

Assessment on the Collective Memory after Alteration of Urban Heritage: Case Study of Hengshan Mansions in Shanghai

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Abstract : A city can be developed through memory, and memory is one of the most important elements for urban contexts. Collective memory is a collection of personal memories that can be preserved with objects, places, and events of heritage, expressing culture through spatial changes. These preserved forms can evoke a sense of community and certain emotions. Collective memory in cities reflects urban spatial alterations and historical developments. It can be preserved and reflected by revitalisation projects. A major current focus in collective memory research is how to identify and preserve memory in an intangible way. The influential elements within the preservation of collective memory mainly include institutions and objects. However, current research lacks the assessment of the collective memory after alterations of urban heritage. The assessment of urban heritage lacks visualization and qualitative methods. The emergence of the application of space syntax can fill in this gap. Hengshan Mansions was a new project in 2015. The original residential area has been replaced with a comprehensive commercial area integrating boutique shopping, upscale restaurants, and creative offices. Hengshan Mansions is located in the largest historic area in Shanghai, and its development is the epitome of the traditional culture in Shanghai. Its alteration is the newest project in this area and presents the new concept of revitalisation of urban heritage. For its physical parts, modern vitality is created, and historical information is preserved at the same time. However, most of the local people are moved away, and its functions are altered a lot. The preservation of its collective memory needs to discuss furtherly. Thus, the article builds a framework to assess the collective memory of urban heritage, including spatial configuration, spatial interaction, and cultural cognition. Then, it selects Hengshan Mansions in Shanghai as a case to analyse the assessed framework. Space syntax can be applied to visualize the assessment. Based on the analysis, the article will explore the influential reasons for the collective memory after alterations and proposes relevant advice for the preservation of the collective memory of urban heritage.

Keywords : collective memory, alternation of urban heritage, space syntax, Hengshan Mansions

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