Historic Site as the Core——Exploration the Characteristics of Urban Space in Contemporary Xi'an by Taking the Study of Historical Context as a Clue on

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Abstract
When the historic sites enter into the scope of the construction of the city, its material and connotation will inevitably participate in the evolution of urban spatial form. The historical site and its surrounding areas will become the city's most valuable embodiment of the region. And then, it will affect the form of urban space. Xi'an is known as the one of the four ancient civilizations, with Cairo, Athens, Rome. The city's urban construction history is about 3000 years. There are four famous dynasties which are called Zhou (B.C. 1046 – B.C. 256), Qin (B.C.221 – B.C. 207), Han (B.C. 202 – A.D. 220), Tang (A.D. 618 – A.D. 907). 37% of the current Xi'an urban space is overlying the cities of these dynasties. The distribution and form of these historic sites are important factors influencing the urban space. This paper is based on the study of historical context. Sorting out the evolution process and schema model of urban space in Xi'an by means of mapping, Analysing the data of large sites in urban space in Xi'an, and trying to explore the necessary relationship between urban space development and the protection of these historic sites in Xi'an consolidation. Found the role of the great ruins changed in the urban space of contemporary Xi'an, puts forward the urban spatial morphology model of "Historic Site as the core" for the space characteristics of contemporary Xi'an city.

Keywords: Historic Site, Urban space, Xi'an, Historical context

1. Introduction
The spatial form of the city is the physical space layout and development mode of the city. It is influenced by the historical process, cultural background and institutional conditions of the city. It is the product of the development of urban humanistic elements. Finding a reasonable form of urban organization is one of the core issues of urban research. Relevant basic theories include: the Conzen, the Muratori-Caniggia and the Versailles. In this study, we can learn from the research ideas of the Conzen, Taking historical context as a clue, Extract the characteristic factors of urban spatial development in Xi’an, And provide the basis for the future development of urban spatial form in Xi'an.

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2. Xi’an contemporary urban space has a long history of urban sites

Cities appeared as early as 3000 years ago in Xi’an area. Xi’an has nearly one thousand years as the capital of China since Zhou dynasty (1046 - 256 BC). The most powerful dynasties are the Han dynasty (202 BC - 220 AD) and the Tang dynasty (AD 618 - 907). At that time, Changan is famous as the world's economic, political and cultural center, and the city also has a profound impact on the whole world. After this, the political center of China shifted to the east, Xi’an became the economic and cultural center of the city in the northwest region, still as the central city of northwest. At present, It is the most rapid phase of the history of urban development, the scale and spatial structure of Xi’an is changing faster and faster. The problem between contemporary urban construction and the protection of historical sites is becoming more and more prominent.

3. Xi’an contemporary urban space and historic sites have high degree of Overlap

The most unusual places of Xi’an urban space is that it has so many historical sites. Due to the long time of the construction of the capitals and the large number of capitals, there preserved many big ruins areaes more than 10 square kilometers. These big ruins area including the city ruins, palace ruins, burial ruins. are overlying the current urban development space degrees up to 37%, Different from the stone ruins of Rome, the sites in Xi’ an are mostly soil sites (Fig.1.). It is difficult to see in the history of the city of grand, the glorious palaces in the aspect of space. Only the contour boundary of these sites is visible and continues to this day.

![Fig.1. Xi'an soil ruins of Han dynasty](image)

Based on the urgency of the urban rapid development and the specificity of the xi ‘an site space characteristic, the historic sites need new direction in Xi ‘an urban space form at present. This is the key point of this research, and the research hope to provide the decision-making basis for the protection and development of the urban history of Xi’an.

Urban form is the crystallization of time in space, The research of the evolution of urban form will eventually fall into the two dimensions: time dimension and space dimensions. The basic train of thought is to follow the law of historical development, Find the coherence and gradual change. Make a positive response to the development of urban spatial form in the future, In order to cope with the serious crisis that the lost of the cultural characteristics of the current city.

4. the spatial evolution of Xi’an from the time dimension

Since the Zhou Dynasty established Fengjing along the Feng River in 1046 BC. The urban construction in
Xi’an small plain began. The cities including Haojing, Hanchangan, Qinxianyang, Suichangan, Tangchangan, Ming Qing Xi’an city and the contemporary Xi’an city. By studying the “Historical Atlas of Xi’an,” we described the evolution of urban space form the following illustration(Fig.2.):

As the figure, the evolution of Xi’an city space can be divided into two stages: ancient times and modern times. The city development background of ancient times is agricultural society and authoritarian politics, and the city spatial structure is the typical center structure of rights. After the Tang Dynasty, Xi’an withdrew from the stage of Chinese capital, has become an important city in northwest region. A new town formed on the basis of the imperial city of Tang Dynasty, backs to the regional center of the city, and as the main space framework of the city continues to the present day.

