Research on the Complication of Historic Areas Protection in Contemporary China: through the Lens of a Lingnan City

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Abstract. Chinese historic areas protection was getting worse. Taking the historic areas protection condition in Huizhou as a sample, we found the complicated basic characteristics, prominently protruding derivative characteristics, complicated cultural psychology, confused protection theory, intense profit struggle, omission of protection mechanism, inadequate maintenance funds and weak technology strength were the origin of the complication of historic areas protection, and the fundamental reason was the greedy for scarce land resource which was from the fanatical pursuit for economic profit in the rapid urbanization background, so the solvent was to establish the concept of scientific development, continuously enhance the protection awareness, earnestly perfect the plan management mechanisms which kept the public participation as the core.

Ⅰ. Foreword

In the recent years, we can easily find the news about historic areas protection condition in our daily life and it always become the focus of our discussion. In was reported that Changsha city had pay hundreds of millions of dollars to reform five hundred more alleys in the city, which are behind the streets. It’s proposed to protect the rich cultural deposits there to display the historical characteristics. But only a few years later, those alleys were demolished in the renovation of Changsha old town. At the same time, a lot of money was spent to build imitating traditional alleys and restaurant. [1]Besides, the housing demolition and relocation in the south of Nanjing brings intense social contradiction. Several cultural relic experts and relevant experts petitioned the government to reconsider its decision. So the prime minister Wen Jiabao has to make comments twice. [2] Even though the contradiction was resolved by the new remaking plan, we can’t help asking what makes historic areas protection getting worse. Is it really complicated to make the work going on? What situation are we facing with about it? In the urbanized advancement of our country, urban renovation will become the central question in the city building. [3]Making a further exploration on those questions is not only the complex of architect or urban planner, but also a realistic subject in front of us.

Huizhou, a beautiful historic city in Guangdong province, has developed rapidly during the recent few years. Along with the vigorous development of Huizhou’s economy, the urbanization and cultural construction make great progress. That change is the achievement of China’s reform and opening up, and the historic areas protection is China’s protection of historic and cultural heritage in miniature. As we all know, our country’s dominion is very vast and the numerous cities have a wide distribution. To solve the problem of complex historic areas protection, we can find method by studying medium cities like Huizhou rather than megalopolis which is fewer. Therefore, in this paper, I will discuss about the complication of historic areas in contemporary China by taking the historic areas protection condition in Huizhou as a sample.

Ⅱ. The Logical Starting Point of Complication

There is no consensus among academics about the definition of “Complication”. The scholar, Huang XinRong, explain “Complication” as the complicated quality or form. According to the traditional comprehension, complication is the opposite of simple, and every complicated thing will become simply when it is recognized which is common in the process of cognition. However, with the development of science and technology, we know that it’s wrong to take complication as the inadequacy of recognition. We
have to admit complication is objective. The true complication has its own characteristic, which can’t be changed, even though it is recognized by people or we have found the solution. [4] And we can comprehend the acceptation from two aspects. On one hand, the formation of thing is much and varied. On the other hand, it means it’s difficult to comprehend and explain. That’s to say, the success or failure of historic areas protection is influenced by many factors. It involves both the characteristic of historic areas and contemporary urbanization development, related interest groups and social culture psychology, latest progresses protection theory and the present historic areas protecting technology, investment and protection programs. From what has been discussed above, we may arrive at the conclusion that the characteristic of historic areas, contemporary urbanization development and social culture discussion has great influence on historic areas protection. We can attack the problem from these three aspects, which is the logical starting point of this research.

### III. Huizhou Historic Areas Protecting Condition

Huizhou is located in the northeast of Pearl River delta. More than 1400 years ago, when it is Sui Dynasty, Huizhou has been the political, economic, military and cultural center of Dongjiang River. Because of its rich and profound cultural reserves and amount of historic monuments, Huizhou gets a reputation of “Famous Lingnan City”. Unfortunately, like many other cities in China, Huizhou’s historic areas protection also fall into a dilemma when urbanization in China is developing on an unprecedented scale.

