

The Art of ‘Three carvings’(“三雕”) of Ming and Qing Ancient Buildings in Jinxi County, Jiangxi Province: Cultural Memory and Heritage Preservation in the Digitization Process

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Abstract

Jinxi County of Jiangxi Province has beautiful forest, with pleasant climate and four distinct seasons. Across the county, a remarkable number of ancient buildings from the Ming and Qing dynasties have survived, reflecting the region's deep historical and cultural heritage. These ancient buildings of Ming and Qing Dynasties are the living fossils of Jiangxi ancient architecture culture, and the memory and inheritance of Jiangxi culture in the past. A qualitative research method was used, through the local ancient buildings, ancient building internal structure, ancient architectural decoration and surrounding environment landscape data collection, interviews with local residents, control ancient history, analyzing the background under the digital process of jinxi county ‘Three carvings’(“三雕”) the necessity of art and cultural heritage protection and the application value of modern society, the exploration of the relationship between cultural memory and cultural tourism development has important theoretical value and practical significance in both academic research and practice. Cultural memory and heritage protection are closely related to the sustainable development of ancient buildings. These two mainstream concepts are integrated with the inheritance and dissemination significance of the ‘Three carvings’(“三雕”) in ancient buildings and ancient buildings. With the concept of cultural memory and the background of digital process, this paper believes that to preserve the traditional skills of ancient architecture, we should fully explore the concept of heritage protection, combine with the government and universities, and use digital technology to promote the sustainability of historical housing and related legislation.

Keywords: *Three Carvings’(“三雕”) Cultural Memory Heritage Preservation, the Digitization Process.*

Introduction

This study will take Jinxi County in Jiangxi Province as the core area for field investigation, and explore the digital inheritance method of the ‘Three carvings’(“三雕”) in ancient buildings of the Ming and Qing Dynasties from the perspectives of ‘cultural memory’ and ‘heritage preservation’. The scope of the fieldwork includes the following aspects:

Geographical and Cultural Background

Jinxi County belongs to Fuzhou City, Jiangxi Province, located in the east of Jiangxi Province, distributed along the middle reaches of the Fu River, and is in the transition area from Wuyi Mountain Range to Poyang Lake Plain. The geographical location of Jinxi County has remarkable features, with Zixi County and Guixi City neighbouring it in the east, Nancheng County in the south, Linchuan District in the west, and Dongxiang District and Yujiang District of Yingtan City in the north. Jinxi County is rich in intangible cultural heritage, including dragon lanterns, hand-cranked lions and other special cultural expressions, and local residents' daily lives can be seen everywhere in the humanities, with a history of 1,000 years, and its rich mountain ranges, water systems, and humanistic landscapes are known as the “hometown of Fragrant Mountain” and “capital of Jiangnan”. Jinxi County has 57 villages listed on the Chinese Traditional Villages List, and 128 ancient villages with intact patterns that are not on the list. It has preserved 11,633 ancient buildings of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the number of which ranks first in China. It is said to be a ‘Chinese traditional architecture and cultural tourism destination’ and ‘a museum of ancient villages not surrounded by a walled city’.

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Distribution and Characteristics of Ancient Buildings

the overall natural style of the ancient villages in Jinxi County is green brick tiles, stone roads, small bridges and flowing water, peaceful and harmonious. Influenced by the traditional Chinese feng shui culture, emphasising the elements of ‘opening heavenly gates, closing earthly households, and building at the mouth of the water’, the ‘unity of heaven and man’ and the harmonious symbiosis with the natural environment are blended together. Usually, Gan architecture villages will arrange key buildings such as ancestral halls and theatres in the geographical centre of the village to highlight their central position in the village life. Wall corners, patios, balustrades, walls and window openings are usually constructed with materials such as lapis lazuli, red sandstone or granite, which are finely cut into stone strips or slabs, and the natural texture of the stone is often used to form various patterns. The appearance of the building mostly presents a rectangular plan layout, surrounded by a hollow half-brick wall, and the overall appearance of green bricks and grey tiles. Half-shade, half-exposed double phi roof hidden in the staggered towering horse-head wall, horse-head wall modelling varied, pointing towards the sky, in addition to the artistic and aesthetic value of modelling also has a practical function of fire and wind protection. These buildings use stone, this head, brick are carved with half-relief patterns, forming a unique meaning of the ‘three carvings’ art. The fieldwork will focus on the art of ‘three carvings’ (wood, stone and brick carvings) in these ancient buildings, as well as the layout and characteristics of the Gan School of architecture, such as green bricks and grey tiles, horse-head walls, and double-sloped roofs.

