

Cultural Aesthetics of Campus Public Space Based on the Concept of Micro-regeneration: A Case Study of Culture Renewal in Shanghai Conservatory of Music

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Abstract. In the new stage of urban development in China, the dominant way of urban regeneration has transformed from the traditional mode of radical reconstruction on massive scale to the organic renewal in gradual process on micro scale. During the practice of organic renewal, the concept of ‘micro-regeneration’ has been developed, aiming at local adjustment and micro-transformation of urban space through small-scale development and renewal, so as to realize space renovation and environment improvement. As a lightweight and practical organic renewal method, ‘micro-renewal’ has been widely discussed and applied in the practice of urban community regeneration in recent years. Campus is a special type of community, but it faces similar problems as urban communities, which is the mismatching of existing environmental quality, functions and actual use demands with the change of development stage. Especially under the construction of socialist spiritual civilization, how to improve the overall cultural atmosphere through the renewal of campus public space is an important issue. Due to the special ownership and use mode of campus space, large-scale renovation is not applicable. While, the concept of ‘micro-regeneration’ provides a possible way for the sustainable development of campus environment. This article takes the regeneration project of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music as an example, applying the theory and method of ‘micro-regeneration’ to carry out the practice of cultural construction of campus public space. In this project, in terms of space renovation, the creation of a cultural atmosphere in the campus public space was achieved through ‘small-scale’ detailed design; in terms of investment costs, the cost control of ‘micro-input’ ensured the balance between social and economic benefits; In terms of the implementation process, the precise deployment of ‘quasi-operations’ avoided the interference of large-scale construction on the daily operation of the campus. In the course of the project, multiple departments and interests were collaborated, which contributed to the whole process control of the ‘micro-regeneration’ of campus from planning and design, communication and negotiation to construction and operation. The research shows that the concept of ‘micro-regeneration’ provides a suitable path for the reconstruction of the campus cultural, which can realize the continuous improvement of the campus space and cultural quality under the premise of maintaining the normal operation. At the same time, under the concept of ‘micro-regeneration’, the implementation mode of small-scale, micro-investment and quasi-operation is relatively easy for the whole process management from planning to landing, which is conducive to the full realization of the vision of regeneration.

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Under the general trend that urban development is changing from incremental development to stock development, urban regeneration becomes an important way of urban construction and development in the future. The proposal of the CPC Central Committee on formulating the 14th Five-year Plan for economic and social development and the long-range objectives through the year 2035, adopted by the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, made it

clear to ‘implement urban regeneration actions and promote urban ecological restoration and functional improvement projects’. By means of urban regeneration, a declining area of the city should be demolished, renovated, invested and built to replace the functionally decaying physical space with a new urban function, so that it can develop and prosper again. ^[1]

As the largest international metropolis in China, Shanghai has been at the forefront of urban regeneration design. In 2015, the Shanghai Municipal People's Government issued the ‘Implementation Measures of Shanghai Urban Regeneration’, and Shanghai's urban development entered a new stage, with the urban

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regeneration model changing from incremental development to stock tapping. [2] The Shanghai Municipal Government clearly put forward the concept of ‘organic regeneration’, and in the process of continuous practice, the theory and method of ‘micro-regeneration’ were gradually derived. [3] Unlike large-scale urban regeneration, ‘micro-regeneration’ is a way to repair and reactivate urban spaces through localized regeneration and micro-renovation. The recently released ‘Shanghai Urban Regeneration Regulations’ have also provided corresponding guidance and requirements.

After the renovation, expansion and merger, combined with the new trend of urban development, China's university campuses have begun to transform from the relatively rough ‘quantity’ increase to the ‘quality’ improvement with quality-oriented education as the core essence. [4] Campus is a special type of community, but due to its different spatial ownership and usage patterns, and the fact that most campuses have both old and new campus forms, the design of campus public space renewal cannot be carried out on a large scale. In this regard, the ‘micro-regeneration’ model is definitely an excellent option.

1.2 Research Purposes

The learning mode of college students is diversifying, and their learning places are gradually expanding from the original classroom to the open outdoor public space. [5] By studying the renewal and practice of cultural construction of campus public space, this paper analyses the shortcomings of campus public space in the context of urban regeneration in China, digs deeper into the value of campus public space and studies the feasibility of micro-regeneration of campus public space and the appropriate operation methods. In this way, it can provide guarantee and support for the effective promotion of campus regeneration and the development of a cultural, green, resilient and intelligent campus.

