

Identity of Guilin Sacred Places: Rebuilding Xi Qinglin Temple in Guilin

Huang Zheng

Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University, Talingchan, Bangkok, Thailand

Keywords: Sacred Places, Xi Qinglin Temple, Rebuilding, Guilin of Identity, Tourism.

Abstract: Guilin Xi Qinglin temple is a Chinese Buddhism place built circa 6th century AD (Tang Dynasty). The temple of Grand scale is well-known in ancient China. There are a handful of written records about the historical texts of Xi Qinglin temple, but there is no record of why the temple was destroyed. There are a large number of Grotto statues around the site, different from the sculptures of the Buddha statues in the north of China. These are evidences of the path of Indian Buddhism passing through the Indian Ocean from Southeast Asia to southern China.

Xi Qinglin temple used to be a very important status in Guilin and even Chinese Buddhism. In fact, Guilin government has carried out studies of archaeological sites in the setting of Xi Qinglin temple, and has discovered archaeological and related historical resources that support the value and significance of Xi Qinglin temple and its rebuilding.

1 INTRODUCTION

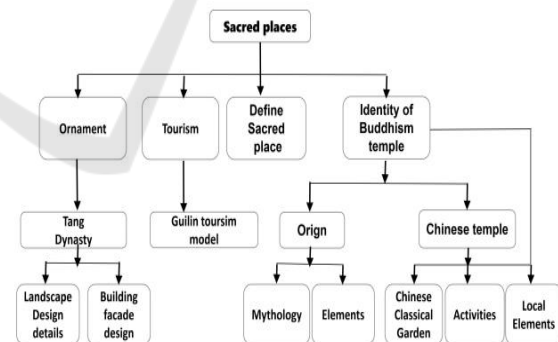
The present research has three interlinked components:

1. In the absence historical records, Based on the origin of Buddhism, I have reconnected ancient myths and fragmented text data to the present and past culture landscape of Guilin sacred places by collage and superimposed them. I shall further explore the important question of Buddhist cultural landscapes and natural environment in the establishment of sacred places.

2. In my paper, I will argue why and how the issue of Rebuilding Identity of Guilin Sacred places. In particular, the current trend of decline in Chinese Buddhism. This paper will analyze the myths and elements of the origin of Buddhism; rethink the overall layout style of the Buddhist temples in the Tang Dynasty from the Dunhuang frescoes in China, the ornament of the facades of the buildings and the details of the landscape design and discusses the issue of spiritual place design of Buddhism, emphasizes the importance of place experience, and provides a significance of the research for the rebuilding Xiqinglin Temple in Guilin.

3. Based on the above research, I integrated the landscape image of Guilin Karst and the

philosophical meaning of Chinese classical garden into the design of Guilin Xiqinglin Temple, creating the identity of the sacred place of Guilin.



Figure(1): Research Framework (owner-draw)

1.1 Definition of the Sacred Places

The sacred places may be religious places, spiritual spaces and holy places, and here is a special area connecting the mundane world and the sacred world. Form the religious scientists Mircea Eliade's (1957) viewpoint, the sacred and the mundane are the two

ways of existence in the world. The sacred places have caused an interruption in the mundane world, and into these sacred places, it is possible to connect with the world of the gods. The religious site is the most specific place carrier in the mundane world. From the perspective of religious geography, Isaac.E (1959-1960) proposed that religion's influence on sites or landscapes in turn affects religion itself. He believes that religious landscape can be divided into material religious landscape and intangible religious landscapes. Religious geographers believe that the transformation of the material world into sacred places comes from religious experiences and religious beliefs. Perceptions and imaginings influence the way such spaces are used, and the personal, spiritual meanings developed in using such sacred spaces.

The sacred places are often rich in aesthetic experience. The Greek philosopher Plotinus (205-270 CE) found that the sacred architecture and art together constituted the sacred places, and its meaning and function were manifest or represented by sacred objects, forms, symbols and shapes. These identities are the general knowledge of traditional sacred places. Homan, R., G. Rowley conducted a study that the religious doctrines affect the location of sacred places. The site selection and layout seldom take into account the development of cities. So most of the sacred places are chosen in the suburbs or isolated from urban fragmentation.