**I) Disappear entirely: ill-fated Shuidong Street**

Located at Qiaodong, Shuidong Street, a commercial historic area, runs east to west. We can find that it lies on Huixing West Street to the east, Dongxing Bridge to the west and intersect Shuidong South Street. According to historical records, this 730 meters long street form during the Song Dynasty (1078-1085), but became prosperous from the period of YongZheng in the Qing Dynasty, especially when it is built as a treaty port in the period of Guangxu. Later in the period of the Republic of China, the government took an action to rebuild Shuidong Street. They replace the eave-corridor style architecture with the westernized overhang, making a new street landscape.

Arcade architecture is the combinations of China wood railing frame architecture and western architecture, which contains both north China building’s character and western shop’s appearance. In the *Huizhou City Building Record*, it’s recorded that “Shuidong Street, rebuilt in 1928, remain relatively without destruction .... .... You can see two row of neat overhang along two sides of the street. The living-room is upstairs and the pavement is downstairs. So pedestrians won’t get soaked in the rainy day.” [5] Overhang not only records the history of Huizhou, but also several generations’ memories in this land.

So far, vandalism and natural disasters have accelerated ageing of those buildings in Shuidong Street and the landscape is losing away. It’s easy to see wall peel off everywhere. What’s more, pillar cracking, roof falling down and iron housing clutter up the street. The worst thing is that high concentrations of electric wire conceal the huge fire danger.

There is no denying that further attention should be paid to the historic areas protection there. However, the government takes a method of pulling down the buildings and rebuilds the whole street. Some unique overhangs and almost all long-established brand shops were torn down. The new Shuidong Street will be a street full of gray antique-style building, which is different from the architecture in Lingnan and it doesn’t look like the building in the Period of the Republic of China. Facing that phenomenon, some media can’t help writing a passage to express their pity. In their words, “a new street is about to rise, but the warm recollection of the ancient city will disappear.”[6]

**II) Tieluhu and Jindai Streets’ changing**

In contrast with Shuidong Street, the change took place in TieluLake seems to be slower. TieLuHu is closed to two parts, GuiShan from east and the former residence of Su Dongpo at BaiHe from west.
According to histories, almost all the resident living in TieLuHu are the descendant of Chen PengFei, who is demoted in Nansong Dynasty. Most of the buildings were built in the Ming and Qing dynasty within a little building keeping from Yuan and Song dynasty. A long time ago, TieLuHu was just a small fishpond, which is called “TieHuLu”. In Chen PengFei’s opinion, “Hulu” sounds like another Chinese word which means captive. So he changed the order of “Hu” and “Lu”, which then came to be a new name “TieLuHu”. Later in 1982, the TieLuHu Lake was reclaimed by the sand from Dongjiang River for the government’s project, building QiaoDong Market. From then on, we cannot see lake any more.

Speaking of TieLuHu Street, the No.19 house, Qiu’s house, is one of the well-known one. It’s built by their ancestors while they moved to GuiShan County in the period of ShuiZhi. Taking up 960 square meters, the total floor area of this house is 1000 square meters, including 430 square meters living area. The main structure consist 3-depth & 3-bay width, forecourt and the east part of house are keep complete till now, especially the characteristic black doors, which were made of dalbergia cochinchinensis.

Not far from the No.19 house, there are the historic Chen’s House and Chen Ancestral Hall. The Chen’s House has the distinguishing architecture features of Ming and Qing Dynasty like more depth & bay width, symmetry, equal. It’s built in NanSong dynasty, about 800 years ago. The floor area is the same to the total floor area, which are both 1250 square meters, including 430 square meters living area. Unfortunately, a majority of Chen’s House are destroyed in the 1980s. And the Chen Ancestral Hall was once used as primary school’s dormitory after the War of Liberation.

“TieLuHu” has great influence on the development of residence in Huizhou. If you walk down the street from east to west, surrounding by ancient and modern buildings, which are divided by alleys, you may feel like going into “Space-time Channel”. The buildings there with strong continuation and directivity look like intentional displayed exhibits, attracting from everywhere.

