Exploring Kaiping Diaolou Using the Methodology of Place Memory

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This paper aims to investigate (1) The towers in the Kaiping region of China are interconnected with individual and collective memories of place; (2) The history of the towers, their architectural features, and the memories and emotions of the local inhabitants, and the paper will reveal how the towers, as a physical space, are closely linked to cultural memories; and (3) Tthe right approach to the protection of the towers, and to provide better suggestions for the preservation of the heritage of Kaiping and the development of tourism. Samples were selected using systematic sampling techniques. The design of the data collection tools combined descriptive statistics and content analysis.

The results of the study are as follows:

1. The average score for the evaluation of public spaces in scenic spots was 5.56, indicating a generally favorable evaluation of the quality and design of these spaces.

2. The average score of 5.46 points on the proposal to visit the Kaiping Diaolou, indicating that tourists recommend to others the willingness of the Kaiping Diaolou at a medium level.

3. The degree of interest in Kaiping Diaolou scored 5.34 points, indicating a medium level of interest in architectural heritage. Keywords: Place memory Diaolou protection research Diaolou's Chinese and Western cultural characteristics World Heritage heritage heritage and development.

Keywords: Place memory, Kaiping Diaolou, Exploring

Introduction

Applying the concept of "lieu de mémoire" (Nora, 1992) as a psychological method introduced a novel approach to studying watchtowers, using the framework of Ebbinghaus (1885) in order to comprehend the architectural and cultural significance of these distinctive structures. Over the years, the academic community has begun to

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focus on the historical and cultural value encapsulated within these watchtowers, which stand as indispensable defensive lookout towers within the cultural heritage of the Guangdong region. These edifices serve as tangible representations of the intricate interplay between Eastern and Western architectural influences.

Existing research has unveiled various facets of watchtowers, exposing their architectural characteristics, historical backgrounds, and role as symbols of cultural exchange. For instance, governmental entities such as the Guangdong Cultural Heritage Department have provided data that substantiates the cultural significance of Tulou watchtowers within the local communities. Furthermore, research conducted in the last 1 to 2 years has delved deeply into the socio-cultural impacts associated with these edifices and the challenges surrounding their preservation. Scholars such as Dong Youyi (2022), Luo Huiming (2020), and Zhao Lijun (2021) have made noteworthy contributions that enrich our understanding of watchtowers as cultural heritage and markers of architectural innovation.

Despite the strides made, there remain conspicuous gaps in exploring watchtowers through the lens of lieu de mémoire. The concept of lieu de mémoire offers a novel perspective that enables us to delve more deeply into the cultural, societal, and emotional dimensions associated with these lookout towers. By employing this framework to study watchtowers, this research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and attain a more comprehensive understanding of their role within the local cultural heritage landscape.

Given the existing state of research, this study aims to address the current gaps by employing the methods of " Place Memory " proposed by Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore (1978) and Rasmussen, S. E. (1964) to investigate watchtowers. Through the adoption of this approach, the research seeks to uncover underlying narratives and layers of significance, contributing to a more comprehensive appreciation of these architectural marvels.

second paragraph: In the realm of research, Diaolou, as a distinct form of cultural heritage and architectural expression, stands as an emblematic representation of the history and culture of the Guangdong region. These Diaolou possess not only unique architectural features but also harbor a wealth of historical and cultural significance, reflecting the intricate process of cultural exchange between the East and West. However, despite their significance, studies employing the lieu de mémoire approach to investigate Diaolou in the context of Shilicun remain relatively limited. Researchers in this field possess extensive expertise and contributions. Many scholars (e.g., Zhang Chaozhi, 2022) have focused on cultural heritage preservation, historical architectural research, and cultural inheritance. Scholars like Li Rusheng (2011) have

gained profound insights into architectural styles, cultural exchanges, and historical processes in southern China. Moreover, scholars such as Tang Yigong and Jiang Xiaojun (2008) have applied diverse methodologies to explore the multifaceted aspects of cultural heritage, thereby offering invaluable insights into cultural heritage preservation and inheritance.

Research on Diaolou has garnered widespread interest in the academic community. Previous studies have delved into the historical evolution, architectural features, cultural value, and social impact of Diaolou. Researchers like Zhang Chaozhi (2009), Yin Jie, Yang Wen, and Kong Zhonghua (2015) have not only deepened our understanding of Diaolou but also laid the foundation for further exploration. Currently, both the academic community and professionals in the cultural heritage preservation field display a strong interest in better comprehending, protecting, and inheriting Diaolou.

