of these parks, grounded in the scientific theories of the human settlement environment and the design philosophy of organic renovation. In the realm of theoretical research concerning place and context, several scholars have synthesized the principal points of the renovation of historical parks. They have explored transformative concepts aimed at preserving urban memory while simultaneously honoring the distinctive characteristics of the site^[6-7]. In recent years, numerous studies have concentrated on examining the social functions of buildings and their relationship to the historical traditions of the city, often neglecting the emotional aspects inherent within these structures.

In 1929, Bayi Park was established adjacent to the municipal government building of Nanchang City. This location, known for its historical significance, has served as a venue for the display of the Eight Scenes of Nanchang and the Two Scenes of Nanchang. The park not only symbolizes the rich history of Nanchang but also embodies the memories and reflections of generations of its citizens. As time progresses, the condition of Bayi Park has deteriorated significantly, rendering it inadequate in meeting the diverse needs of the community. Consequently,

in 2017, the authorities initiated a comprehensive maintenance and redevelopment project for the park to enhance its capacity to serve future visitors effectively. This study presents recommendations and strategies for the renovation and transformation of Baihuazhou area, informed by an investigation of the area and framed within the contexts of urban renewal and urban visual art.

2.1 Street landscape features of Baihuazhou

(1) The street landscape of the Baihuazhou area exhibits significant diversity, featuring a wide array of flowering plants, including shrubs, trees, and vibrant flora. The distinct changes across the four seasons allow residents to appreciate the aesthetically pleasing green environment. Furthermore, the presence of ample green space on both sides of the street, characterized by green trees, a well-defined landscape sequence, and a diverse array of community laneway vegetation, contributes to the visual appeal of the area (Fig.1).

(2) Certain landscape facilities established within the street space of the Baihuazhou Area exhibit a lack of human-centered design considerations. For instance, some tree pools intended to offer recreational space do not adequately address users' needs for shade. Additionally, the vegetation planted within these tree pools is often unappealing in appearance and lacks significant practical benefits. The positioning of the bulletin board appears to be somewhat arbitrary, which may lead both residents and tourists to overlook its content. Furthermore, there is a lack of coherence in the aesthetic between the landscape sketches, garbage receptacles, and the bulletin board itself (Fig.2).

2.2 Problems in the waterfront space of Baihuazhou

(1) The waterfront street space is deficient in human-centered facilities. Currently, there are only a limited number of stone benches distributed across certain sections of the waterfront walkway. Most areas lack adequate facilities for residents and visitors to rest and engage in social interactions. Furthermore, the existing stone benches do not adequately address the needs of residents and pedestrians for shade and protection from the sun and rain (Fig.3).

(2) The design of the waterfront street space lacks sufficient hydrophilic characteristics. The waterfront jogging trail is predominantly bordered by marble and iron fences, which effectively isolate the water body from the adjacent street space. Consequently, the accessibility between

the jogging trail and the landscape features of the water body is inadequate, resulting in limited interaction between residents, tourists, and the waterfront area (Fig.4).

3 Urban visual culture landscape

As contemporary society advances, there has been a significant transformation in the cultural structure. Humanity is currently experiencing an era of unparalleled visual art, which is exerting an increasingly profound influence. Consequently, a growing number of citizens have started to concern the visual culture of the city, thereby increasing their awareness of its distinctive features. It is anticipated that the city's aesthetic appeal, coupled with human activities and cultural exchanges, will facilitate a deeper understanding and greater enlightenment regarding its essence. The structure of urban culture, as conceptualized herein, is influenced by a multitude of factors, including the political system, legal framework, cultural heritage, and the expression of the human spirit. Notably, visual culture has emerged as a significant determinant impacting the characteristics and quality of the urban cultural landscape^[8].

Each city possesses a distinct historical origin, a rich cultural heritage, and significant spiritual connotations, all of which contribute to the unique spiritual character of the city. Nevertheless, the swift advancement of society has led individuals to continuously seek novel experiences, while ignoring the inherent cultural characteristics of their cities. Consequently, this spiritual character is gradually being overlooked. In instances of excessive emphasis on urban development, there is a tendency for individuals to overlook the distinctive cultural heritage inherent to the city. This phenomenon often manifests in the evaluation of a city's competitiveness through the height and quantity of its buildings. Consequently, this approach has led to a predicament in which cities find themselves unable to escape, ultimately hindering their capacity to reflect their authentic atmosphere, character, and spirit.