As one of the famous 9 Alleys&18 Lanes in Huizhou, JinDai Street was just a residential area out of the central Huizhou and it’s built as a commercial area in the period of HongWu in Ming Dynasty.

For supporting local student to participate in the Provincial and Metropolitan Examination, BinXing Hotel was built in the 8th year in the period DaoGuang by China’s squires. “BinXing” was taken from Zhou Rite. BinXing Hotel is well designed in spatial structure and show us relatively complete architectural style in Qing Dynasty.

The Spatial Depth of BinXing Hotel is three-depth and three-bay widths, and the total floor area is 640 square meters. Up to now, the middle of the second depth and the wing-room in left and right are well-preserved. Flush gable roof was used in the middle of BinXing Hotel and the timber frames include both Through Type Timber Frame and Beam-lifted Frame. At the top of front entrance door, there is a Stone Carving Torii engraved “BinXing Hotel”. It’s carved in intaglio, and the diameter is about 50cm. Walking into BinXing Hotel, you can find Tablet of BinXing Hotel, Treaty of BinXing Hotel and the names of those who donated money for building BinXing Hotel are engraved On the wall.

There are many other famous buildings in JinDai Street. LiangYi Chen Ancestral Hall, covering an area of 536 square meters in No.37 JinDai Street, is a five-depth courtyard house, which is rare among the architecture in Huizhou. Most of people living in the east JinDai Street have the surname, Chen, and LiangYi Chen Ancestral Hall is the main hall. The Huang’s House, which takes up 221 square meters, lies in No.54 JinDai Street. It is a traditional two-depth building. There is a well dug in the Ming Dynasty in the courtyard, from where we can draw quality water. Made of red sandstone, the railing of well is rugged but no crack after hundreds of years. Third typical example I’d like to introduce is the former residence of Yang QiYuan, a Libushilang in Huizhou in the Late Ming Dynasty. It’s resold to a Ju-ren, Chen Peiji. He rebuilt a three-depth courtyard house there, which has ante chamber and winding circle door in the front and main courtyard two-depth and open yard in the back. Both sides of this house are used as study room, back hall or storeroom. Some swelled plinth made of red sandstone, cylinder and hexagon wood column, the remains of Ming Dynasty, are primly used as the brace of the winding circle door, and it’s kept till now.
In the middle of JinDai Street, there is a one-meter width DingDong Lane between two high walls. While walking down this lane, you may hear the echo “DingDong”. If you wear geta or stiff shoes, the echo will be clearer and this phenomenon now becomes a special feature spot in Huizhou. In addition, “Plum Blossoms House”, the ancestral home of a Huizhou celebrity Zhang YouRen, also lies in JinDai Street. And Chen’s ancestral home and Huang’s study are not far from it.

(Ⅲ) Ruined by nature: miserable fate of historical building in country

In comparison with urban, historic areas protection in country is extremely different. From the coast to inland, Huizhou’s territory is so vast that there are many kinds of residences. Hakkas’ quadrangle enclosed house in HuiYang County is the one of most influential form. Among the 100 existing Enclosed Houses, ChongLinShiJu in ZhenLong town, HuiLongLou in QiuChang Street, BiYanLou and DaTangShiJu in XinXu town are more typical. Most of those buildings have experienced many changes in this area for more than 100 years. However, exposed to the wind and rain and lack of funds, some are still there, but not in its integrity, some are even broken down.

All the mentioned above tell us that our historic areas protection in Huizhou was getting worse. Firstly, just little attention are paid to architecture conservation. Secondly, people are inclined to protect Cultural Relics Protection Unit rather than historic areas. Thirdly, lacking of funds and urban planning, historic areas are destroyed so severely that we can’t see the original beautiful historic areas. Fourthly, historic areas in country are also severely destroyed. In particular, human disturbance is the main cause.