In modern times, The city has transformed from agricultural society to industrial society and post industrial society, and the urban spatial structure has formed a concentric circle structure centered on the old city that changed to the multi center structure.

![Fig.2. The Change of Xi’an city in the Plain](image)

5. The distribution characteristics of the Xi’an from the spatial dimension

In Xi’an, the urban planning area covers an area of 10108 square kilometers, the main city covers an area of 525 square kilometers. And the relics area of Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang Dynasties covers an area of 108 square kilometres. Currently, the relics area had been completely covered by contemporary city area. The coincidence degree between relics area of Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang Dynasties and urban built-up area of Xi’an is 37%(Fig.3.). There are 2944 registered cultural relics in Xi’an, including 700 sites which accounting for about 1/4, and There are 290 Cultural relics protection units, including 80 sites which accounting for about 1/3.
The distribution of the four sites and its area

The greatest feature of the large site of Xi'an is huge, distinct, complete, and dispersed. Because of the superposition between the relics area and the contemporary city area, modern life disturbed the site environment. In recent years, many heritage parks which include Daming Palace National Heritage Park, Qujiang pool heritage park, the mausoleum of second Emperor of the Qin dynasty heritage Park, and Tang Chang'an City Wall heritage Park. These heritage park is not only a measure of protection and exhibition of the sites, but also an important component of the urban public green space.

6. The relationship between the development of urban space and historical sites in Xi'an

The urban space of Xi'an is influenced by the overall urban planning. Combined with the four overall plan of Xi'an after 1953, The relationship between the development of urban spatial morphology and the historical sites in Xi'an including the following three stages: divide and conquer; punctate influenced; system impact (Fig.5.)

Divide and conquer: the first urban planning of Xi'an in 50s, took the old city as the center, to the East, West, South three directions for expansion, giving full consideration to the protection of Changan city in the Han Dynasty and the Tang Daming Palace Ruins, and no big expansion but arranged to do the storage area in the north of the city. Other sites have a certain distance from the urban built-up areas, although a specific protection planning has not been formulated, the sites maintain its original shape and boundary, without the
effect of city construction.

Punctate influenced: from 80s to 90s, Xi'an has experienced two times of the urban general planning, the city scale expanded further, completely overlapped on top of Changan city in Tang Dynasty. The Daming Palace Ruins, the Tiantan ruins, the outer city ruins, and the Qujiangchi ruins are surrounded by the city, under the stimulus of city construction, the protection of the big city ruins and the development of its surrounding areas have been put on the agenda.

System impact: Xi'an conducted the fourth general planning after 2000, urban expansion increased rapidly, and the positioning of the city image was gradually clear. The protection of the dignity, integrity, continuity and identity of the great monuments became a consensus during this period, in addition to the ruins museum, the concept of green site was gradually clear, in 2008 The Daming Palace National Heritage Park was built, opening the Xi'an big ruins park green space construction precedent, and Han Changan Ruins Park, the E pang Palace Ruins Park, Fenghao two Beijing ruins park site, formed a unique large site green space system in urban space.

![Fig. 5. The Relationship between General Regulations and Historic Sites in Xi'an](image)

7. Conclusion

Urban morphology highly expresses the material form and cultural connotation of the city. The study of urban morphology is an important means to recognize the city and further construct the city. We often use the historical maps to analysis of the historical process of the formation and evolution of urban morphology. This analytical tool is intuitive and specific for the study of urban morphology, in the specific practice has a strong application value.

Through the time and space dimension for the historical context of Xi'an clues, The relationship between the evolution of the urban space form in Xi'an and the protection and development of the space of the historical sites. Discover the connotation and form of the protection of the historical sites, The present situation of urban space in Xi'an presents the trend of the development of the site as the core. The core of the site bears not only the core of urban culture, the core of urban green space but also the comprehensive
function of the core of urban public space.

At present, Xi’an is preparing to prepare a new overall planning, historical sites in the urban space to assume the role of more and more important, The future of the site of green space as a framework for the construction of urban space in Xi’an city space characteristics. This space characteristic has preserved the ancient capital pattern of the capital construction culture in Xi’an for three thousand years, and also provided the guarantee for the future of green ecological city construction in Xi’an. We think the space characteristic is a win-win development idea of contemporary city construction and site protection.

Fig.6. The historic site as the green core in contemporary Xi’an city space

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