Cultural Heritage Status and Challenges

Traditional villages in China are rapidly disappearing, and ancient villages in Jinxi County are facing challenges and trials. The fieldwork will focus on the components of ancient buildings with artistic and cultural value, such as doors, windows, plaques, stone foundations, etc., as well as the current state of conservation of these components and the problems that exist, such as theft, damage, and disrepair.

Specific case study: Selecting the ancient village of Zhuqiao in Jinxi County and the Yu Gongzhi Ancestral Hall as specific cases, we study the neatly-planned village layout of Zhuqiao Ancient Village, the distribution of ancient buildings, as well as the current situation of the art of the ‘three carvings’ and the local people's cultural memories, and conduct a VR study on the ‘Yu Gongzhi Ancestral Hall’. Digital heritage method of digital roaming design. The field survey will deeply analyse the cultural memory and cultural heritage value of the ancient buildings, as well as the current protection measures and existing problems.

Digitalisation and Conservation Strategies

The study will also explore the application of digital technologies and strategies to enhance cultural memory and heritage conservation through digital means. The fieldwork will involve interviews with local residents, the government and relevant conservation organisations to understand their perspectives, challenges and future conservation plans.

By defining the field scope as described above, this study aims to comprehensively reveal the cultural value of the three carving arts of Ming and Qing Dynasty ancient buildings in Jinxi County, explore their conservation strategies in the digitisation process, and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the conservation and inheritance of cultural heritage.

Local Live-action Pictures of "wood carving"

The art of wood carving, as one of the three carving arts of Ming and Qing Dynasty ancient buildings in Jinxi County, Jiangxi Province, carries a rich cultural memory and heritage value. Houses and furniture in the ancient village architectural complexes in Jinxi County have cleverly used wood carving techniques with unique styles and rich themes, reflecting the ancient Chinese people's pursuit of artistic aesthetics and consideration of the functionality of living spaces. In terms of decorativeness, wood carving is particularly prominent in the Jinxi ancient village complex. The wood carving decorations on each house



Figure 1

and furniture, on the one hand, aim to add to the beauty of the building, and on the other hand, they also take into account the need for indoor lighting, making the space brighter and more harmonious. In the architecture and furniture of famous families, the wood carvings are usually more delicate and gorgeous, with a variety of shapes, full patterns and a sense of hierarchy. These carvings, in addition to demonstrating superior skills and deep cultural connotations, are also the cultural memory of the Chinese people in the past. For example, the beams, column bases and window panes all highlight the identity and status of the homeowner. Although the wood carving patterns on the furniture of ordinary families are relatively simple, they are also rich in life and symbolism. Most of the motifs are auspicious, peaceful and long-lived, such as bats, lotus flowers, ruyi and longevity peaches, all of which reflect people's aspirations and wishes for a better life. Although the wood carvings in ordinary buildings may not be as fine as those in prestigious buildings, they also carry the local residents' love of life and respect for and memory of traditional culture. Through the documentary study of woodcarving art in ancient villages in Jinxi County, we can not only gain a deeper understanding of the development level of woodcarving techniques in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, but also feel the people of Jinxi's perseverance and inheritance of traditional culture in the process of digitalisation through these exquisite patterns and shapes. This provides valuable empirical materials for our cultural memory and heritage protection work, and also provides a new direction for thinking about how to better protect and develop traditional art in the digital era.

Local 'Stone Carving' Art Patterns and Symbols

The stone carving art of ancient buildings in Jinxi County is an important part of the three carving arts, which demonstrates the unique aesthetic pursuit and cultural connotation of Jinxi people in the past. Corner stones, patios, railings, lighting walls, leaky windows and other parts of ancient buildings are carefully designed, cut and polished, using green stone, red sandstone or granite to form stone slabs, and in the construction process fully through the design of the natural texture of the stone itself and the carving of the pattern cleverly combined into a variety of patterns. The stone carvings reflect the high skills of the craftsmen, and the cultural symbolism is also displayed and passed on through these carving techniques and themes. Most of the walls in the ancient buildings are made of small bricks that extend along the iconic horse-head walls. The load-bearing wooden pillars of the building have heavy foundation stones, on which are hand-carved various patterns, simple and simple, with deep auspicious symbols, mainly the legendary dragon and phoenix, lotus flower, unicorn and so on, with smooth lines and a sense of beauty and strength.