In the urbanization process, the conflict between the new construction project and the historic areas will be more and more obvious, especially in middle-and-small city. Historic architecture in these cities will most likely be pulled down to make room for the new buildings. In China, there are many middle-and-small cities like Huizhou, which has not form the mechanism of historic areas protection. Single protection mode and fragmentary protection staff also are the roots of the problem. It’s high time that we placed great emphasis on historic areas protection.

IV. Origin Of The Complication Of Historic Areas Protection

(1) The basic feature of complication

In the China’s historical and cultural heritage protection system, historic areas ranks second between historic city and cultural relics protection unit. Unique substance space, multiple area form, abundant historical background and many other factors lead to the complication of historic areas protection.

(1) Unique substance space

Taking an important part in inheriting and developing humankind’s civilization, historic areas show its significance and unique value. People create unique substance space by different technology in the same place from the ancient time. The function layouts, varied architecture, scale of lane, texture in historic areas are different from new area, being unique scenery in modern city.

(2) Multiple historic area form

Classified by usage, there are commercial, residential, industrial, suburb and village historic area and so on. On the other hand, there are mountain area, waterfront area, moat area, rampart area, ancient canal area, and etcetera if classified by the surroundings. Those multiple historic areas enriched our living environment, and provide much historical information.

(3) Abundant historical background

Some resident still live in part of historic area and keep traditional custom today. Making baskets out of bamboo, writing couplet, manufacturing iron, selling grain and oil, are common in their daily life. That slowly walking old man, yoyo players, a seller and the little boy who is buying beer for his father in the lane exhibit a leisurely status. On other words, these historic areas have the attraction of those relaxed cadence of life, evoking our retrospective memories.

(4) Rich historical information
Influenced by the construction level, cultural concept, alternation of dynasties, accidents and many other factors, historic area has experienced many changes there. From the ancient time to today, countless various events happen in the same area and remain much information, which is the evidence of the diversity of mankind’s social culture. It can also set up our national self-esteem and enhance our national self-pride.

(Ⅱ) Prominently protruding derivative characteristics

The characteristic of derivation can be interpreted as the characteristic that has great influence in things’ existing form and development situation in special circumstance and condition. These characteristics are not the original but derived from itself in the impact of external environment. When it comes to be historic area protection, out-of-date use value, multiple property right subjects, and especial location, and unique value of position are the obvious characteristics.

1) Out-of-date use value

The major architecture in these historic areas were built based on former Lifestyle and technical condition, which adapted people’s need at that time. However, those kind of building structure, public facilities and the width don’t fit the current social needs. Even some have lost part or all use value.

2) Especial location

Most of the urban planning is expanding to the area around gradually on the basis of old urban area in the process of modernization. To some extent, usually the old urban areas occupy advantage point, the central area. Even though the old urban area can’t create great value, the developers are willing to invest here for the advantage area. So the governments are always confused on how to rebuild the old urban. Its especial location leads to the contradiction in historic areas.

3) Multiple property right subjects

Based on historical reasons, the property right subject in historic areas is very complicated. Generally speaking, the ownership of cultural relics protection unit belong to nation and the rest can be divided into two parts, public housing and private housing. Public housing take a bigger part and is consist of housing in unit management and government housing controlled by housing administration office. We can come into the conclusion that there is just a little part of the citizen own the building property right, which result in citizen’s lack of passion in protecting historic areas.

4) Unique value of position

Cultural relic building itself has unique historical or artistic value. When it comes to historic areas, not every building here has historical or artistic value, but the whole environment and the order of historic areas reflect the characteristic in some historical period, which is the greatest difference from cultural relic building.

(Ⅲ) Complicated cultural psychology

From time immemorial, Chinese did not pay much attention in protecting historic site, to say nothing of the historic areas where citizen live. A new regime means destroying all the old architecture, which is regarded as the sign of the former regime. Moreover, the new regime often considered building house as a easy job for their traditional wooden structure. Naturally, architects are in the low position and they are considered craftsman, resulting in obliterating architect’s creativity and even a great lose in cultural heritage.

