Cultural Review of the Value Conflicts of Architectural Design

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Abstract: There exist multiple value conflicts in Chinese modern architectural design, mainly in three forms, that is, the incongruity between architecture and natural environment, the isolation between functionalism and emotionalism and the deficiency in the virtue of architects. These led to the acts of the inappropriate trade-off, blind plagiarism and hasty decision-making in the design process. The reason is that the current popular culture of architecture is always chasing the market-oriented benefits. Examining and integrating the value conflicts is helpful to explore the rational value system of modern architectural design from the cross-cultural perspective.

Key words: Cross-culture, architectural design, value conflict, harmonious coexistence.

1. Introduction

Chinese architecture has entered the era of diversification. In general, most of Chinese modern architectures are unique in form and space, with unique structural features, organic space organization and far-reaching symbolic meaning. There are many great works, too numerous to mention, including the Suzhou Museum and Xiangshan Campus of China Academy of Art. But at the same time, we must see that Chinese modern architectural design is faced with multiple value conflicts determined by the pluralism and complexity in the development of social and historical process. The representation of the conflict lies in the differences of design subjects in the value of the orientation and cognition. Exploring the fusion of different cultures can contribute to the harmony of Chinese modern architectural design values.

2. Three Forms of Value Conflicts in Architectural Design

"In recent years, globalization has contributed to the worldwide recognition of values, and also has sparked widespread and intense conflicts of values in the world." [1]. The conflict of architectural design value is one of the performances. It refers to architects' contradictory views in the face of the identification of practicality, effectiveness, applicability of the architectural values. They are the collisions between different values. The architectural design value system embraces the subjective value system and the objective value system, the unity of the two embodies the essence of the architecture. Heidegger deems that the essence of architecture is to let people settle down ("anjv") [2]. This sentence has two different levels, one is "jv" and another is "an". First, "jv" is the basic and the premise; it is the dominant physical value and the representation of the objective value system. The value of function, security and economy can be included in. Second, "an" is stable, not drifting, it contains the inner pursuit of people; it is the hidden image value and the representation of the subjective value system. The value of aesthetic, environment and culture can be included in.

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separate of the two. The value conflict is the confusion or dislocation between the two architectural design value systems. "In the process of understanding nature and society, human values are often in an 'imbalanced' state, some attitudes are losing during the process, just like the respect for science, nature and human values." [3]. The value conflict is the imbalance between subjective value and objective value, and it is the contradiction between design idea and social demand. When the values of architects are unbalanced between the two value systems, the value conflicts will be presented in a variety of phenomenological forms. To sum up, we divided the value conflicts of architectural design into the following three forms.

First, architecture and nature is opposed by human. Fundamentally, this is the performance of the conflict between practical value and environmental value in architectural design. It is the result of the neglect of environmental value which belongs to the value orientation of the architect during the design process. It is an imbalance between the subjective value system and the objective value system. For example, Wuhan University had a high-level teaching building. It is only used about sixteen years, but it was demolished last year because of its adverse effect on the natural environment of East Lake. It can be seen that the absence of environmental values during the design process will result in the separation of architecture and nature and will form a situation of binary opposition between the architecture and the surrounding environment. "Architects should premeditate that how to make the building and the surrounding environment to form a harmonious resonance, rather than self-centered completely or regardless of the overall coordination of the environment, even destruct the overall aesthetic quality and cultural characteristics of the environment." [4].

Second, utilitarian value and emotional value is isolated. That is, architects choose to pay more attention to function or emotion during the process of architectural design. The isolation of utilitarian value and emotional value is the fragmentation of the constructive design of the subjective value system and the objective value system. Architectural design tends to pay more attention to function in modern society. For example, modern residential design emphasizes the function of the place, which leads to a fixed, rigid spatial layout. Although the classification and layout of architecture reflects the adaptability and synchronization of modern lifestyles, but too much emphasis on functional division and definition will inevitably leads the architecture to a strong functionalist tendency. When the building has only a certain use of the function, it will lose the emotional and some other spiritual functions.