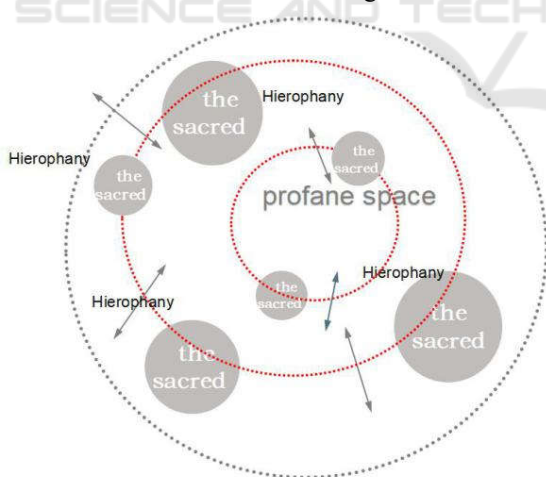


Figure (2) :Mundane world and the Sacred world (owner-draw)

The sacred places of China include religious sites, cultural religions sites, religious and folk beliefs, religious places such as Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity and Islam; cultural religions such as Confucian temples and academies; and folk religions

are the space for the beliefs of some ethnic minorities in China. After more than two thousand years of cultural integration, the identicalness of the spatial image has become a typical feature of China's sacred sites under the influence of multi-culture. Based on the principle of "go into the secularity", Chinese sacred places show distinct local cultural characteristics, such as the architectural layout under the influence of Confucianism, the sacred places combined with the design of Chinese classical garden under the influence of Taoism. Some space and objects are defined in folk beliefs, which are the typical characteristics of Chinese sacred places culture. It should be extended to other religions and cultures.

1.2 Objectives

This paper is aimed at investigating the way to create the sacred places under the unique scenery of Guilin. It seeks to integrate the knowledge and wisdom of Chinese Buddhist places, as well as the new identity form of sacred places that can be applied in future design.

This paper aims to :

1. Study the background, identity and significant values of the cultural landscape of the Guilin Xi Qinglin temple.
2. Investigate the ways for rebuilding project based on integration between historical value, both promoting Buddhism and natural environment and Aesthetic development such as from tourism development.

1.3 Significance of the Research

This research is to investigate and survey historical documents and existing remains, through a comprehensive analysis of the spiritual connotation of Chinese traditional Dharma, Tracing back to the origin of Buddhism, comparing the tangible and intangible cultural values of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia and Mahayana Buddhist temples in East Asia, redefining the spatial identity of sacred places. In terms of landscape and facade design, extracting the historical texture of the traditional Buddhist environment of Dharma and even Guilin, In order to incorporate into the natural scenery of Guilin, combining the secularization of contemporary sacred space and the trend of tourism

industry experience, rebuilding the Theory of Sacred Space Knowledge with New Identity of Guilin.

This paper not only researches the Identity of the sacred place in Guilin, but also discusses the value and significance of rebuilding from the aspects of physicality and spirituality. There are 4 aspects of value and significance to analyse namely, a) Architecture Site planning and route, b) Traditional layout and related elements, c) Revival and innovation , d) Natural environment and spiritual space. information used for analyzing the values and significance have been obtained from study of Historical remains, both those discovered in Xi Qinglin temple literature itself and those found in Grotto statues remain. There have been studies of value, culture and natural environment,existing conditions, perspective analysis and tourism,and other relevant factors in order to provide more information for rebuilding planning and tourism experience research.

1.4 Research Methodology

The research requires various field data to create a basis for creating new identities , and a model for Rebuilding Xi Qinglin Temple in Guilin. This research concentrates on studying the identity of Chinese Tang Dynasty temples and the creation of new cultural landscapes in Guilin Buddhist temples based on the tourism industry. The research is qualitative in its methods and includes research and extraction of design elements related to site survey and rebuilding ,the understanding of the rebuilding of temple environment space in Tang Dynasty, and the analysis of worship and tour behavior. Several stops in the research are as follows :

Through investigation, an understanding of the background, characteristics and significant values of the Xi Qinglin temple will be linked with the documentary data. At the same time, it analyses the philosophical significance of Guilin's unique karst scenery and the integration of Chinese classical gardens into the temple space environment.