The lack of the awareness of protecting historic site and the long-term feudalism in political unification account for Chinese complicate cultural psychology. On the one hand, we have been proud of our country for its long history of a country with an ancient civilization, and uphold classical architecture for a long time. For example, ancient architecture is always linked to the Palace Museum and the hall of supreme harmony, like West Lake in Hangzhou to tourist resorts. On the other hand, the local people are not confident in their own regional culture, ignoring the local city characteristic. The opinion has led to the appearance of imitated classical architecture in many cities. What’s more, under the strong influence of politics society and culture, great deals of cities in China, especially middle-and-small cities, are at a distinct disadvantage.
in the regional culture and architectural characteristics. Chinese strong society collective awareness and the
small difference between cities are being more evident while the cities are taking a active part in the
globalization. How can citizens recognize the importance of the local architecture under this situation?
Many of us just focus on those classical architecture that can represent our nation in their opinion.
Frankly speaking, that’s a great misunderstanding of the cultural heritage. In my opinion, the world is
diverse and the cities are different from one to another. That’s what makes a diversiform and beautiful. The
temple of heaven in Beijing and the Sizhou Tower in Huizhou are just different in building technology. There
is neither lowliness nor nobleness in their beauty.

(IV) Confused protection theory

Damage is often seen in the protecting practice, even though we take an active part in protecting
historic areas. This is an unintentional damage due to the plentiful lack of protecting theories. Authenticity
Protection is frequently used in the practice. It was firstly used in the protection of architectural heritage.
Later in the historic areas protection, this theory is used again. However, unlike architectural heritage,
there are both buildings and many residents in the historic areas. The historic information is as important
as the buildings for its long history of human living, especially in large-area living historic areas. Therefore,
it’s not appropriate to use Authenticity Protection completely. Zhangjie, a scholar, had pointed out that it
will be a useless protecting if we persist in the Authenticity Protection without any improvement. And will
also make the theory looks like a fallacy. [7] In fact, Authenticity Protection confuses many scholars even in
the protection of architectural heritage. In Lu Yongyi’s words, “If a building combine both architecture’s
characteristic in Tang and Song Dynasty, should we conserve the Tang or Song Dynasty one? For
another example, supposing that some historical information was drawn on a protected house’s
wall, how can we make an appropriate choice between the completeness of architecture and
history?”[8] She put forward a statement that the discussion about Authenticity Protection and historic
conservation is an expression form of people’s opinion on historic architecture, and the recovery work
make in into practice. But it’s difficult to find an ideal standard which is suited to every historic
architectural. It’s the same when it comes to historic areas protection. We have to make clear what we are
going to protect in the historic areas before our action. All in all, the confused protection theory is confused
in values. And the value refers to ideology dimension and the relation between human, history and society.

(V) Intense profit struggle

The renewal and transformation of historic areas relate to the local government, developer, and
resident, expert and so on. They express different opinion constantly. Firstly, for the local government,
their original intention is to develop local economy, improve infrastructure level and residents’ house
condition and mould urban image. Secondly, developer aims at procuring economic profit in the historic
areas because of its advantage location and the land value. Thirdly, the local residents are eager to improve
living condition, but attracted to the historic building and living style at the same time. It’s difficult for them
to give up the interpersonal relationships in the historic area. Fourthly, what the expert strongly believes is
that what they have to do is to preserving the excellent urban historical information and inherit historical
culture. They are the pioneer strength in historic areas protection.

It’s the government that initiates and leads this intense profit struggle. But the main pusher is the
market force, which is initiated by the developer’s desire for more economic resources. In contrast, weak
force and passivism is a great disadvantage to the resident. Even though their strong need to improve the
living condition, what they can do is waiting casus they can’t communicate with the government or
developer effectively. It’s an unequal struggle at the beginning. There’re several reasons as follows. To
begin with, the government hasn’t recognized the relation of historical culture to residents’ life in the
historic areas protection. Strong attitude towards political achievement, pursuit of economic growth and
unilateral cognition on historical culture lead to some unscientific protection schemes, which are not based
on adequate surveys and negotiation among multiple members. When the profit struggle comes to the
fact, the situation will be much more complicated. While the role of the local government change stealthily, developer’s eagerness to procure economic profit become stronger. Considering the time and money, developer put forward to accelerate the step of rebuilding. In addition, in need of improving living circumstances even their hope to keep the old living space, resident often give up their right of retention of historic areas under the strong policy and the economic temptation of the government and developer. And finally, only the expert still fight for historic areas protection. They can do nothing except bring public opinion pressure to some officials in the local government or the higher leader so as to impact the local government’s policy. But if the expert’s influence is not strong enough, or their suggestion cannot be transmitted to related department, all they have are in vain. Moreover, experts emphasis on protection blindly, they ignore the resident’s living condition and their eagerness for improving living environment. The expert’s action makes an excuse for the government and developer’s ignoring resident’s need.