Third, the virtue of architects is inadequate. This is mainly due to the deficiency of architects' imagination, creativity and sense of responsibility. It is the performance of the deficiency of the cultural category in the subjective value system. It will lead to the serious dislocation between the subjective value system and the objective value system in the value orientation. For example, in recent years, "Copycat Architectures" which are the plagiarism of foreign famous building often appeared. The "Copycat Architectures" just like Eiffel Tower, Sydney Opera House, London Tower Bridge, Buckingham Palace and some other world-famous buildings all can be found in China. To a certain extent, these "Copycat Architectures" reflect the current problems during social development process in the field of architectural design, that is, the excessive praise on the Western architectural culture and the deficiency of recognition on traditional Chinese culture.

The emergence of architectural design value conflict is mainly due to the internal imbalance of the value system. Compared with the objective value of visualization, the implicit subjective value is also an important dimension of architectural design. The implicit value is both an extension of the intuitive design representation and the center value of the creation process. The above cases can show that the value is the guide of the design behavior, once the clear

direction is losing, that may result in the defects of the architectural design. Only by maintaining the balance and the integration of the subjective value system and objective value system, the communication among human, architecture and nature could become possible.

3. The Essence of Value Conflicts in Architectural Design

The conflicts of values inevitably lead to the confusion of design intention, the vacuum of design value consciousness and the bad signs of design result.

In the first place, the conflicts of modern values are largely due to the concept of contemporary utilitarianism. The core of utilitarianism is instrumental rationality, which highlights the value of tools and obscuring the humanistic value. Benefits not only contain material benefits, but also contain spiritual benefits such as rights, social status and culture. Architecture as a commodity does not only have material properties, but also has a specific social function and image value. "The value of architecture is not only a material element and generally manifested as a natural material that may cause sensual pleasure, it is also a prominent element of humanism that promotes social benefits." [5]. Architecture as a commodity is not just a material carrier of physical value. The architecture carries a lot of elements because of the diversification of thoughts, the faster spread and the complicated stakeholder. The inertia thinking under the rapid development of the economy always causes the abnormal development of the design value, that is, parts of the designers pay too much attention to the personal style, economic benefits, external forms, artistic effects, but neglect some aspects of value orientation in the architectural design. Utilitarianism is bound to making architectural design pursue economic value and ignoring cultural values, it is the focus of value conflict.

As Le Corbusier said, "Modern architecture is a sign of an era." [6]. Modernity thought and consumer culture is affecting the architectural design constantly, it is showing the tendency to pursue the benefits of

commercial capital, the performance of utilitarian has become prominent increasingly in the architectural design, such as the blind imitation of the Western modern architectural style, the pursuit of strange shape and the destruction of natural landscape. "Our architecture runs all the way with the amazing speed, it is the interpretation of the Western architecture of the glorious years. Architecture exaggerating year by year, the city is also seeking higher, larger process of rapid expansion." [7].

In the next place, the multicultural conflict is the key to the value conflict. Different cultures have different contents, which constitute the reality of cultural diversity. "The intense collision of multiculturalism, in some cases, it might destroy the inherent culture of a city." [8]. Cultural conflict is the mutual competition and confrontation among the different cultures. As a result, cultural conflict is either absorbed or replaced. For architectural design, the cultural conflict manifests the collision of opposition in the different forms or the impact of architectural culture of different cultural elements. In the face of Western architectural culture, the traditional cultural factors in Chinese modern architecture are less and less, even gradually lost though it has a high status in the past, the carrier of traditional culture such as the traditional architectural system is digestion [9].

When the Chinese traditional culture and Western culture meet each other, it should be the time of cultural integration. However, the situation of "seemingly in harmony" has performed in the architectural design in recent years. Chinese architecture wants to develop, of course it should be colorful, but this colorful should be adhere to some principles. The reality of modern architectural ideas has led to the fragmentation of architectural culture. Sometimes multi-cultural convergence does not show innovative fusion but mechanical patchwork. Such as the Fu Lu Shou Hotel, the shape of the hotel is the color sculpture which belongs to the traditional elements, the internal structure is high-level structure and functional suites

which belong to Western-style. Although the cultural factors of Chinese and Western both can be seen on the hotel, but it is still difficult to make a sense of harmony and unity. The diversity of different cultures has led to the developing trend of the diversification of architectural culture, which is the historical necessity. In the process of modernization, the traditional Chinese culture and the western architectural culture has been transformed into a creative perspective, which has become a realistic problem in the field of Chinese modern architectural design.

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