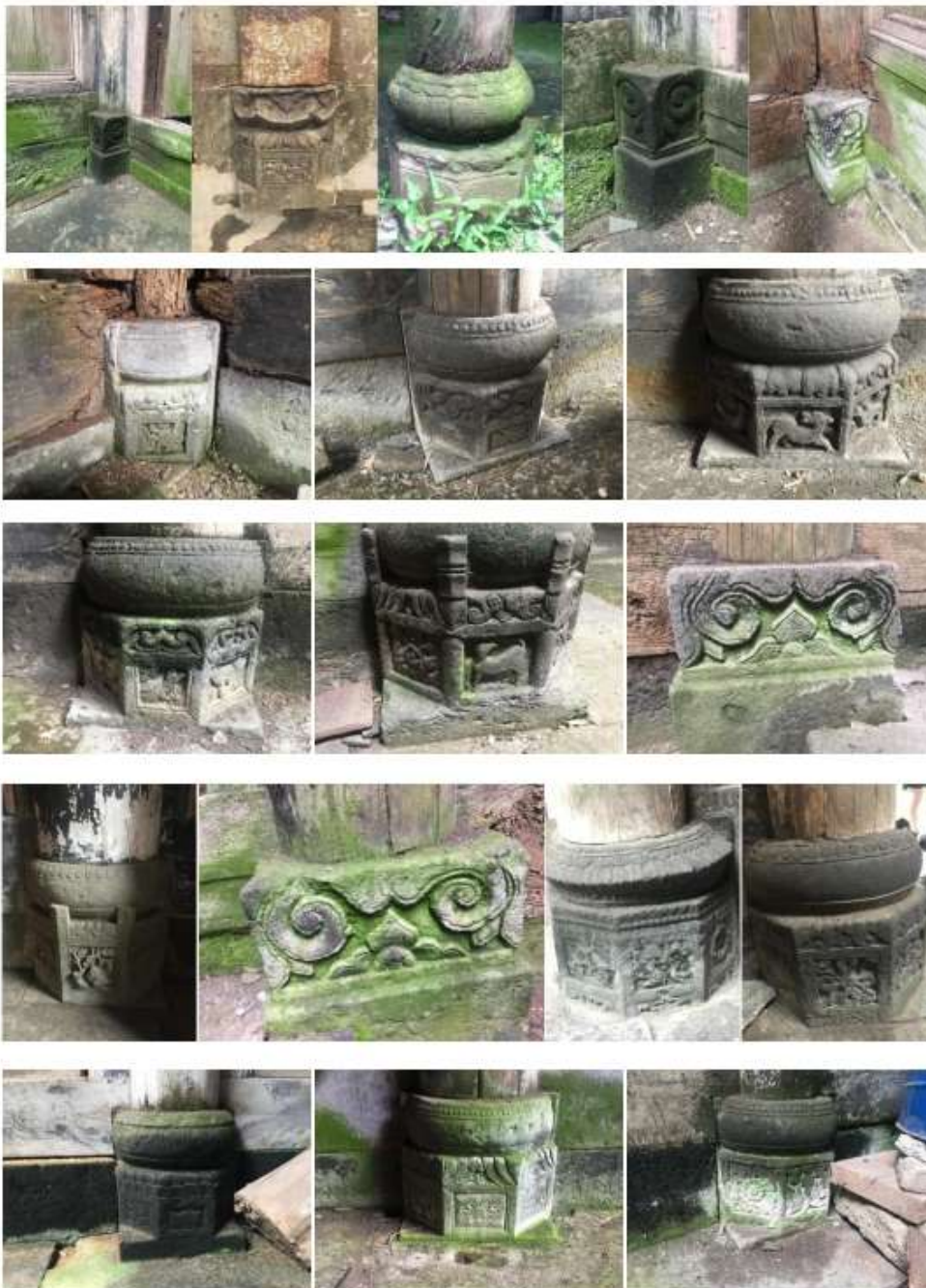


Figure 2

The art of stone carving beautifies the ancient architecture of Jinxi itself and carries the good wishes for life of the past and the two great Jinxi people. The patterns on the stone carvings have specific cultural connotations, such as auspicious motifs heralding good luck and happiness, while animal and plant motifs often symbolise vitality and harmony. These symbols are the embodiment of the wisdom and emotions of the Jinxi people, a reflection of their philosophical thinking of living in harmony with nature and pursuing the unity of heaven and man, and an important part of their cultural memory. Cultural memory consists of collective memories, narratives, and practices that have shaped the identity and continuity of past and present Jinxi people over time. It plays a critical role in how society remembers its past and influences cultural identity, heritage, and even contemporary social dynamics. Cultural memory is tied to practice identities, including skills, attitudes, and shared experiences in teams (Ellis, 2022).

Nowadays, the digitalisation process is constantly deepening, and the in-depth study and recording of stone carving art patterns and their symbols using digital means helps to protect and pass on the cultural heritage of Jinxi's ancient architecture, and provides new perspectives and methods of preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage. The application of digital technology records, analyses, stores and disseminates stone carving art more accurately, so that the cultural memory of Jinxi's ancient architecture can be passed on more clearly, accurately, richly and quickly.

Local Shot "Brick Carving" Art Patterns and Symbols

The patterns and meanings of brick art are particularly distinctive in the ancient buildings of Jinxi County. The complexity of the geographical environment and cultural differences in Jiangxi Province have given rise to diverse cultural regions. The northern region was the earliest to accept the culture of the Central Plains, and its cultural integration process formed a unique form of folklore, laying the foundation for the development of Gan culture.

Gan culture has undergone a long development and gradually formed Gan culture, which contains many sub-systems such as Xunyang culture, Yuzhang culture, Linchuan culture, Luling culture, Yuanzhou culture and so on. Among them, Linchuan culture originated from the Qin and Han Dynasties, flourished in the Song Dynasty, and continued to develop in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, covering more than ten counties with far-reaching influence. Topographically Linchuan culture covers most of Jinxi County, which, together with Linchuan City and Dongxiang County, forms the core area of Linchuan culture. Jinxi County is known as the living fossil of Linchuan culture, ancient architecture and the 