

Research on Cultural Narrative Strategies for the Exhibition Space of Cishan Site in Hebei Province

Zhang Tianjing Institute for Design, Hebei Academy of Fine Arts

ABSTRACT

The exhibition design of cultural heritage sites can be regarded as a cultural narrative activity with space and culture as its carriers. Taking the exhibition space of Cishan Site in Hebei Province as an example, this paper approaches from the perspective of cultural narrative. By studying the logical commonalities between spatial exhibition design and narrative design, it explores the narrative strategies for the exhibition space of cultural heritage sites. The aim is to enhance the cultural communication power and influence of the exhibition space of Cishan Site, and to provide references for the exhibition design of similar cultural heritage sites.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage Site; Cultural Narrative; Cishan Culture; Exhibition Space; Spatial Narrative Strategy

1. Cishan Cultural Heritage Site

Cultural heritage site, as a living imprint of human history and culture, is an important carrier of cultural inheritance. As the material basis for the development of civilization, they, in the concrete forms of architectural remains, shapes of artifacts, symbol systems, etc., completely preserve historical memories and the genealogy of cultural genes. They play an irreplaceable and important role in inheriting and promoting human civilization, enhancing national identity and pride, conducting scientific research, cultural education, and other fields. The Cishan Site is located at the eastern foot of Cishan Village, Wuan City, Hebei Province. It is one of the important cultural heritage sites in the early Neolithic Age in China. It has multiple attributes such as historical, agricultural, and cultural ones. Its discovery has filled the gap in the research of the early Neolithic culture in China, and it is of paradigmatic significance especially in the origin of foxtail millet agriculture and the evolution of early settlement forms. How to present these precious cultural heritages to the tourist in a vivid and interesting

way has become an important issue for the current exhibition space of the Cishan Cultural Heritage Site.

2. Cultural Narrative

In the field of literature and art, "narrative" refers to the artistic expression of real or imagined events in the form of poetry, prose, or other styles. As an interdisciplinary methodology, spatial cultural narrative transforms cultural symbols into narrative materials, takes the multi-dimensional space as the performing field, and systematically interprets the diachronic evolution and synchronic value of cultural phenomena through dramatic plot structures and emotional renderings. With the help of spatial narrative means, designers can vividly restore historical scenes, enabling the tourist to establish cultural identity in an immersive experience. This innovative research paradigm provides new ideas for the spatial design of cultural heritage. By constructing reasonable narrative strategies, the historical context and cultural value of cultural heritage sites can be transformed into perceivable narrative languages, enhancing tourists'

understanding and experience, and thus promoting the inheritance and development of cultural heritage. Moreover, by presenting the culture of the Cishan Site through cultural narrative techniques, the originally scattered and isolated cultural elements can be connected in series to form a complete and coherent story. Through vivid narration, it can arouse the emotional resonance of tourists, making them more deeply feel the historical heritage and cultural charm contained in the Cishan Culture.

3. Logical Commonalities between Spatial Exhibition Design and Narrative Design

Spatial exhibition design is about planning and arranging the exhibition space to effectively convey information; narrative design emphasizes telling stories through design means and transmitting emotional values. There are many logical commonalities between the two. Firstly, cultural narrative emphasizes a distinct and prominent narrative theme, and in spatial exhibition design, there also needs to be a clear cultural theme as a guide, and based on this, the spatial design is carried out around the theme. Secondly, the content of cultural narrative is the core of the entire narrative design. It can not only reflect the narrative theme and provide an inexhaustible source of materials for narrative design, but also its internal logic and development context determine the structure of narrative design. The materials of spatial exhibition design are a collection of the cultural connotations and cultural elements, which require designers to extract and excavate from the materials of cultural heritage sites. Thirdly, in narrative design, whether it is the narrative of literary texts or the narrative structure in spatial narrative (which is also the connection of each spatial node), it emphasizes the coherence of the plot or content. The construction logic of spatial planning and organization also follows the narrative rules. It requires a reasonable layout, such as arranging exhibits in chronological order or by theme classification, and optimizing the visiting route with the help of the topological structure of the moving lines, so that the tourist can form a cognitive integrity in the process of