Observation and general interviews are important ways to study both tangible and intangible values of a temple cultural landscape. Moreover, based on the analysis of literature data, this paper chooses Tang Dynasty to Song Dynasty as the key time line of research, extracts design elements, and puts forward design ideas.

For the analysis process, the results from the literature review, survey and observation and In depth study of the causes of excessive

commercialization and identicalness of Chinese Buddhist temples. This will give an exploration of the method relevant to create a new identity for tourism industry.

The final stage of analysis is drawing conclusions and suggestions for rebuilding design. At the same time, it also creates positive significance for Xiqinglin Temple of Guilin and establishes a unique Buddhist Temple identity for the region.

2 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 Chinese Buddhist Temple Identities

Buddhism spread from India to China in AD 67. After integrating Chinese Confucianism and Taoism, Buddhism was gradually being Chinese influenced. Chinese Buddhism is divided into Mahayana Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism. This study is a Chinese Mahayana Buddhism temple. Japanese scholar Nomura Yosho's point of view is that The Buddhism prevailing in East Asia is Mahayana Buddhism with Chinese Buddhism as its mother. Chinese Buddhist temples present the localized cultural characteristics of China. Under the joint influence of Confucianism and Taoism, the identity of Buddhist temples is not obvious.

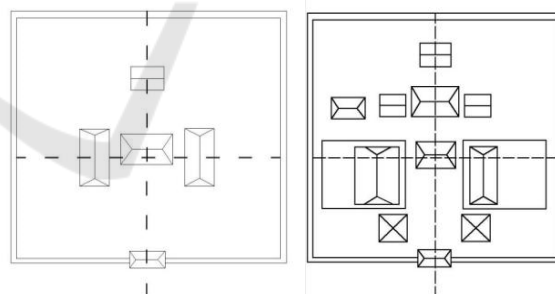


Figure (3) : Changes in Temple layout from Tang Dynasty to Song Dynasty

From the site selection of the temple, building a temple along the mountain is an important feature of Chinese temples. About one-third of China's first batch of Chinese national parks are Buddhist temples and are located in famous mountains. The aesthetics of the temple's landscape is based on the mysterious and hidden thoughts, forming the layout features of the mountain temple garden. In the article "Shaping the Artistic Conception of Chinese Buddhist Temple Space", Guan Xin believes that

China's "Feng Shui" theory has profoundly affected the layout of temple buildings. The location of the temple is chosen to be in a south-facing position with good ventilation and lighting, and it contains auspicious meaning. The same regulation and level also affect the layout. As early as in the Han Dynasty of China, the Chinese translation of the "Dharmagupta-vinaya" and the ten-law "Sarvāstivāda-vinaya" stipulated the temple-centered layout. Affected by traditional Chinese rituals, the building stands at the highest level of the temple - the Daxiong Hall is facing the south, while the other ancillary buildings such as the Shanmen, the Bell and Drum Tower, and the Heavenly King Hall are slightly oriented in the south. The multi-cultural integration brings about the central axis layout of the Buddhist temple under the influence of Confucianism and the free random layout under the influence of Taoism.

The Chinese temple environment is divided into four areas: Pilgrimage Space: Secular to the sacred area, including the incense, the mountain gate, the Zhaobi, the Heavenly King Hall, etc.

Sacred Space: The closed and static area formed by the sacred atmosphere of Buddhism, including the Daxiong Hall, the East-West Hall, the Temple, the Ring, the Tibetan Classic, the Tower, etc.

Service space: including mortuary, pilgrim, tourist accommodation, meals, warehousing, etc.

Public activities space: Garden and areas of activity.