The intended audience of this research includes academic researchers, cultural heritage practitioners, enthusiasts of historical architecture, and those interested in the interplay between Eastern and Western cultures and architectural evolution. By adopting the method of "places memory" proposed by Lu Shaoming (2012), this study aims to provide these audiences with a more profound and comprehensive approach to understanding Diaolou in Shilicun. In doing so, it offers valuable insights for fields such as cultural heritage preservation and tourism development.

third paragraph: Wang Jiao (2021) aligns with the method of lieu de mémoire. The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively study Diaolou from the perspectives of place and memory in order to understand their cultural significance. This entails analyzing architectural features, historical backgrounds, as well as the impact of these structures on local communities and broader emotional and cultural resonances. Drawing inspiration from Wang Xinjian and Ai Juan (2009), this approach aims to reveal the latent layers of memory within Diaolou, explore their socio-cultural influence, and understand their role in bridging the past and the present.
To achieve this goal, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods will be employed. Extensive field surveys will be conducted within and around Diaolou and their vicinity, gathering primary data about the structures. This will encompass architectural features, community perspectives, and local narratives concerning Diaolou. Furthermore, archival studies and social reports will offer valuable insights into the historical and cultural contexts of these structures.

This research paper will be structured in accordance with the Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion sections. Following this structure, the paper will guide readers through a logical progression of

the research process and findings, ultimately aiding in a better comprehension of the role of Diaolou as memory places within the cultural landscape of Shilicun.

The purpose of this research is to provide valuable insights for scholars, cultural heritage practitioners, and local communities, deepening the understanding of the significance of Diaolou in preserving cultural memory and intergenerational connections. Anticipated research outcomes will contribute to academic discussions on heritage preservation, architectural studies, and cultural exchange, while offering guidance for heritage management practices, benefiting both current and future generations.

Research's objective

1. To explore the architectural characteristics of Diaolou and their relationship with the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. By analyzing architectural forms and elements, uncover the historical and cultural information encapsulated within these structures.

2. To investigate the emotional connections and memories of local community residents regarding Diaolou. Explore the societal and personal significance of these buildings, as well as how they intertwine with local identity and a sense of belonging.

3. To analyses of their societal impacts, propose strategies and recommendations for the preservation and inheritance of Diaolou. Provide practical guidance for local cultural heritage preservation and sustainable tourism development.

Literature Review:

The literature review aims to unveil the existing body of knowledge concerning Diaolou while identifying a pivotal gap in knowledge that warrants further exploration. Through the analysis and synthesis of pertinent documents, articles, and research papers, our goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current comprehension of these architectural structures, their historical significance, and cultural impacts.

1. Architectural Features and Cultural Symbolism: Previous research has revealed the architectural intricacies and cultural significance of Diaolou in the Guangdong region. Scholars like Wang Liming (2008), Yun Yanni (2016), Jiazi & Zheng Lili (2010) have emphasized the fusion of Eastern and Western architectural elements within these structures. While these studies have made valuable contributions to our understanding, a comprehensive examination of Diaolou through the lens of lieu de mémoire is still lacking.

2. Local Perspectives and Identity: Zhang Guoxiong's (2007) research extensively

explores the emotional connection between local communities and Diaolou, highlighting their role in shaping identity and a sense of belonging. However, within the context of Diaolou, there remains a scarcity of comprehensive research that intersects memory, cultural identity, and architectural heritage.

3. Heritage Preservation and Tourism Development: Zhang Huijie (2013) discusses challenges and strategies in cultural heritage preservation, while Tan Linxi's (2017) research delves into their potential in sustainable tourism development. Nevertheless, concerning Diaolou cases, there is still limited analysis on how to employ the lieu de mémoire approach to simultaneously guide heritage preservation strategies and promote sustainable cultural tourism.

The literature review, by exposing significant gaps in the current knowledge framework, paves the way for this study to comprehensively explore the cultural and historical significance of Diaolou in Shilicun using the approach of lieu de mémoire. Building upon existing theories and concepts, this research will apply the method of lieu de mémoire to thoroughly investigate the cultural, emotional, and socio-economic dimensions of these structures within the context of Diaolou.

