

## The Image Analysis of Famous Historical and Cultural Towns in Central Sichuan

Yue Wang <sup>a</sup>, Yuyang He <sup>b</sup>, Xudi Chen, Kai Ping and Peng Yu

School of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Southwest Petroleum University, Chengdu  
610500, China

<sup>a</sup>1102636992@qq.com, <sup>b</sup>676012778@qq.com

### Abstract

China had unveiled three hundred and fifty history and culture towns, which made the protection of historical and cultural heritage in China expanding to a larger scope, and provided a broader stage to show the traditional landscape and architectural art under different region and culture. The word "image", as a concept to research space image, was derived from the book named Image, which advocates studying urban space characteristics with personal feelings, at the same time puts forward the city's "identification". However, Image was not commonly used to analyze and research the concept of structure features of Chinese history and culture town and to reveal its unique space image. In fact, the traditional towns in China are extremely rich in its "identification" and "impression". At present, the research in space image of the famous historical and cultural towns in Central Sichuan is not enough. This paper, which uses the theory of Image, takes the Historical and Cultural Town Protection Planning of Cangshan as an example, trying to provides a new theory and new perspective to its landscape study.

### Keywords

Famous Historical and Cultural Towns, Image, Path, node.

### 1. Introduction

More attention has been paid to the famous historical and cultural towns in China, but at the same time, the related research is still relatively weak, furthermore there exists many problems in the protection of the famous historical and cultural towns. The word "image" from the book named "Image" put forward the concept of "identity", which express an unique method that emphasizes the local characteristics. The uses of "image" methodology in the study of history and culture town can comb the local characteristic elements effectively, in order to determine the whole structure about what to protect and how to protect.

### 2. Literature review

In 2005, the notice of the state council on strengthening the protection of cultural heritage explicitly proposed that "in the process of urbanization, cultural heritage, such as excellent vernacular architecture, plays an important part in the development strategy of urbanization ". In 2006, the protection of ancient historical and cultural villages was written to the file number one on several opinions of the promotion of the construction of new socialist countryside. In 2014, the national new urbanization put forward that strength the protection of the historical and cultural blocks and towns, and carried forward the excellent traditional culture.

Earlier origin of heritage protection in abroad has experienced an evolution from single building protection to the protection of the blocks, further extended to the protection of whole urban environmental of historical development process.

The Athens charter noticed that historic buildings should be properly kept. The Venice charter in 1964 pointed out that cultural relic buildings cannot be separated from its historical environment, but should maintain the existing traditional environment; In 1976 the Nairobi Suggestions emphasizing

that historical area with its surroundings should be actively protected as an unified whole; Washington charter has been clear about the content that historical towns protection contains, which natural and artificial environment should be brought into. Furthermore the connotation of historical towns landscape protection was defined in the Memorandum of Vienna and the declaration of protection of urban historical landscape, then higher requirements are put forward from the aspects of cultural values, contemporary architecture creation and management.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 The basic image of Chinese historical and cultural towns**

##### **3.1.1 Landscape Image**

Chinese traditional philosophy pays attention to "harmony between human being and nature ", thinking that human being is a part of nature, affected by this whole idea of organic, so when they choose the living environment, they emphasis the natural landscape particularly." Ten Books on architecture" wrote: "where the people live, it should give priority to the land of mountains and rivers." In the historical and cultural towns, the landscape image can be attributed to the concept of the five elements in this area.

##### **3.1.2 Ecology Image**

China ancients in the pursuit of the ecological environment have always been one of the standards of an ideal place to pursue. Most Chinese historical and cultural towns have characteristics of that they were always surrounded by the mountain and river; north-south oriented; lush vegetation; deer soil, etc. That is to say, in the historical and cultural towns, a stream, a pergola or a small green node are the elements of nodes or boundaries in image.