Figure (4) : Rebuilding Temple Layout functional division

From the Dunhuang murals of the world intangible cultural heritage, we can see that the ancient architecture of the Buddhist temple in China during the Tang and Song Dynasties attached importance to practicality. There was no excessive decoration. The central axis layout centered on the Buddhist temple, the courtyard layout, and the tower was on one side. After the Song Dynasty, the temple gradually formed a system of Samghrma seven-story

, and the gardens inhabited by the public. There are seven kinds of buildings that become the inherent standards of Chinese Buddhist temple buildings: Mountain gate, Buddhist hall, Family hall for worshipping Buddha, Abbot, Monk's house, Bathroom, Toilet. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, there was no change in the general plane. It gradually evolved into seven halls, such as Mountain gate, Heaven Palace, Mahavira Hall, Back hall, Family hall for worshipping Buddha, Arhat Hall, Guanyin hall, etc., emphasizing the central position of the main hall, the central axis is symmetrical, the temple attaches importance to decoration, and has rich colors. Variety. The Tang Dynasty style and the Qing Dynasty style have become two important era styles of the traditional Chinese architecture, and have become the cultural characteristics of the symbols defining the times. These typical Confucian buildings, such as the screen wall, the decorated archway and the Stele Pavilion, show a high degree of cultural integration in the Buddhist temple. Buildings such as the tower, depositary of Buddhist texts and the Buddhist stone pillar, although they were the products of primitive Indian Buddhism, were gradually being Chinese influence in the sedimentation of Chinese culture, and they were far from the origin and function. The plaque is a direct expression of Chinese culture in the temple architecture. It conveys the landscape and expresses the Buddhist Zen. This form is the only feature of Chinese culture. It is different from other Buddhist cultures and even cultural landscapes. Developing it is the focus of design.

The temple environment space broke the closed single temple view architectural form, and absorbed the layout features of secular gardens and garden-style dwellings, and the transformation of sacred space into garden space. The temple space is flexibly treated with the fluctuation of the terrain, emphasizing the close integration of religious space and garden space. Chinese temples are similar to Chinese ink landscape paintings. The buildings are arranged within one-third of the height of the mountain, showing a horizontal linear trend, giving people a viewing space. The visual experience changes during the walking process. The section is built on the hill and has one side facing the wide area. The relationship between the building group and the environment mainly occurs in the form of a relatively stable mountain surrounded by temples. There is a virtual and real change between architecture and the environment, with the traditional Chinese implicit aesthetic characteristics, extremely rich and hidden meaning.

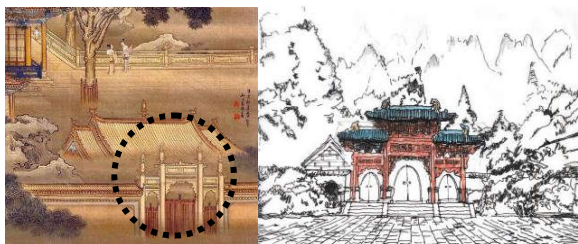


Figure (5): Lingxing Gate is the integration of Confucianism and Buddhism

The Bodhi tree, the Borneo tree and the sapling tree are called the Three Gates of Buddhism, which represent consciousness, life and death and enlightenment. Master Xu Zhengguo believes that the lotus in Buddhism is metaphorized by everyone. Therefore, lotus ponds are generally set up in temples, and white lotus and red lotus are planted. The plants of the temple have identification marks and guide functions. Chinese temples are distinguished from Japanese temples, and the plants are not trimmed and blended with nature. Pine and cypress trees are the base trees of the temple. The tall evergreen plants surround the space for sound insulation and good insulation, creating an atmosphere of Buddhist monastic cultivation. As a sacred tree of Buddhism, Ginkgo biloba forms a main tree on both sides of the planted gate. Magnolia and osmanthus trees are planted in front of the church or in the atrium. The seeds of the sweet-scented osmanthus tree will be planted to attract people to visit. Bamboo is a symbol of Buddhist teachings. The hallowness between its festivals is the embodiment of the Buddhist concept of "emptiness" and "heartlessness". The Xuanzang Master of the Tang Dynasty recorded ancient India in the book "Da Tang Xi Yu Ji". One of the earliest two temples, Zhulin Jingshe, is commonly used in Chinese temples as an architectural background.

In order to maintain the daily diet of monks and pilgrims, temples often set up flowers in the temple to grow vegetables and fruits. "Luoyang Jialanji" has repeatedly mentioned the luxuriant scene of planting fruit trees in monasteries. Temple plants not only have ornamental value, but also focus on the purpose of production. Such planting methods are worthy of continuing in the design of contemporary temples, bringing a variety of experiences. In the Tang Dynasty of China, Baizhang Huaihai Zen Master took the lead in formulating regulations for the cultivation of monks. The temple economy was

transformed from being provided for before to self-sufficiency, which guaranteed the prosperity and development of Buddhism. Until today, in addition to farming, selling tickets to Buddhist temples has become an important source of funds for daily operation of Buddhist temples in China, and the landscape environment in Buddhist temples has become an indispensable tourist requirement.