Conceptual Framework

Case study method. In the section of project analysis, this paper conducted a case study of Chikan Ancient Town, delving into the selection, extraction, and creation of visual spatial elements, the choice and layout of architectural types, as well as the reproduction of other perceptual, symbolic, and event-related elements.
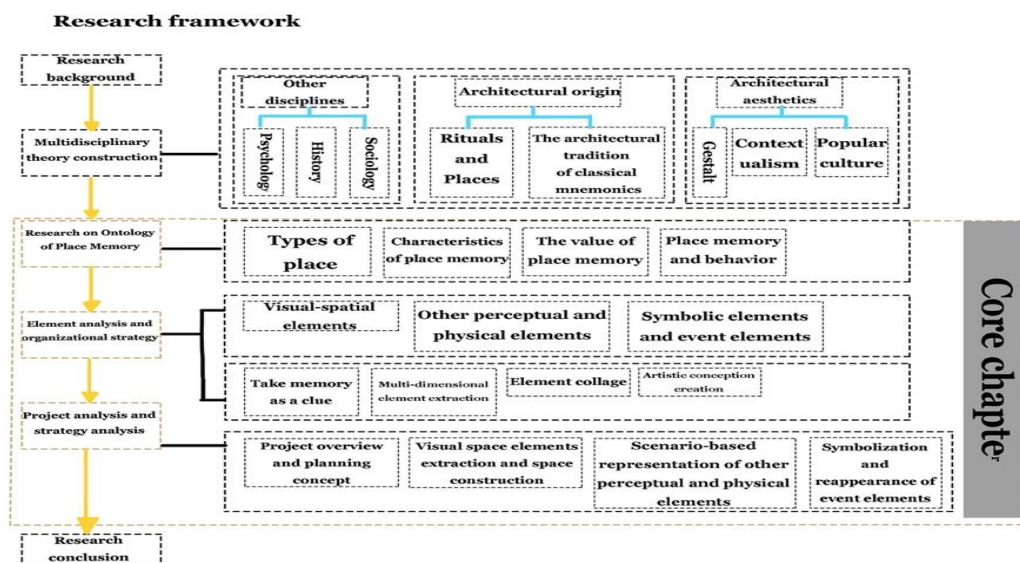

Figure 1. Research Framework Diagram

Research Methods and Framework

Literature review method. Through collecting and reviewing relevant theoretical literature, this paper has outlined the development overview and achievement perspectives of memory in psychology and historical sociology, laying a good foundation for interdisciplinary theoretical research. Additionally, a substantial amount of literature, such as architectural studies, art studies, communication studies, professional journals, and theses, was reviewed to clarify the research direction of this paper and its innovative contributions to the academic field. During the project participation process, a large number of historical documents and visual materials on Kaiping Diaolou during the Republic of China period were also collected through a literature review, providing a historical basis for architectural design.

Cross-disciplinary method. The research on place memory in this paper requires the introduction of relevant theoretical achievements from disciplines such as communication studies, psychology, history, sociology, geography, and art studies based on the foundation of architecture. In the analysis of the mechanism of place memory, psychological conclusions are used as the theoretical basis. The concept of "cultural memory" in sociology is borrowed to expound on the ontology of place memory, while historical discussions about memory are relied upon to discuss the significance and value of the entire research topic.

Systematic research method. The research on place memory in this paper is a systematic theoretical study aimed at rejecting the arbitrariness and subjectivity of memory discussion in current architectural disciplines. Starting from tracing the origin and explaining the profound correlation between place and memory, this paper employs cross-disciplinary methods to study the types of place memory, its relationship with behavior, the characteristics and value of place memory, and the elements and organizational strategies of place memory. The entire study systematically discusses the ontology of "place memory".

Summary method. This article employs the method of inductive reasoning extensively in the study of place memory. As this article is pioneering in its ontological approach to the study of place memory, many of its concepts are based on a synthesis of theories from multiple disciplines. For example, the classification of place memory is the result of the digestion and synthesis of research on memory from psychology and sociology. In short, the method of inductive reasoning is pervasive throughout the entire research process.

The method of mutual verification between theory and practice. This article extensively employs the method of mutual verification between theory and practice in

the study of place memory. Inspired by the overall transformation project of Chikan Ancient Town, the author establishes an analytical framework for the theory of place memory based on the design experience and interdisciplinary theoretical learning gained from the project. By combining theoretical research with project analysis, this article vividly demonstrates the scientific validity, practical applicability, and real-world significance of the theory of place memory developed in this study.