2 Target Selection: Shanghai Conservatory of Music

2.1 ‘Micro-regeneration’ and Cultural Construction of Campus Public Spaces

Campus is a special type of community, with relatively independent and complete characteristics. However, like urban communities, as the development stage changes, campuses are facing the problem of incompatibility between the original environmental quality and functional pattern and the real needs of use. Especially in the context of the development of a socialist society with an advanced culture and ideology, how to improve the overall cultural taste and atmosphere through the renewal of campus public space is an important issue facing campus construction. Due to the special ownership and usage pattern of campus space, large-scale renovation is not applicable. However, the concept

of ‘micro-regeneration’ provides a possible way for the sustainable development of campus space.

In addition, some universities have both old and new campuses, which were built and opened at different times and have different characteristics. Moreover, the styles between the old and new campuses are often not unified, and there is little connection between them. The effective use of some indoor spaces and outdoor landscapes on both campuses needs to be improved. At the same time, the publicity system is relatively monotonous and weak, and lacks practical connection with the building space and campus landscape, and it needs to be improved in terms of integration with the existing campus culture. At the same time, there is a lot of unused space, which can be developed as a potential space for campus activities and propaganda. In the renewal of the campus, it is necessary to listen to the opinions of various parties, especially the students and faculty, and to involve them in the design, so that the project will be better recognized and understood and trusted by the students and faculty. [6]

2.2 Overview of Selected Objects

With a history of nearly a century period, Shanghai Conservatory of Music boasts its profound cultural and historical heritage. The newly established campus on Lingling Road is full of modernity, while the old campus on Fen Yang Road is as stable as the historical atmosphere hidden in Shanghai Conservatory of Music. The two very different styles have led to a lack of connection between the two campuses, and the public space within the campus no longer meets the current needs of students and faculty. At the same time, the development of a socialist society with an advanced culture and ideology is in full swing, and Shanghai Conservatory of Music needs to follow the trend of the times, keep pace with the development, and do a good job of spiritual civilization. Therefore, the public space of Shanghai Conservatory of Music is in urgent need of regeneration.

Shanghai Conservatory of Music's campus on Fenyang Road is located at 20 Fenyang Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai, at the junction of Fenyang Road and Huaihai Middle Road, with an area of approximately 34,900 square meters. As the old campus of Shanghai Conservatory of Music, the Fenyang Road campus has a good learning atmosphere with intensive teaching activities, rich historical and cultural heritage, and a strong artistic atmosphere. However, due to its long service life, many public spaces cannot meet the needs of students and faculty today.

The campus on Lingling Road is the new campus of Shanghai Conservatory of Music. It was put into use in 2019 only two years ago. It is located on the south side of Lingling Road and covers an area of 33,860 square meters. The architectural design of the campus is simple and atmospheric, with linear elements, distinctive features, and a unified design style. However, the architectural complex of the new campus lacks, to a certain extent, the humanistic features, historical and

cultural features and humanistic landscape features that are inherited from the old campus. The two campuses were not connected before. The lack of cultural characteristics of Shanghai Conservatory of Music in the space of the Lingling Road campus has led to a weak sense of belonging and identity among the students and faculty. Also, the hard pavement and the campus are simple, geometrically modern, and the soft greenery is harmonized with the style of the campus, but it lacks the characteristics of Shanghai Conservatory of Music, and lacks the corresponding centralized cultural display area, collective activity space and leisure space. The publicity and display systems in the campus are few in number and scattered in distribution. They are single in form, lack of changes and rhythm, and fail to provide practical and effective help to the faculty and students in the campus. Moreover, they do not show the cultural characteristics of Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

3 Practice on Campus ‘Micro-regeneration’

This paper takes the campus renewal project of Shanghai Conservatory of Music as an example and applies the theory and method of ‘micro-regeneration’ to practice the cultural construction of campus public space. (Table 1) The renewal project, in terms of spatial transformation, design the details in small scale to create a cultural atmosphere in the campus public space. In terms of investment cost, the cost control of ‘micro-investment’ ensures the balance of social and economic benefits. In terms of implementation process, the ‘quasi-operational’ precise deployment avoids the disruption of the daily operation of the campus through large-scale construction. At the same time, the project focuses on communication and collaboration with multiple departments and entities to control the whole process of campus ‘micro-regeneration’ from planning and design, communication and consultation to construction and operation.