2.2 Symbolic Significance of the Historical Traces of the Xi Qinglin Temple in Guilin

Xi Qinglin temple built in the early Tang Dynasty, It is the most famous temple in Guilin. The Tang Dynasty scholar Mo Xiufu recorded in the book "Guilin Fengtu Ji" that a certain year of flood brought giant wood, the local residents carved the giant wood into a Buddha statue and built a temple for worship at the suggestion of the Indian monks. Wu Zetian, the only female emperor in Chinese history, in her sleep, the god asked her for cassock, after she woke up, she ordered someone to make a cassock and hang it on the city gate, cassock is lost the next day, finally found cassock on the Locana Buddha in Xi Qinglin Temple, Guilin. The story of folklore is confirmed from the side, at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, there were already Indian monks in Guilin, Xi Qinglin Temple is also famous at this time and has become one of the five largest Buddhist temples in China. After the change of history, this temple is gradually ruined, in the eleventh volume of "Guisheng" written by Zhang Mingfeng of the Ming Dynasty in China, the temple has ceased to exist, grotto statues in the Tang Dynasty is the only remaining relic.

Guilin in the Tang Dynasty, the unprecedented prosperity of Buddhism, become one of the centers of Buddhism in southern China, from the style of the existing Grotto statues, different style from the Buddhist statues in the Central Plains and Northern China, scholars believe that this is evidence that Buddhism was introduced into China from India by sea. In 750 AD, the Chinese Tang Dynasty eminent monk: Jian Zhen, after five failed attempts to spread the Dharma in Japan, spreading Dharma for a year at Kaiyuan Temple in Guilin, then he traveled to Japan again, finally succeeded, Kaiyuan Temple has also been destroyed, leaving only a dagoba, there is no historical record of Jian Zhen's activities at Xi Qinglin Temple, but as a temple that was famous at the time, it can be guessed that such an activity exists. The writings of Xi Qinglin Temple are

rarely recorded, historical traces are interrupted for a long time, interview some local experts, they generally recognize the important position of Xi Qinglin Temple in the history of Guilin Buddhism, the cultural symbolism of reconstructing the temple is much higher than the function of the temple itself.



Figure (6) : Relics of Indian Mathura style Grotto statues

The existing Buddha statues at the site have 98 niches 243 statues, the largest of which is up to 200 cm, the minimum height is only 20~30 cm. Although most of them are broken, but you can still see the prosperity of the Buddha's affairs that year. Temples and grottoes coexist and are not common in China, especially in the southern temples of China. The karst landforms of Guilin undoubtedly make the sacred place features more unique, the Buddha statue has Lingnan "small jasper" style, exquisite appearance, gentle expression and unique local style. According to field research, the Buddha statue is mainly small, these statues have the characteristics of the Tang Dynasty statues: fullness of the face, the earlobe is large until the shoulder, busty chest and thin waist, Mild expression. There is a clear historical record of the "Li Shi" statue at Guanyin Peak, it is elegant in style, obviously influenced by the art of mathura from central India. At present, Buddhism in Guilin does not have advantages in China, The grotto art of Xi Qinglin Temple will become an important design reference for reconstructing Buddhist cultural tourism.

2.3 Chinese Temple Tour and Tourist Industry in Guilin

Chinese Buddhist temple tourism has strong appeal. For example, China's four major Buddhist Sacred mountains, Wutai Mountain, Putuo Mountain, Emei Mountain and Jiuhua Mountain, attract a large number of tourists every day. In addition to visiting,

prayer to Buddha, burning incense and wishing are the most important Buddhism activities. When the festival comes, people are constantly rushing from all directions to see the attractiveness of strong columns.