'three carvings' art of its most characteristic, is an important symbol of local culture. Brick carvings in ancient buildings not only play the role of light collection, but also has a strong cultural and artistic significance. Brick carving pattern is diverse, both traditional auspicious patterns, but also reflect the local residents living customs and beliefs of the subject matter, has become an important material for the study of local cultural memory.



Figure3

Cultural Memory

‘Cultural memory is the collective memory preserved through cultural and historical heritage, which strengthens national identity. As evidenced by various memorial museums around the world, it enhances the understanding of a culture and a sense of belonging through the transmission of important historical sites.’ (Ekaterina, D.etc. 2024), ‘Cultural memory refers to the shared memories and experiences that shape community identity and continuity. In the context of resettlement, it is essential for the preservation of cultural heritage and for facilitating the rehabilitation process of displaced persons’ (Inga-Lill, Aronsson.ect.2024). The cultural memory of human beings and the traces of social life in the architectural space confirm the living habits of human beings; the wood, stone, and brick carvings and their carving patterns, craftsmanship, and materials in the ancient buildings indicate the cultural memory and identity of the Jinxi people. The patterns, craftsmanship and materials of the three carvings are the continuity of the cultural heritage and ideology of the ancestors and modern inhabitants of Jinxi County, as well as the material manifestation of local cultural and social memory.

Heritage Preservation

Heritage preservation is a multifaceted endeavour that encompasses the protection of cultural, historical and built assets. Recent research has highlighted various strategies and challenges in this field, emphasising the importance of innovative technologies and community involvement in conservation. Digital preservation methods, including the digitisation of audiovisual materials, are essential for preserving the historical record to prevent degradation and technological obsolescence (Silva, 2024). Involving local communities in conservation can increase the sense of ownership and responsibility, which is essential for sustainable heritage management (Pokhriyal & -, 2024). Heritage conservation proposes a basic paradigm for promoting the sustainability of historic houses from the perspective of cultural memory, which is different from the perspective of historic preservation (which emphasises ‘restoration’, preserving only the

original appearance of historic houses). The idea is one of ‘appropriate renewal’, whereby the heritage is expected to contain elements that allow society to reflect on the past, to reinvent it, to grasp the present and to plan for the future.