decoding cultural information. Fourthly, narrative design is also committed to creating an atmosphere that can set off the theme of the story, enabling the tourist to better integrate into and understand the story. For example, cultural heritage parks achieve the spatial-temporal folding of historical pictures through cross-media narrative strategies such as the construction of situational scenes and multi-sensory theaters. And spatial exhibition design forms an immersive field energy that resonates with the genealogy of civilization genes through elements such as spatial structure, hierarchy, form, color, lighting, and materials. Fifthly, both pay attention to the tourist's experience. Narrative design emphasizes establishing an emotional connection with tourists and causing emotional resonance. tourists can have a pleasant spatial experience in the exhibition space, thus achieving cultural cognition and identity.

4. Cultural Narrative Strategies for the Exhibition Space of Cishan Site

(1) Narrative Theme - Determining the Narrative Theme and Positioning the Cultural Theme

The narrative theme, as the core of cultural narrative, dominates the content and form of the entire cultural narrative. Taking the Cishan Site as an example, the narrative theme should be determined closely around the "Foxtail Millet Crop Civilization" of the Cishan Culture as the core. Through in-depth research on the historical background, cultural characteristics, archaeological discoveries, etc. of the Cishan Site, the narrative theme can be determined as "Cishan Culture - Foxtail Millet Crop Civilization". This theme highlights the important position of the Cishan Culture in ancient Chinese history and also reflects the cultural characteristics of the Cishan Culture. On this basis, sub-themes can be further refined, such as "The Life of the People in Cishan", "Primitive Foxtail Millet Crops", "Pottery Making Techniques", "The Exploration of the Spiritual World", etc., to deeply explore the connotations of the Cishan Culture from different angles, enabling tourists to comprehensively and systematically understand the Cishan Culture.

The positioning of the spatial theme is a key link in

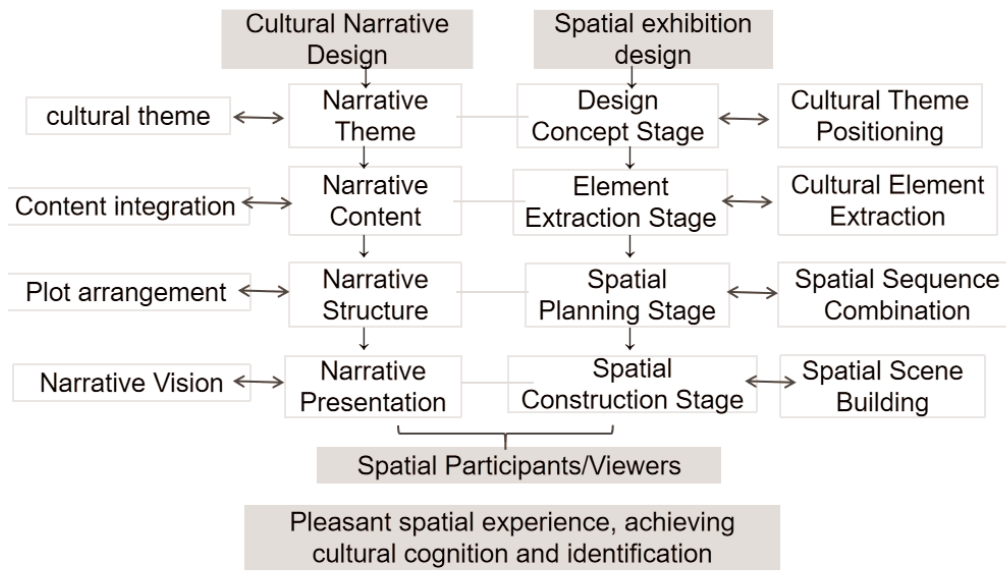


Figure 1 The logical commonalities between spatial display design and narrative design

the cultural narrative of the exhibition space of the Cishan Site. Through a clear and unique spatial theme, tourists can quickly understand the core information conveyed by the exhibition space, enhancing the effect of cultural narrative. In the exhibition space of the Cishan Site, the spatial theme can be created from multiple aspects. Firstly, in spatial planning, according to the characteristics of the Cishan Culture and the logical relationship of the exhibition content, the exhibition space is planned into multiple thematic exhibition units. Each thematic unit uses different scene construction techniques, installation art, or multimedia AI technologies. For example, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies can be used to let tourists experience the living environment and historical scenes of the Cishan Culture period immersively by constructing virtual scenes.