The case study method. In the project analysis section, this article conducts a case study on Chikan Ancient Town, delving into the location selection, extraction, and creation of visual spatial elements, the selection and layout of architectural types, as well as the reproduction of other perceptual, symbolic, and event elements.
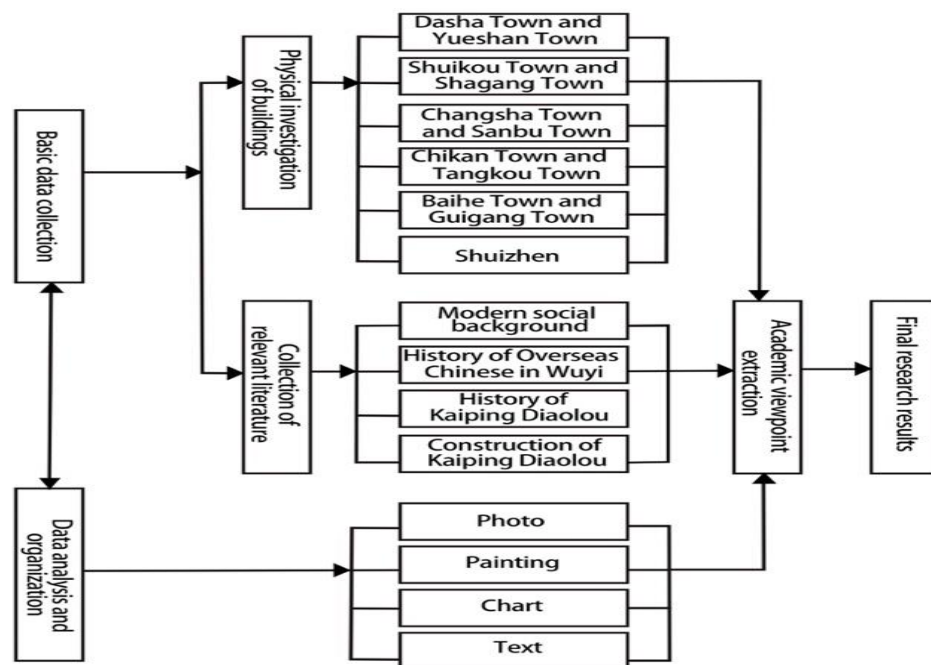
The research method flow of this paper is as follows:

Figure1. Research Method and Process of This Thesis

Research Results

Objective 1. The results revealed that the architectural features of Kaiping Diaolou are intricately intertwined with the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. The analysis of architectural forms and elements unveiled the historical and cultural information embedded within these structures.

Objective 2. The results demonstrated that local community residents' emotions and memories concerning Kaiping Diaolou underscore their profound societal and personal significance. These buildings play a pivotal role in shaping identity and fostering

a sense of belonging, intricately linked with local and individual perspectives.

Objective 3. The results illustrated that strategies and recommendations for preserving and inheriting Kaiping Diaolou could be derived from historical investigations and analyses of their societal impacts. The study provided practical insights into heritage protection practices and sustainable cultural tourism promotion, facilitating the preservation of this unique architectural heritage.

Discussions

The exploration of Kaiping Diaolou using the methodology of place memory has shed light on several significant dimensions, offering insights into the architectural, cultural, and societal aspects of these unique structures. The findings from this study contribute to a deeper understanding of Diaolou's role as memory places within the cultural landscape of the region.

The first objective of this study delved into the architectural characteristics of Kaiping Diaolou and their relationship with the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. The results highlighted the intricate blend of architectural elements that reflect historical exchanges between different cultural influences. This finding aligns with previous research that emphasized the amalgamation of design motifs from diverse architectural traditions. However, the approach of place memory further enriched our comprehension by unveiling the layers of cultural and historical meanings inherent in the architecture.

The second objective focused on local perspectives and identity, revealing the emotional connections that local community members have with Kaiping Diaolou. This emotional resonance underscores the cultural and social significance of these structures in shaping individual and communal identities. The study illuminated the nuanced interplay between architecture, memory, and cultural identity, offering a more holistic understanding of the impact of Diaolou on the local populace.

Lastly, the third objective addressed heritage preservation and tourism development, providing practical strategies for safeguarding Kaiping Diaolou. The study's insights into the balance between heritage conservation and sustainable tourism promotion are invaluable for guiding preservation practices in other cultural heritage sites. The utilization of the place memory approach in devising these strategies demonstrates its applicability in preserving architectural heritage while fostering responsible and meaningful tourism.