Table 1. Work content of campus ‘Micro-regeneration’ from area to points

Plate	Core content	Work content
AREAS	Overall Planning	General content such as current research, future research and judgment, cultural style, etc.
LINES	Cultural Roads	Combining with space display, refine several representative campus culture roads
POINTS	Featured Nodes	Optimization of specific representative cultural spaces, such as buildings, green spaces, walls, publicity columns, etc.

3.1 ‘Small-scale’ Detailed Design

For the cultural creation of campus public space, large-scale renovation is not suitable because the campus is still in use. The micro-regeneration is a good way to make a small-scale partial renovation of the campus without affecting the use of students and faculty. Based on the concept of micro-regeneration, students and

faculty can be involved in the design of the campus, with the students and faculty as the main body, and their wishes can be fully listened to and discussed by multiple parties. Students and faculty can participate in the analysis of the current situation of the campus and put forward their willingness to renovate it. Through participatory campus micro-regeneration, we can enhance the sense of participation of students and faculty in the regeneration project. [7] In addition to preserving the overall appearance of the campus, the campus was partially renovated to form a campus cultural path with multiple nodes to drive the whole campus and form a campus landscape with the characteristics of Shanghai Conservatory of Music. In this way, we can really realize the detailed design of ‘small scale’, starting from lesser parts.



Fig. 1. Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: upgrading the bulletin board and core values across from the cafeteria on the new campus.

Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: upgrading the bulletin board and core values across from the cafeteria on the new campus. (Figure 1) The renewal project makes full use of the building opposite the cafeteria to add electronic bulletin boards, core values and landscape flower borders. The site is located across from the cafeteria, between the dormitory and the school building, and is a place where faculty and students must pass through every day, so that the information can be communicated to all students and faculty.

The location of the bulletin board has a wide view, so it can convey information well. At the same time, the use of outdoor electronic display facilities, so as to realize the notification of various matters, but also effectively reduce the waste of posters, paper printing, convenient and fast. The renewal project is small in volume and truly regenerates the details in small scale.

3.2 ‘Micro-investment’ Cost Control

Based on the ‘acupuncture’ model of renewal, the financial expenditure was controlled to achieve ‘micro-investment’ cost control. [8] The project adopted a bottom-up approach for public participation in design. Students and faculty participate in identifying campus problems under the guidance of the college leadership. The planning designer proposes the design, then gives feedback to the students and faculty, and the students and faculty select the design they are satisfied with, then the designer deepens the design to be constructed by the construction team. At the same time, the students and faculty can play a supervisory role during the school year, and the project will eventually produce a result that

is satisfactory to both students and faculty. In this process, students and faculty are involved throughout the project and they have a sense of participation and accomplishment after the project is completed. We selected effective sub-projects for implementation and made full use of public participation to control costs, thus achieving ‘micro-investment’ cost control.

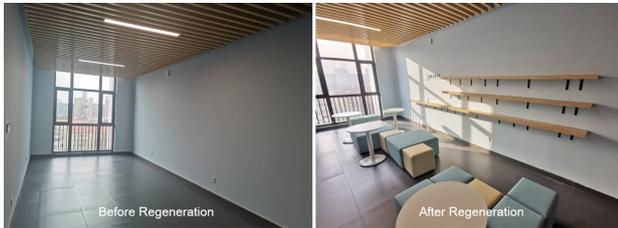


Fig. 2. Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: comprehensive upgrading of the propaganda system of the Department of Music and Theatre on the new campus.

Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: comprehensive upgrading of the propaganda system of the Department of Music and Theatre on the new campus. (Figure 2) The renewal project adopts a flexible and innovative publicity model, aiming to improve the construction of the publicity system of the Department of Music and Drama on the seventh floor of the main building of the campus on Lingling Road. We have added a number of promotional panels, such as the introduction of the department, the introduction of teaching and research departments and their achievements, the introduction of original musicals and graduation plays, domestic and international exchanges, and the introduction of famous alumni and current students. At the same time, some LCD screens and smart interactive screens were added to reduce the consumption of printed materials caused by changes in notices and to facilitate the communication of various matters of the university and the department. In addition, the renewal project also redesigned the open space in the public area so that the unused space will not be wasted and will be used as a place for students and faculty to interact with each other.