Since the Tang Dynasty, Chinese Buddhism has completely gotten rid of the tradition of begging for food by bowls. "Baizhang Qing Rule" of Huaihai mook was born, and the economic model of self-sufficiency of monasteries has remained until now. At present, there are two levels of differentiation in temple economy. There are many tourists in economically developed cities and well-known temples. Tourist companies intervene in Temple Tourism Management and generally collect tickets. There are a lot of business activities in temples, which promotes the commercialization of temples. In some remote areas, temples are closing down and tourists are scarce due to financial difficulties. Because of the low risk and high return of the development of Buddhist tourism projects, under the joint promotion of the tourism and Buddhist circles, there has been a nationwide upsurge in the construction of Buddhist statues in temples. Typically, giant Buddhist statues rising in various places attract a large number of tourists in the temple space.



Figure (7) : Buddhist temples in China maintain farming regulations

Guilin, located in the southwest of China, is a city famous in the world for its karst scenery. It has more than 80 million tourists every year, and its total tourism income accounts for 20% of GDP. Guilin's tourism industry focuses on natural scenery tourism, ethnic minority tourism and agricultural leisure experience. Tourist crowds are distributed at all ages. Holiday tourism is developing into a new tourism fashion. About 95% of the tourists are domestic tourists, young tourists and foreign tourists, mainly from Korea, Singapore, Europe, America and Japan.

3 CONCLUSION

China's Buddhist temple a place of multi-cultural integration. It is the core content to analyze the connecting characteristics of different cultures in the process of research. The rebuilding of Xi Qinglin Temple in Guilin is scarce. The only historical records come from the Tang Dynasty. The peak period of Chinese Buddhist temples was in the Tang Dynasty, which brought design reference for the rebuilding of temple projects. From the historical evolution of Buddhist temples in China, Tang Dynasty to Song Dynasty is an important research timeline. Buddhist temples in this period established the typical image of Chinese Buddhist temples. The artistic style is different from the later dynasties. In Tang Dynasty, whether it is architecture, sculpture or mural, it shows simple style, repetition and momentum. Based on this, the rebuilding artistic style are positioned in the style of Tang Dynasty in China.

Although Mahayana Buddhism differs greatly from Theravada Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, many hidden meanings will be found in the study of the origin of Buddhism. These contents will be an important reference for research and design. To discover the cultural significance from the origin and to reproduce and rebuild it is the goal of research at present. The excessive commercialization of Chinese Buddhism has been accused of losing faith and questioning the sacredness of Buddhism. In the 1920s, based on the decline of Chinese Buddhism, Taixu a Buddhist modernist put forward the new philosophy view of "Humanistic Buddhism", a movement to promote the modernization of Buddhism, so that Buddhism can be closer to the needs of society and people and care for the public. From the philosophical point of view of Buddhism, the design of a temple is not only to provide a place for prayer to Buddha, but also to provide space to adapt to the times as a design concept, so that everywhere can feel the Buddha's teachings, activities to meet the needs of people. Guilin is famous for its scenic tours, and sightseeing and vacation are the current forms of tourism. The rebuilding of Xi Qinglin Temple is a supplement to the form of Guilin's tourism industry. At the same time, relying on the long-term accumulated tourism foundation, it is of great significance to the spread of Buddhism.

REFERENCES

- Eliade, Mircea. The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. Trans. Willard R. Trask. San Diego: Harvest, 1987. Print.*
- The philosopher Plotinus (205-270 CE) explained it this way [Enneads, IV, 3. 11]:*
- Homan, R., G. Rowley. The location of institutions during the process of urban growth: a case study of churches and chapels in 19th century Sheffield[J]. East Midland Geographer, 1979, 7(4): 137-152.*
- Kong, Lily.(1993). Negotiating Conceptions of 'Sacred Space': A Case Study of Religious Buildings in Singapore. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 18(3), 342-358.*
- VIRTUAL ISSUE 13 / SACRED SPACE UNBOUND .Published June 12, 2015.*
- Chen Haitao, Chen Qi. Picture of Cave 254 in Dunhuang, SDX Joint Publishing Company 2017. Print.*
- Moxiufu ,Yu Hengzhi of Guihai,Tang Dynasty.Print*
- Shi Xiang Hong,Chinese Tang Dynasty Wood Architectural Culture,China Architecture &Building press,2012.Print*