Research Methodology



Figure 4

The text of this study is the art study of "three carvings" in ancient architecture in Jinxi County, Jiangxi Province, China, aiming to study the concept and art form of "three carvings". This paper uses a qualitative study approach. The studied art works are divided into four groups: ancient buildings, this carving, stone carving and brick carving. The samples include natural villages in various towns in Jinxi County, Jiangxi Province: Zhuqiao Ancient Village, Putang Ancient Village, Xiali Village, Qiaoshang Village, Huwan Old Street, Quanfang Village, Huwan Old Street, Quanfang Village, etc. Data were searched through textbooks, literature and research literature, artistic exploration of photography, sketches, and interviews (Figure 1). The informants are divided into three groups: 1) art informants; 2) Scholars, Friends, Students, and Locals in the Fields; and 3) the informants most closely related to the art work in the community. Data were analyzed by interpretation and content analysis. The study results are presented here as a descriptive analysis.

Results

An analysis of the relationship between historical development and social culture in Jinxi County, Jiangxi, through fieldwork.

The use of digital technology to design and justify the need for a digital museum of Ming and Qing dynasty ancient buildings and the folk culture of "three carving" techniques in the ancient village of Zhuqiao, Jinxi County, Fuzhou, Jiangxi Province.

The ancient villages in Jinxi County, led by the ancient village of Zhuqiao, are being repaired and restored, and relevant experts and architectural teams are conducting research for this purpose. The design of the digital museum is imperative. The design of the digital museum is divided into four modules: a picture and video database (pictures facilitate an intuitive browsing mode to view the overall layout and details of the three carvings, the video itself is intuitive, record and dissemination function, an effective means of

intangible cultural heritage preservation); a VR roaming platform of the Yu's Ancestral Hall (a representative architectural example of the Yu's Ancestral Hall in the ancient village of Zhuqiao to show the inner appearance of the Ming and Qing dynasties buildings and "The design is based on a 360-degree panoramic view of the Ming and Qing dynasties buildings in the ancient village of Zhubiao (a one-to-one restoration of the ancient village buildings in Zhubiao, with the entire layout of the buildings roaming from multiple angles). The design is based on the construction of a database of images of the Ming and Qing dynasty buildings and the "three carvings" in Jinxi County, and the use of modern digital media technology for the construction of a "digital museum of folk culture", with a view to providing a technical reference for the construction of a "non-heritage" heritage in Jiangxi Province. It is intended to provide a technical reference for the construction of the heritage "non-heritage" in Jiangxi Province, to provide digital information for the construction of the Jiangxi Folk Culture Museum, to provide a data reference for the local folk culture and art and heritage "non-heritage" heritage, and to provide digital technical support for the preservation and transmission of Gan folk culture.

The use of digital technology to design and justify the need for a digital museum of Ming and Qing dynasty ancient buildings and the folk culture of "three carving" techniques in the ancient village of Zhuqiao, Jinxi County, Fuzhou, Jiangxi Province.

Jinxi County Zhuqiao Ancient Village Folk Culture Digital Museum is based on a picture and video database module, a VR roaming platform display module for the Yu's Great Ancestral Hall as a case study, and a 360-degree panoramic interaction of the Ming and Qing dynasty buildings of Zhuqiao Ancient Village as the final import platform, which can be implemented within the platform to switch between modules to create a better experience for users, with the following design process.

Development of VR roaming platform for Yu's Great Shrine

Dmax modeling technology research

Before modelling, we collected realistic scenes of the ancient village of Bamboo Bridge, finally confirmed a few pictures for reference, sketched, and used a DSLR camera to take pictures of the Yu's Great Ancestral Hall and the surrounding realistic buildings. Because it was a realistic restoration, we took panoramic shots of several single houses and many details of the houses for mapping, shooting distant views, medium views, close views and close-ups of the houses. Single shots of details, antiques and carvings of the house. Realistic modelling through 3DMAX software. Modelling is a very important part of the process, by analysing the structure, form and features of the architectural model, modelling based on the measured data and checking the accuracy of the model based on perspective views. It is important to choose the right modelling method when creating the model, to create the general structure of the model and then to detail it to save the number of surfaces. For realistic mapping, Photoshop is currently the most popular software for processing images, and it has a simple and fast production method for processing images. The ground model is built, irregular pavement using the use of aerial video interception of a few suitable pictures of the modelling method, the use of the creation of the face piece, the same through the addition of lines, squeeze the surface, reduce the line from section to section around the modification again, and finally to achieve the desired requirements.