In the process of upgrading the propaganda system, different types of message carriers were selected according to different locations and functions. Combined with the unique elements of Shanghai Conservatory of Music, various alternative models were flexibly matched.

The renewal project fully integrates student and faculty participation, optimizes content and costs, and truly achieves ‘micro-investment’ cost control.

3.3 ‘Quasi-operational’ Accurate Deployment

In response to the problem of poor connection between the old and new campuses in the process of cultural construction of campus public space, we propose to adopt the master plan design from surface to line to point, and design the two campuses as a whole from the direction of surface to realize the cultural continuity and build the cultural road. Moreover, we designed the nodes

that constitute the cultural path, efficiently utilizing the existing public space, re-energizing the space and presenting the cultural characteristics of Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Thus, it can be precisely selected and precisely deployed from surface to point, reducing the waste of resources, achieving sustainable development, and realizing the precise deployment of ‘quasi-operation’.



Fig. 3. Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: renovation of four electronic screens on the old campus and enhancement of core values.

Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: renovation of four electronic screens on the old campus and enhancement of core values. (Figure 3) The renewal project is based on the existing publicity screens in front of the South, Middle and North buildings of the campus on Fenyang Road. The existing four screens had their paint heavily worn out, and the screen fans needed to be maintained. The four display screens were completely renovated and repainted, and the content of ‘core values’ was created in the blank space below the screens. It not only makes full use of the current resources to display the core values, but also presents the elegant and delicate artistic atmosphere of Shanghai Conservatory of Music.



Fig. 4. Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: flag-raising plaza and cultural display of the school motto at the new campus.

Example of ‘micro-regeneration’ on campus: flag-raising plaza and cultural display of the school motto at the new campus. (Figure 4) The renewal project added a flag-raising plaza in the centre of the main building on the Lingling Road campus to meet the urgent need for flag-raising ceremonies on the new campus and to hold small-scale related events in the plaza.

The addition of the flag-raising plaza is conducive to strengthening patriotic education and promoting core values of Shanghai Conservatory of Music. In addition, in order to show the spiritual connotation of Shanghai Conservatory of Music's cultural motto ‘Harmony, Determination, Dignity and Sincerity’, a flower border with sculptural characters was set on the side of the flag-raising square facing the entrance of the campus to show the cultural connotation of Shanghai Conservatory of

Music. Simulated plants were chosen as the main body of the cultural display of the school motto, reflecting the characteristics of Shanghai Conservatory of Music in line with the ecological theme of the new era, while reasonably reducing maintenance costs and avoiding wastefulness. In addition, the flag-raising plaza was renewed with an ecological pavement of waterside plats and pebbles, minimizing the impact on the existing green space.

The above two updates are based on the master plan, and are implemented step by step and precisely from the surface to the point, so as to achieve the precise deployment of 'quasi-operation'.

4 Conclusions

Research shows that the concept of 'micro-regeneration' provides a suitable path for the cultural renewal of campus communities, which can achieve the continuous improvement of campus space and cultural quality while maintaining the normal operation of the campus. At the same time, the small-scale, micro-investment, and quasi-operational approach of the 'micro-regeneration' concept facilitates the management of the whole process from planning to implementation, and facilitates the full realization of the renewal vision.

Cultural construction of campus public space based on the concept of micro-regeneration focuses on the reuse of existing resources, giving more functions to the unused space, satisfying the needs of users and revitalizing the space simultaneously. As time goes on, the demand for space use is increasing, but large-scale renovation and renewal will inevitably affect daily use, which can be avoided by appropriate micro-regeneration. In the renovation of the campus, the mode of micro-regeneration can be adopted to retain the original texture of the campus and respect the original characteristics of the site. Moreover, in response to the needs of students and faculty, the existing resources can be used according to local conditions to reactivate the site, increase the vitality, and finally add cultural display elements to empower the site with the meaning of the times.

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