

# Reality and Retrospect

## On the Application of Context Continuation in Leisure Center Design

Juan Wang

School of Art Design

Huanghe Science and Technology College

Zhengzhou, China

**Abstract**—Nowadays Leisure Center has been regarded as the marker to measure the prospect of real estate and it is also taken as the signpost in cities. However, there are some problems in the utilization of them. The problems that how to realize the sustainable development and how to embody the humanities, environmental-friendliness and modern features are the ones to solve. Combined with the regionalism and humanistic views of clubs, this paper will focus on the emergence and development of "context" and expound the unity of function and form vertically and horizontally so as to create club design full of individuality. Context has been the focus of attention of designers and critics. The meaning and importance of the design works which could reveal the cultural property of the nation are not to be doubted. This paper aims at discussing the application of context in clubs environment design from the perspectives of its significance and embodiment.

**Keywords**—context; leisure; function; sustainable development

### I. THE DESIGN OF CONTEXT IN LEISURE CENTER

The club is believed to have developed from the community center in which some basic facilities meet people's needs of leisure activities at that time. Our early committee activity room in the community is the prototype of community club. With the development of China's commercialized housing market, the majority of rich communities have built more fancy and luxurious activity rooms involving broader sense. Thereupon, the name and concept of "club" have been introduced to Chinese community from overseas. Nowadays, it has become the vane of our modern life. It is the highlight and selling point for the real estate developers to attract customers and also one of the important signs for the buyers to judge whether the residential area is classy or not. According to incomplete statistics, about 60% of the residential areas in large cities are equipped with clubs.

The club in this paper mainly refers to the public gathering place established in community, which is similar to the form of club in general.

The club in the past was a way of living for the aristocracy, where was a gathering place featured by class, domain, secret, interest and hobby. Its sense of superiority, mystery and nobility was cultivated by the urban culture. Nowadays club has begun to influence each aspect of life, which is not only a place for party but also a kind of fashionable leisure concept

in more sense. With the development of society and the improvement of people's living standards, people's consumptive conception is also continuously improving and the basic life demands for food and clothing are gradually replaced by the pursuit of high quality of life. The flourish of varieties of cultural industries and more attention to the quality of life are not only reflected by the prosperity of the third industry and the rapid development of entertainment places; but more reflected in the aspects of people's pursuit of the improvement of their internal and external cultivation. Cultural entertainment has become a fashion. It is human's nature to pursue beauty since ancient times. Therefore, leisure centers with rich cultural connotations, which could relieve people's living and working pressure, have drawn more and more people's attention.

The existence of things has its necessity of historical and social factors. The necessity of its functions plays a dominant role in the development of the club. Leisure center belongs to the service industry. Club provides people with the most basic equipment. The style and the culture embodied shall conform to the preferences and aesthetic needs of the target population. The ultimate purpose is to make people who come to the club obtain pleasant enjoyment both physically and mentally.

### II. CONTEXT AND CLUB DESIGN

#### A. The Relationship between club design and culture

The design of Leisure Center emphasizes the historical, cultural features and keeps up with the times as well.

The knowledge of tradition includes all aspects of the history of human activities such as the history of culture, folk custom history, political history, military history, economic history, architectural history, the history of science, the history of technology, education history and so on. The modern indoor space design is a large-scaled, intuitive, vivid and comprehensive history book existing in space environment.

Club design concerns the health condition and it matters to each individual, nation and whole country. The design of leisure center contains abundant memory for the reason that it is the fruit of human civilization. The beauty of modern interior design itself is worth advocating, appreciating and developing. It changes the city and countryside and upgrades the business environment constantly. It reveals the beauty

which integrates the sense of history with modern civilization. The well-designed club would enlighten one's mind and value. People in the leisure center could not only get physical relaxation but more importantly attain spiritual enjoyment.

Traditional culture is a continuous process of constant change. Any form of change brought by the development won't change the thinking patterns which fundamentally formed in people's consciousness. The complementation of Confucianism and Taoism is the primary feature of Chinese traditional culture and these two contrasting philosophies affected ancient architectural forms of China. As the mainstream of Chinese ancient culture, traditional Confucianism put emphasis on 'disciplines' which were regarded as the decrees and regulations by the ruling class. They restrict the social ethics and people's living as well. At the same time that 'disciplines' restrained ancient architecture, the view of nature fascinated by Lao Tse highlighted the priority of nature, which enabled some buildings, especially the gardens to embody the element of nature but not entirely conform to conventional standards. It made people go beyond the bounds of disciplines and return to nature, obtaining a short-time slackness, peace and joy. In the decoration of traditional architecture, people pursued the freedom of individuality, conformity with nature, abundant and satisfactory beauty, ethereal beauty and harmony between man and nature. Besides, the pictures must embody implications, which must be auspicious. The integration of the romantic 'likeness in spirit', emotion and reason were also emphasized. After Buddhism spread to China, various thoughts of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism integrated and supplemented each other, which gradually formed a more vigorous Chinese culture spirit. The exploration of traditional humanity enables us to communicate with ancestors spiritually, have an insight into the colorful and profound cultural connotation involved in Chinese traditional design.

Apart from the images working as visual symbols, traditional concepts, consciousness and psychological factors involved in Chinese traditional architecture could also absorbed into the new design. For example, American modernism architectural master Wright absorbs the concept of space from '*Tao Te Ching*' of Lao Tse, designing the "Fallingwater" which achieves the perfect integration of architecture with nature. It is the architectural masterpiece which sits by a stream in front and a hill at the back.