Urban culture encompasses not only the tangible aspects of a city, including regulations, architecture, streets, cultural squares, commercial facilities, residential areas, and transportation systems, but also incorporates deeper connotations such as social values, cultural atmosphere, and social customs and practices. Thus, it transcends a mere superficial understanding. In the context of urban landscapes, individuals frequently assess their cultural value based on the presence of sculptures or evaluate



Fig.1 Greening and landscape space around Baihuazhou



Fig.2 Surrounding landscape facilities of Baihuazhou



Fig.3 Waterfront space facilities of Baihuazhou



Fig.4 Insufficient hydrophilicity of Baihuazhou waterfront space

them in terms of the accessibility of commercial activities. In modern significance, it is essential to underscore that the fundamental value of urban culture lies in its capacity to mirror individuals' perceptions, compositions, behaviors, and understandings of the entire city. The influence of human beings on urban environments is substantial, manifesting in various domains such as architecture, transportation, commercial activities, and other facets. Human participation in urban activities imbues these experiences with meaning, thereby contributing to the distinctive charm of the city. Consequently, individuals play a crucial role in shaping urban culture. Human culture comprises a multitude of elements, with individuals representing the most spiritually engaged component of these elements. The

phenomenon not only reflects the individual's cultural characteristics but also encompasses the surrounding social environment, economic conditions, and personal moral development, thereby resulting in the formation of a distinctive cultural structure. Through a comprehensive examination of cultural cognition, we can meticulously assess the extent to which the sales system offers humane care services, the emergence and decline of bookstores, and whether the spatial arrangement of teahouses and cafes aligns with contemporary needs. The transition from the green landscape at the end of the street to the meticulously arranged sculptures, along with the variations in light between day and night, and the accessibility of transportation, all serve to illustrate the

community's pursuit of urban culture. The cultural composition of a city constitutes its spiritual foundation, with individuals acting as promoters, creators, implementers, and reflectors of this foundational aspect. Human creativity is manifested across various aspects of culture, including books, newspapers, and magazines. Although certain mediums, such as radio and television, are experiencing a decline and may be gradually disappearing, they nonetheless continue to play a significant role in the cultural landscape. The widespread adoption of the Internet has significantly influenced contemporary culture, particularly through mobile phone media. The captivating nature of this visual culture has led to a form of addiction among individuals, prompting them to engage in risky behaviors, such as vehicular accidents and falls down stairs, as well as to squander their time day and night. This phenomenon exerts an insidious charm over people.

4 Conclusions

From the perspective of the four distinct developmental stages of Nanchang Bayi Park, a comprehensive landscape framework and its extensive historical background have been established, which spans from urban planning to mountainous landscape. The evolution of Bayi Park, initiated by the government of the Republic of China and culminating in its initial construction, reflects a synthesis of Chinese and Western elements, thereby enriching the contemporary landscape of Nanchang Park. Throughout the entire process of constructing Bayi Park, there has been a steadfast commitment to enhancing the environment while continuously exploring innovative approaches to address the needs of modern citizens. This initiative seeks to move away from the Republic of China style of horticulture and instead embrace the fundamental principles of ancient aesthetics characterized by simplicity, tranquility, and elegance. Bayi Park is actively promoting sustainable development through a holistic vision that incorporates contemporary environmental protection concepts. The principles of green and continuous innovation have imbued Bayi Park with a vibrant character. The development and transformation of Bayi Park reflect the extensive evolution of landscape greening in Nanchang, showcasing the remarkable changes and challenges that have shaped the area over time.

The development of historical parks is shaped by the historical and societal contexts in which they are created, and their establishment is constrained by the prevailing historical and

social conditions of the time. Typically, historical parks are situated in aesthetically pleasing natural settings and exhibit distinctive garden styles that are influenced by the surrounding architecture and human activities. Since modern times, the design and construction of Western parks, influenced by political and civilizational factors, have developed into a comprehensive system that integrates multiple cultures, incorporating both traditional Eastern elements and contemporary styles. However, as society continues to evolve, the diversity of individuals' needs has increased, necessitating ongoing improvements in the construction of multicultural spaces. With urban development, both the form and function of parks have undergone significant transformations. The transformation and construction of Nanchang Bayi Park exemplify the diversity inherent in Chinese urban parks, highlighting its historical origins, distinctive style, and its interaction with the surrounding environment. This development contributes

to a more varied and dynamic development of urban historical parks. Consequently, there exists a responsibility to undertake the transformation and construction of Nanchang Bayi Park, thereby fostering the advancement and evolution of urban historical parks throughout the nation.

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In the future, waterfront landscape optimization should closely focus on the needs of users, use scientific methods to build a comprehensive evaluation system, strengthen the deep integration of multi-disciplines, excavate deeply the connotation of regional culture, and establish a long-term dynamic monitoring mechanism. These measures are adopted to realize the sustainable and coordinated development of waterfront ecology, society and economy, improve the quality of urban waterfront space, satisfy people's yearning for a beautiful waterfront living environment, and inject new vitality into the sustainable development of cities. This is not only a research direction in the field of waterfront landscape optimization, but also an inevitable requirement for promoting high-quality urban development.

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