Application of Unity3D software

Unity3D is quick and easy to create such as 3D games, simple games, building visualization, VR games, VR scene browsing and other types of interactive content, use the archive inside 3DMAX, export the texture and materials, unzip the archive file, open the Unity3D software, first import the texture into Unity3D, in the import model, so that the model will automatically adapt to the texture. Import the grass and tree plugins into Unity3D so that the trees and grass will feel more realistic. Use Unity3D's built-in parallel lighting as the main light source for the scene. By setting different lights to make the scene rendered out to achieve the realistic lighting effect.

The sky box is far away from the scene and does not require many details, it is relatively simple. Under the

Create panel, create a Camera, set it to Main Camera in the Parameters panel, create an Animation under the camera premise, put the camera into the Animation, create Position and Rotation in the Animation, and hit the key pin on it to create the motion Create the trajectory. Adjust the timing and direction of the movement to make the trajectory perfect.

VR System Implementation

Using unity software and Google plug-ins to cooperate with virtual reality technology (Virtual Reality), Google's VR plug-in into Unity3D, find GvrMain in the Prefab option of the imported plug-in, and put it under the created Main Camera to realize the VR scene.

360-Degree Panoramic Interaction of The Ancient Village of Zhuqiao in Jinxi County

In the design of the 360-degree full-image display of the ancient village of Zhuqiao, the overall layout of the building complex is photographed by a drone aurally as the introduction screen, and each angle of the internal space of the dwelling is photographed with a panoramic camera and photographed in a one-week 360 surround, so that the internal pattern is truly restored. Transformation. After exporting the images, the compositing process should be as seamless as possible to achieve a realistic experience of the digital virtual showroom. The use of this technology requires less deployment and can be directed to the students involved in the subject for production. The digital showroom offers both manual and automatic roaming. The manual roaming experience allows the user to zoom in and out of the images through the manipulation functions provided by the platform, and to switch between roaming scenes through mouse movements, while mobile phones and VR glasses can be used for an immersive experience with realistic and vivid reproduction effects.

Test and Release

After the three modules are produced and tested, an independently running .exe program is created and the work is released to finally complete the Jinxi County Zhuqiao Ancient Village Folk Culture Digital Museum.

A qualitative research method was used to analyse and summarise the habits and cultural practices of the inhabitants of the villages and towns of Jinxi County.

To summarize the concept of "cultural memory" and to analyze the conservation methods of the three carvings in the ancient town of Jinxi based on cultural memory

Innovative theories of Heritage Preservation in Cultural Memory using interdisciplinary research methods.

The relationship between the historical development and social culture of Jinxi County, Jiangxi Province, is clearly sorted out.

A method of using digital technology to preserve the cultural heritage of ancient Ming and Qing dynasty buildings and "three carvings" in the ancient village of Zhuqiao, Jinxi County, Fuzhou City, Jiangxi Province, is collated.

Specific information is collected on the habits and cultural customs of the inhabitants of the villages and towns in Jinxi County.

Innovative development of the concept of 'cultural memory'

Innovative development of historical conservation theory for cultural heritage conservation

Results Discussion

Research by scholars in sociology, history and architecture has shown that the historic preservation perspective of ancient buildings emphasises three aspects of the role of historic houses in cultural memory: commemorative images, performance rituals and linguistic symbols, and that this view of historic preservation, which 'restores the old for the sake of the old', is considered by some scholars to be an obstacle to architectural design and functional adaptation. This view of historic preservation as 'restoring the old for the old' is considered by some scholars to be an obstacle to renewal and innovation in architectural design and functional adaptation, and does not fully reveal the impact of cultural memory on historic buildings. The author argues that there is something to be learned from this view of historic preservation, and that it can be combined with modern digital technology for theoretical innovation. The author also argues that the heritage conservation perspective can contribute to the sustainable development of ancient architecture and its 'Three carvings' ("三雕"), and on this basis the author offers a more specific and comprehensive view and guidance on the digital heritage of ancient architecture.

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