(2) Narrative Content - Mining Narrative Content and Extracting Cultural Elements

The Cishan Culture contains rich cultural connotations and cultural elements, such as primitive agricultural culture, pottery making culture, residential culture, spiritual belief culture, etc., which are important materials for the cultural narrative of the exhibition space.

By extracting and applying the cultural elements of the Cishan Culture, the exhibition space can more vividly convey the connotations of the Cishan Culture. When extracting cultural elements, in-depth research is needed on the cultural relics, remains unearthed from the Cishan Site, and relevant historical documents. Decorative elements such as geometric patterns and patterns of animals and plants can be extracted from the shapes and patterns of pottery; line elements can be refined from the shapes and manufacturing processes of stone tools; elements related to architecture and living scenes can be excavated from the living forms and lifestyles of the people in Cishan. When applying these cultural elements, multiple methods can be adopted. One is direct display. Present the extracted cultural elements to tourists in the form of real objects, pictures, models, etc., so that they can intuitively feel the charm of the Cishan Culture. The second is abstract transformation. Abstractly process the cultural elements and apply them to the design of the exhibition space. For example, simplify and transform the geometric patterns on the Cishan pottery and apply them to the design of partitions, lamps, etc. in the exhibition space, which not only retains the characteristics of the

cultural elements but also makes the design more concise and modern. The third is interactive experience. By designing experience projects related to cultural elements, let tourists immerse themselves in it and enhance their understanding and memory of the Cishan Culture. For example, set up a pottery making experience area, allowing tourists to try to make simple pottery under the guidance of professionals and feel the pottery making techniques of the Cishan Culture.

(3) Narrative Structure - Arranging the Plot and Combining the Spatial Sequence

The arrangement of the plot is an important part of cultural narrative, which can present the extracted cultural connotations to tourists in a vivid and interesting way. The reasonable planning of the moving lines in the exhibition space is equally important for the smoothness of the plot arrangement and the tourists' experience. When planning the exhibition moving lines in the exhibition space of the Cishan Site, the following factors need to be considered: Firstly, the logical relationship of the exhibition content. According to the development context of the Cishan Culture and the levels of the exhibition themes, reasonably arrange each area of the exhibition space. For example, starting from the origin of the Cishan Culture, successively display the contents of agriculture, handicrafts, residence, spiritual culture, etc., and end with the influence of the Cishan Culture on later generations. Secondly, the behavior habits and psychological needs of tourists. Follow the principles of ergonomics, set reasonable passage widths, rest areas, and guiding signs, so that tourists feel comfortable and happy during the visit. Thirdly, the design of spatial enclosure. According to the characteristics of the exhibition content and the needs of the exhibition effect, reasonably arrange the spatial enclosure. For some important site remains and cultural relic exhibition areas, a relatively closed spatial design can be adopted to create a solemn and mysterious atmosphere; while for some interactive experience areas and rest areas, an open space design can be adopted to enhance the communication and interaction among tourists. In actual planning, multiple forms of exhibition moving lines such as linear, loop, and radial can be

adopted, and they can be selected and combined according to the specific shape of the exhibition space and the requirements of the exhibition content. For example, for a relatively small-scale exhibition space with relatively simple exhibition content, a linear exhibition moving line can be adopted, enabling tourists to visit each exhibition area in sequence along a straight line; for a large-scale exhibition space with rich and diverse exhibition content, a loop exhibition moving line can be adopted, allowing tourists to return to the starting point continuously during the visit, forming a complete visit cycle, and at the same time, it is also convenient for tourists to choose the key points of the visit according to their own interests and time.