In the circumstances, historic area is facing an unsatisfactory future and the intense profit struggle may lead to conflict and disharmony in the society. The most important reason account for this phenomenon is that the public has not awakened of the importance of historic areas. Located at the city, historic areas have obvious publicity naturally. Meanwhile, abundant cultural information in these areas is possessed by all the citizens, meaning the common sharing characteristic of historic areas. In conclusion, historic areas protection, which have great influence on citizens’ overall interests, not only partial interests, is closely linked with the whole citizen, not only the resident living in the historic areas.

(VI) Omission of protection mechanism

Omission of protection mechanism also is a reason for damage in historic areas during the city construction. Omission includes system and institution. System is established by state organs, enterprise and institution for management. At present, historic areas protection is managed by Housing and Urban and Rural Planning Construction Office, Municipal Bureau of Culture Press Publication and Housing Administration. The short of clear division of labor leads to shifting responsibility in the practice and the final decision always depends on the leader’s will. Institutional construction mainly embody as developing and perfecting relative law. In this respect, there are no complete laws and regulations system of historic areas protection in our country, and the relative law is not very suitable in historic areas protection for its little operability. Take Preservation Laws on Historic Relics for example. Historic relics are obviously varied from historic areas protection. So that law is not usable. Another law, Preservation Laws on Historic City expounds basic requirements of preservation, but not the specific management measures, which is the obstacle in protecting. For the other hand, expression of opinion is very important for the multiple different interest subjects have different view. Even though the resident living in the historic areas and the city are the benefit correlation, the public did not come to be a core power in protecting in the weak civil society. Due to the lack of channel, their opinion can’t be expressed completely. In a few words, historic areas protection is a practical behavior. From the initial draft modification scheme to the practice of protection, there are many influent influencing factors such as police, administrative system, laws and regulations, management means, etc. This kind of complicated social engineering need a sound, clear, positive and effective decision-making mechanism, operating mechanism and supervision mechanism to support. That’s the key in historic areas protection.

(VII) Inadequate maintenance funds

The crucial element of what force the historic areas into corner is the insufficient funds and the main reason of the inadequate maintain funds is the limited source of funds. For a long time, historic areas protection and maintenance depend on the governmental fiscal expenditure in our country. However, the housing authority takes funds on the “Housing Loans” way so that lead the areas protection more strait-jacketed. At the process of the historic areas transformation, the needed funds in the transformation of the municipal facilities, renovation of the historic buildings and resettlement of the resident is so enormous that it can’t last long if only supported by government. The reasons are as follows. First of all, poor financial situation of the government can not afford the enormous historic areas protection funds. Secondly, the
historic areas protection cannot attract the investors by it’s indirectly benefit. Sadly, there is little or no incentive to invest it. On the other hand, due to the unique value of position, developers are attracted to take down the old buildings and rebuild new ones. Lacking of maintenance funds, and aiming to improve living condition and economy, the government accepts the developer’s development pattern. That’s to say, adequate maintenance funds may make historic areas protection feasible. And we are more closed to western countries if our country has specific laws and regulations of maintenance funds and expanding sources to maintain funds like them.