##### **3.1.3 Clan Images**

In Chinese ancient society, the relationship between the people with blood as the basis is a typical society that makes the blood relationship as the link. The ruins of Banpo in Xi 'an has fully embodied the characteristics of this image. In most of the existing historical and cultural towns, the ancestral hall or other places of worship became town markers.

##### **3.1.4 Image of pursuing auspiciousness**

When people pursue the ideal environment, they always tend to pursuing auspiciousness and avoid disaster. When people are staying with nature in a long-term relationship, they regard the personal safety; convenient life; fertile land and beautiful scenery as propitious environment. The common layout mode shows that the existing historical and cultural towns are always surrounded by the mountain and river.

#### **3.2 The analysis of historical and cultural towns of central Sichuan in Southwest China**

##### **3.2.1 Bridge**

When select the site of traditional town in China, one of the standards is surrounding the mountain and river. The structure of bridge is simple and practical; the model of bridge is flexible and lighter. Therefore, bridge plays an important role not only in the transport organization, but also in the landscape of ancient village towns. Bridge is connecting with the poetic environment that around it, and has become the important space node, in order to create good memories for people.

##### **3.2.2 Entrance Square**

Village entrance often has the nature of starting space. It not only has the defensive function, but also has a certain symbolic significance.

As a transitional space and public space, the type of facilities often appear here such as trees and small bridges, it may form a distinct feature of entrance square sometimes, and form a place for villagers to rest or welcome and see-off guests.



Figure 1. Entrance Square schematic diagram

### 3.2.3 Teahouse

The teahouse is often offering a place for men to rest and communicate after working. The form of teahouse may be a building or a temporary trellis on the side of the road, with some simple tables and chairs, it constitutes a place full of zest for life, it can constitute a place full of fun and joy.

### 3.2.4 Bazaar

For the people of ancient towns, going to the bazaar belongs to a large social activity. When people go to the bazaar, it is not necessary to make a deal, or also can be a good place to recreate. Market Squares always combine with streets, and often expand at the intersection formed by the space.



Figure 2. Bazaar schematic diagram

### 3.2.5 Pond

Influenced by shallow-hill landforms, pond becomes a common image of the ancient town in Sichuan. In the ancient town, the pond has both the value of landscape, and makes the person relaxed and happy, what's more, it also can adjust microclimate, nourish biological diversity. Even if the building messy layout, it also can form a potential center sense by its own cohesiveness because the water has its own characteristics

### 3.2.6 Street

Street Space is the most popular place in a ancient town, people are most active in the association. Streets in the ancient town are different from straight roads in the city. The selection of path is particular about "induction". The street space varies with the buildings along the street, the Street cannot be glanced its end at first sight. It can form the randomly scattered street façade and rhythmical contour, and then leave a stretch visual effect on people.



Figure 3. T-crossing road

#### 4. Result&Discussion

The definition of space is the compound of the space elements, but not the Superposition of all the space elements, namely complex feelings produced by man's subjective cognition.

In terms of theory, Kevin Lynch's "city image" provides a theoretical basis for this study. In order to improve applied in the famous historical and cultural towns, more specific refining and research of image are required.

In practical applications, the image is more used in teaching and theoretical research, but few designs with its theory are carried out. This paper hopes, through the digging of the contemporary image elements, "Image" could integrate into the overall planning and design research.

As hypothesized, this paper combed out the local image elements of historical and cultural town in Middle Sichuan area, and further combined with the actual case planning and design, combining the theory with the actual and providing a new perspective to the planning of famous historical and cultural towns in the rest Middle Sichuan area.

#### 5. Conclusion

The protection and renovation of historical and cultural towns is a historical process. Therefore those imperfections should be tolerant and encouraged. This paper which is lack of systematic quotes the concept of "image" to the research of historical and cultural towns, providing a new method to the protection planning of historical and cultural towns. In the design part of this paper the elements of the local characteristics are due to the path, edge, district, node and the landmark, so as to determine which should be retained and how to retain. The method of "image" to study the historical and cultural towns has its special significance, from which we could find a new angle of view to comb local elements.

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