(4) Narrative Presentation - Narrative Effect and Constructing the Spatial Scene

The construction of the spatial scene refers to the design and application of elements such as the layout, decoration, lighting, and sound effects of the exhibition space to create a spatial atmosphere that conforms to the narrative content and enhance the tourists' emotional experience. In the exhibition space of the Cishan Site, the following rhetorical means of spatial scene construction can be used: Firstly, use the architectural space to create a historical atmosphere. For example, restore the real scenes of the Cishan Culture period in the site protection area, so that tourists seem to travel back to the Cishan Culture period 8,000 years ago the moment they enter. Secondly, use lighting effects to enhance the exhibition effect. For important site remains and cultural relics, adopt immersive light and shadow special effects to increase the scene atmosphere. Thirdly, use sound effects to create an immersive feeling. Play some sounds simulating the natural environment in the exhibition hall, such as the sounds of wind, rain, and birdsong, or the sounds of production and life scenes at that time, such as the sounds of pottery making and agricultural production, so that tourists can more truly feel the living atmosphere of the Cishan Culture period. Fourthly, use multimedia technologies. For example, use VR technology to let tourists travel back to the Cishan Village 8,000 years ago and witness the living scenes of the people in Cishan

building houses, growing crops, making pottery, etc. with their own eyes; use AR technology in the site protection area or cultural relic exhibition area, and present the 3D models of cultural relics, historical background introductions, and relevant animation demonstrations to tourists through devices such as mobile phones or tablets, making the cultural relics "come alive"; use digital projection technology to project the geographical environment and human activity tracks of the Cishan Culture period, enabling tourists to more intuitively understand the historical background of the Cishan Site. In addition, a multimedia technology can also be used to develop an online exhibition platform, allowing tourists who cannot visit the site in person to also understand the relevant information of the Cishan Site through the Internet, expanding the communication scope of the Cishan Culture.

5. Conclusion

Through the research on the cultural narrative strategies for the exhibition space of the Cishan Site in Hebei Province, this paper summarizes the cultural narrative strategy system of the exhibition space of the Cishan Cultural Heritage Site through the logical commonalities between spatial exhibition design and narrative design. In the future, it is hoped that the application of cultural narrative strategies in the exhibition spaces of different types of heritage sites can be further explored in depth, and combined with the development of new technologies, the exhibition means and narrative methods can be continuously innovated. At the same time, the research on the tourist's feedback can be strengthened. According to the needs and opinions of the tourist, the cultural narrative strategies for the exhibition space can be optimized to improve the quality and effect of the display of cultural heritage. In addition, the research on the cultural narrative strategies for the exhibition space of the Cishan Site can be combined with the development of the local cultural industry to explore new models for the protection and utilization of cultural heritage.

References:

- [1] Long Diyong. The Importance of Space in Narratology Research [J]. Jiangxi Social Sciences, 2011(8): 43-53.
- [2] Di Ye. The Construction and Communication of Images in Visual Narrative[J]. Art & Design, 2015(2): 130-131.
- [3] Wang Hong, Liu Suren. Immersion and Narrative: A Study on the Immersive Experience Design of Museum Culture under the New Media Image Technology[J]. Hundred Schools in Arts, 2018(4): 161-169.
- [4] Miao Ling. The Application Exploration of Virtual Reality Technology in the Narrative Design of Museums[J]. Packaging Engineering, 2018(4): 15-18.
- [5] Zhao Honghong, Tang Yuanqi. An Overview of the Evolution of Contemporary "Spatial Narrative" Theory Research: The Cognitive Transformation and Practice of Space in Narratology[J]. Social Sciences in Guangxi, 2021(3): 74-81.
- [6] Zhang Haibo. Research on the Exhibition Design of Intangible Cultural Heritage Museums from the Perspective of Spatial Narrative Theory [D]. Jinan: University of Jinan, 2023.
- [7] Huang Chenying. The Spatial Narrative of Museum Exhibitions: Problems, Potentials, and Strategies[J]. Southeast Culture, 2023(5): 175-182.
- [8] Lv Cui. Research on the Application of Spatial Narrative in Museums in the Digital Age [D]. Shenyang: Luxun Academy of Fine Arts, 2023.
- [9] Zhang Xiaoli. The Definition of Digital Museum from the Perspective of Social Development and User Demand [J]. Southeast Culture. 2011,(2).
- [10] Zhang Haoda. Lessons and Reflections on the Construction of Digital Museums in Recent Years [J]. Digital Library Forum .2010, (1) .12-22