So in the club design, we should pay attention not only to the functional adaptability, but also the embodiment of the connotation of culture, especially the traditional culture. For example, many scientific concepts in ancient geomancy bring valuable ideas and conception to modern interior design. Therefore, this paper tends to conduct further analysis by introducing the concept of "context".

#### B. The explanation of context

The so-called context originally means the "context" in literature. In linguistics, it is referred to as the "context", which means the situations in which the words are used. The meaning of it, in broader sense, could be extended to imply the relationship between a matter with other matters in time or

space. It is translated as "context" in design fields, which should be understood as cultural context and cultural inheritance.

Cassirer believes that humans could surpass the natural world and that is the world of culture. 'Humans are animals in culture.' All human cultures are products created by activities of symbolization of human beings. Science, art, language, mythology, etc. are all parts of the "products", and their inherent relationship constitutes an organic unity — human culture. Nowadays, humans not only live in a natural world, but also live in a 'cultural world'. 'Culture is the people's way of life'. The notion of culture is so large that only on the macro level can we truly understand its definition.

Such abstract and huge culture could be transmitted in time and space through artificial symbols and symbol system. At the same time, people are constantly creating and developing the culture in the way of "symbol activity". "Symbolic thinking and behavior are the most representative features in human life, and the overall development of human culture is dependent on these conditions." Symbol contains two aspects. One is "form" and the other is its "significance". Symbols represent certain meaning via its form or form combination (symbol structure). Therefore, culture is not only the material world built up by varieties of symbolic forms, it is more a world of meaning. Human is the author of symbols and the symbol is the work of human being. They constitute the meaningful content for living in the world, which is culture. In a word, the essence of culture is to convey the meaning of human behavior by using symbols.

Since culture is a meaning system which is expressed by symbols, as the cultural linkage, context should work as the connection in the aspect of meaning rather than the continuation or inheritance in form.

### III. THE INFLUENCE OF FUNCTION SPACE AND CONTEXT

#### A. Bath space and context

Bath space has been existing for long. Most of the Western European countries had been dominated by the Roman Empire (Romans loved bathing). Their public baths were built with marbles and looked very magnificent. Now there are still ruins of them in the city of Rome. Finnish sauna is the steam bath. In the design of bath space in this paper, context is mainly reflected in form. Natural stones instead of functional materials are used to re-interpret this culture.

According to the earliest Chinese medical classics Huang Di Nei Jing, massage, guidance, decocting, fumigation and bathing are recuperation methods apart from the common methods of drugs and acupuncture therapy. In the design of the bathing pool, bamboos which are the representative of oriental culture are used as wall decoration, integrated into the function space.

The design of the bath center combines eastern and western culture which meets different tastes of leisure of modern people. Moreover, it uses functional symbolic language and bath pool. The application of traditional and natural materials like bamboo and wood is not only environmentally friendly,

and more importantly, it is the reflection of history, which changes people's preconceived notion by mosaic and ceramic tiles and gives people a fresh vision and psychological feeling.

#### *B. Recreation and context*

On the one hand, recreation refers to the leisure time for entertainment and rest; on the other hand, it refers to "the time for developing intelligence and enjoying freedom in spirit". "Recreation" is "non-working time" and "time that is not occupied by work". [2] Recreation in this paper is a concept of time. The different periods of society and times endow it with different meanings. From the connotation embodied in these recreational matters, Marx considered that "for the whole society, creating freely-controlled time means creating the time to produce science and art, etc." The leisure tourism, leisure bathing and leisure club of modern times apparently have essential differences from those of the past. It is actually the demand for the satisfaction of higher moral, mental and spiritual needs after their restoration of energy. Marx believed that freedom and recreation were linked to human nature and the comprehensive development of human individuality. Nowadays recreation is thoroughly a connotation of a cultural and spiritual life in new historical conditions.

#### *C. The outdoor space design and context*

There is no concept of leisure square in real sense in the traditional culture of China. But in ancient Rome, the public parliament won support among people. Therefore, the square also had the meaning of democracy. The club environment determines that it should be the leisure square which takes leisure, fun and green as the themes.

"As the extension and supplement of indoor space, the external space environment is indispensable. What's different is that in foreign countries, buildings are at the center with courtyard around the building. By contrast, in China, garden is usually at the center and surrounded by buildings, thus forming a kind of unique combination which takes external space as the center. Internal-oriented layout is centripetal, constrained and convergent. External-oriented layout is featured by centrifugation, radiation and diffusion. As the two opposite tendencies, the two forms of layout are not only reflected in the garden layout and common architectural space combination, but also reflected in people's behavioral psychology and even traditional customs and personalities of the entire nation. In the matter of our ancient situation, as an oriental nation constrained by the feudal law for a long time has gradually built the national personality which is characterized by introversion. Such personality almost permeates all aspects of people's lives and one of the most distinctive features lies in the layout of architecture."

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The design is the basis that makes all things become possible. Now we carry forward the national culture and preserve the sustainable development of the motherland culture. Leisure Center is a new-born thing, the design of which should be people-oriented. Context is a way that makes

people recognize design so as to improve the quality and level of people's life more greatly. Of course, in essence, context is different from packaging design.

In short, only by combining the three aspects of leisure needs, leisure place and leisure culture organically and form a system, can they be not only conducive to national construction, but also meet the people's desire to improve the quality of life and effectively promote the healthy development and progress of the whole society.

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