(Ⅷ) Weak technology strength
During the unprecedented fast urbanization in our country, there are numerous construction projects. The present condition of construction industry demand exceeds supply in qualified personnel resource. An enormous market demand has attracted school, student and the society, leading an inclination to technology in construction industry. Take architecture as an example. In higher education of China, architecture is a first class discipline, and consists of architecture History, Architecture Design, architecture Technology and many other second class disciplines. In high learning education, architecture is taken as a second class discipline and specialties are set up on that basis. These specialties are architecture history and theory, architecture design and theory, architecture technology and so on. Both of them have exact assignment and position. In fact, nowadays architecture in university becomes a major about architecture design, [9] which is weak in historic architecture protection. That’s distinct from western countries for their well-protected architectural heritage.[9] Postgraduate students majoring in architecture history and theory is in small number, and most of them tend to stay in the big city. That’s another reason for the lack historic areas protection in mid-small cities. For example, there is no special historic building protecting institution in Huizhou until 2011. Moreover, the modification scheme of historic areas and blocks are often designed by skilled personnel who major in architecture design or urban design. Being short of the research on historic areas protection and historic building technology, their modification scheme is not the satisfied one. Last but not the least, even if some organizations own the strong technical force, it takes time to repair and rebuild the historic buildings. Considering time cost, designing institution would rather to remove historic buildings in a large scale.

Ⅴ. The solution of the dilemma in historic areas protection
Due to the commonality of urban space and the diversity of cultural heritage, historic areas protection is not only involved in the engineering technology fields but also closely connected with urban management and cultural inheritance. It is a kind of comprehensive social practice activity. Therefore, in general, the solution of the dilemma in historic areas protection lies in a synthetically utilization of various disciplinary knowledge, especially the combination of public management theory and the sciences of human settlements.

The formation of the dilemma in historic areas protection originates from our fuzzy understanding of its basic conception. Why are we constantly seeking economic growth, and what kind of city are we looking for? When the government no longer considers tall buildings as the symbol of modern city, when officials recognize that the economic growth is to improve the human living situation effectively, the developers did not pursue the reasonable profit firstly, but also has social sense of responsibility, people no longer take their houses as worthless old courtyards compared with the Imperial Palace and when everyone think cultural heritage is very precious, our historic sections protection won’t be so complicated.

There are many factors resulting in the dilemma of historic area protection in China. But the core problem is that under the background of rapid urbanization, the fanatical pursuit of economic interests lead to greedy for scarce land resources. Building and land, as the two basic elements of artificial environment, should have been in kind of harmonious relation. The best condition is that buildings depend on land and the land is beautified by the buildings. However in the process of historic areas transformation,
the artistic value, life style and history information in architecture should be protected while what the developer focuses is the land. Therefore, a unity of architecture and land is separated ponderously. If this kind of contradiction happens in other place, such as the transformation in ordinary town, it might not be so violent and the social impact will not be too great. Unfortunately, it makes the historic areas protection complicated. Its unique charming living style and abundant historical value which has experienced many changes in this area should be protected instead of damaged. It's the grab for land resources, overlooked cultural heritage protection and long-term weak heritage protection consciousness that push cultural heritage to the verge of disappearing. Just as Ruan Yisan says, “The biggest enemy of the cultural heritage protection is neither lots of irresistible natural forces, such as rain and snow, nor a complete lack of corresponding protection technology, but the unilateral cognition understanding of it. That’s the primary problem that has to be solving in China cultural heritage protection.”[10]

Historic areas protection doesn’t only relate to people of our generation, but also need later generations’ constantly effort. It is a never-ending process. At present, under the unprecedented fast urbanization, our responsibility seems to be particularly great. Unilateral cognition of economic development, the vast difference between the urban and rural development, the incomplete protecting system and many other factors bring a heavy pressure to our protection work, especially in plenty mid-small cities. To find a solution in the complication of historic areas in contemporary China, we have to broaden our horizon and clear the thoughts while the historical features are rapidly disappearing. Judging from all the evidence offered, as far as I am concerned, the solvent was to establish the concept of scientific development, continuously enhance the protection awareness, and earnestly perfect the plan management mechanisms which kept the public participation as the core.

Notes
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