In conclusion, this research has deepened our understanding of Kaiping Diaolou by examining them through the lens of place memory. The findings underscore the importance of considering both the architectural and cultural dimensions of these structures in heritage preservation efforts. The approach adopted in this study offers a

promising avenue for exploring and conserving other architectural treasures around the world.

Knowledge from Research

The research on "Exploring Kaiping Diaolou Using the Methodology of Place Memory" has yielded valuable insights that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of Diaolou in the context of cultural heritage and architectural significance. This knowledge is synthesized below:

1. Architectural Fusion and Cultural Significance: The study reveals the intricate fusion of Eastern and Western architectural elements within Kaiping Diaolou. This synthesis symbolizes historical cultural exchanges and enhances the structures' cultural significance.

2. Emotional Resonance and Identity: Through the lens of place memory, the research demonstrates the emotional connection of local community members with Diaolou. This connection contributes to shaping individual and communal identities, highlighting the societal and personal significance of these structures.

3. Heritage Preservation and Sustainable Tourism: The research offers practical strategies for preserving and inheriting Kaiping Diaolou. The findings emphasize the need to balance heritage conservation and sustainable tourism, providing insights into responsible tourism development.

The knowledge is depicted in the form of a concise and easy-to-understand concept map, outlining the relationships between architectural fusion, emotional resonance, heritage preservation, and cultural significance of Kaiping Diaolou.

This synthesized knowledge enhances our grasp of Diaolou's multifaceted importance and provides a framework for their preservation, contributing to both scholarly discussions and practical heritage management strategies.

Conclusion

The exploration of Kaiping Diaolou using the methodology of place memory has illuminated the multifaceted dimensions of these unique architectural wonders. The synthesis of architectural fusion, emotional resonance, and heritage preservation underscores their intricate role within the cultural and historical landscape.

This research contributes to the field of architectural and cultural heritage studies by providing a comprehensive framework for understanding the cultural significance of Diaolou. The approach of place memory has revealed layers of historical and emotional meanings embedded within these structures, enriching our appreciation for their role as memory places.

Furthermore, the study's practical insights into heritage preservation and

sustainable tourism development provide actionable strategies for safeguarding Diaolou while promoting responsible tourism. These findings have implications beyond Kaiping, serving as a valuable guide for preserving architectural heritage worldwide.

In conclusion, "Exploring Kaiping Diaolou Using the Methodology of Place Memory" has not only deepened our understanding of these remarkable structures but also offered a methodological approach that has the potential to contribute to the preservation and appreciation of architectural heritage across diverse cultural contexts.

Suggestions

The research on "Exploring Kaiping Diaolou Using the Methodology of Place Memory" has opened up new avenues for understanding the cultural and historical significance of Diaolou. Building on the findings, several suggestions emerge for further research and practical applications:

1. Expanded Comparative Studies: To enhance the understanding of architectural fusion and cultural significance, future research could include comparative studies with other architectural heritage sites globally. This would provide a broader context for analyzing cross-cultural influences and architectural symbiosis.

2. In-depth Cultural Narratives: To delve deeper into the emotional resonance and identity aspects, qualitative research methods such as interviews, oral histories, and ethnographic studies could capture local narratives and personal stories connected to Diaolou. This would enrich the exploration of how these structures influence cultural identity.

3. Integrated Heritage Management Strategies: Building upon the suggested heritage preservation strategies, it would be valuable to explore how the findings could be integrated into comprehensive heritage management plans. These plans could encompass not only physical conservation but also education, community engagement, and sustainable tourism initiatives.

4. Transdisciplinary Collaboration: Engaging experts from diverse disciplines, such as architecture, anthropology, sociology, and tourism, could provide a holistic understanding of Diaolou's cultural and societal dimensions. Collaboration could yield multifaceted insights that extend beyond individual research perspectives.

5. Interactive Educational Initiatives: The research findings could be utilized to develop interactive educational initiatives for local communities and tourists. These initiatives could enhance public understanding of Diaolou's cultural significance and encourage responsible tourism practices.

6. Policy Development: The study's insights into balancing heritage preservation and tourism development could inform policy-making for cultural heritage sites.

Collaboration with government bodies and local stakeholders could lead to the implementation of sustainable practices that benefit both heritage conservation and the local economy.

Incorporating these suggestions could further enrich the understanding of Diaolou's role in the cultural landscape, facilitate its preservation, and promote responsible engagement with architectural heritage.

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