

# **Mining the Space Cultural Value of Traditional Dwellings under the Mode of Art Intervening--Taking the Reconstruction of Xijingyu Village Residence in Jixian County, Tianjin as an Example**

**Jiixin Zhang, Tao Wang\***

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Art and Design, Beijing Institute of Technology, Beijing 100081, China

\*Corresponding Author

**Keywords:** Traditional village, Art intervening, Xijingyu village, Cultural value, Renovation and transformation

**Abstract:** As an important carrier of Chinese farming civilization, traditional villages have historical and cultural research value. Taking Xijingyu Village, Yuyang Town, Jizhou District, Tianjin City, Tianjin as the research object, this paper will, through the physical survey and analysis of Xijingyu Village, put forward the use of artistic intervention mode to intervene in the village according to the current situation of the village. updated construction. The research purpose of this paper is to explore the design strategy of modern experience space that is conducive to the inheritance of historical culture based on the requirements of ancient village protection and historical and cultural heritage. At the same time, by exploring the development direction of traditional village protection, this paper hopes to deeply explore the cultural value of residential space.

## **1. Introduction**

From ancient times to the present, traditional villages have carried the spiritual and material civilization of China, thus laying the foundation for human existence. Since 2005, “beautiful countryside” has become a hot topic of social concern; The strategic goal of rural revitalization proposed by the 19 th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017; In 2018, the Strategic Plan for Rural Revitalization (2018-2022) proposed that “cultural workers and volunteers should be encouraged to participate in rural cultural construction, enrich rural cultural formats and reshape rural cultural ecology”, and the construction of beautiful countryside has become an important measure for social development. From 2012 to now, China's Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development has established a list of five batches of traditional villages. With the gradual improvement of people's living standards, the over-exploitation of tourism projects often neglects the inheritance and continuation of the style and texture of traditional village space. The fault of historical context in the space environment and the gradual hollowing out of old villages lead to the decline of traditional villages.

In the process of urban and rural development, the countryside needs to find a road to rural revival that can form the return of value, social identity, self-hematopoiesis, and prosperity, which is different from the unique identity and value of the city[1]. This paper selects Xijingyu Village, Yuyang Town, Jizhou District, Tianjin City in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region as the main research object. Its purpose is to explore the current situation and value of traditional villages in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. At the same time, this paper aims to excavate and continue the unique rural culture in traditional villages, absorb the essence of traditional culture in the construction of traditional villages with art, and reinject the vitality of the village, so as to design a living environment in harmony with nature [2].

## **2. Analysis of the Present Situation of Xijingyu Village**

### **2.1 Historical Evolution and Cultural Inheritance**

Xijingyu Village belongs to Yuyang Town, Jizhou District, the northernmost part of Tianjin, and is located behind Fujun Mountain, Jizhou District, with a total land area of 13.4 hm. It is close to the county seat and has a superior location. In 2001, General Shao Hua, Chairman of China Photographers Association, personally named the village “Xijingyu Folk Photography Village”. In 2005, Yuyang Town decided to protect Xijingyu, and the government created a tourism-oriented planning pattern of “Five Sceneries, Ten Workshops and Thirty Courtyards” for the village; In July 2010, Xijingyu Village was included in the fifth batch of “Famous Chinese Historical and Cultural Villages” (Table 1); In July 2012, Xijingyu Village was approved by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the Cultural Relics Bureau as the fifth batch of famous historical and cultural villages [3].

Xijingyu Village not only has unique cultural and natural landscapes, but also has a strong historical and cultural heritage (Table 1). The village style is “born and lived by stone”. In 2018, The stone masonry technique of Xijingyu village was selected into the second batch of intangible cultural heritage list of Jizhou district. The stone mills used by villagers are now exhibits for tourists to visit and shoot. Straw weaving art and shadow play are still local folk culture. The unique Stone culture in the village has become the focus favored by film and television dramas, feature films and photographers. In different seasons, artists will come to the village to collect the wind and create, and hold photographic art exhibitions in specific festivals.

Table 1 Traditional Folk Activities in Xijingyu Village

Five Sceneries	Stone Square, Ten Thousand Rolls of Stone Books, Night View Through Clouds, Shoushan Fushui, and Tianlong Seeking Traces.
Ten Workshops	Straw weaving workshop, Sewing workshop, Vegetable drying workshop, Powder leakage workshop, Old mill, Shadow play shop, Tofu shop, Talent shop, Pottery shop, Strange stone shop
Stone culture	Stone houses, Stone streets, Stone walls, Stone alleys, Stone wells, Stone tables and tools, Stone steps, Slate roads, Stone dams, Stone grinding plates, Stone squares, Stone caves, Stone carvings and Stone grooves
Intangible cultural heritage	Masonry technique, Shadow plays

## 2.2 Street Space

Xijingyu Village belongs to the traditional agricultural settlement space, with streets and lanes as the skeleton of village road space, and its street space is connected in series with courtyard-style dwellings, thus promoting the internal order of settlement space [4]. Because of the surrounding area of Xijingyu Village and its own mountain environment, the layout of its street space changes according to the ups and downs of the terrain, and its roads and roadways are paved with flaky stones. The village street space is connected in series by the main street in the east-west direction, followed by the auxiliary street parallel to the main street and located on the south side of the main street. The village space system mainly surrounds the main street and the auxiliary street. The key elements of a good tourist destination include walkability and human scale. Tourists in Xijingyu can walk freely in the streets and lanes, which lays a foundation for the future development of tourism.

## 2.3 Public Space

The terrain of the village is quite different, and there are two village entrances. Among them, the main entrance and parking lot are on the southeast side, and the secondary entrance is on the northwest side (Figure 1). The stone square in the central open space of the village is the main activity place. In 2005, according to the plan of “Five Sceneries, Ten Workshops and Thirty Courtyards”, the government designed it as a personalized folk tourism village as a photography creation base. Thirty Courtyards are small farmyards built for local rough stones. Although “Five Sceneries, Ten Workshops and Thirty Courtyards” has cultivated villagers' awareness of management and brought opportunities for revival, it has not received continuous attention. At the same time, villagers' self-management cannot meet market changes, resulting in the rupture of rural tourism development.

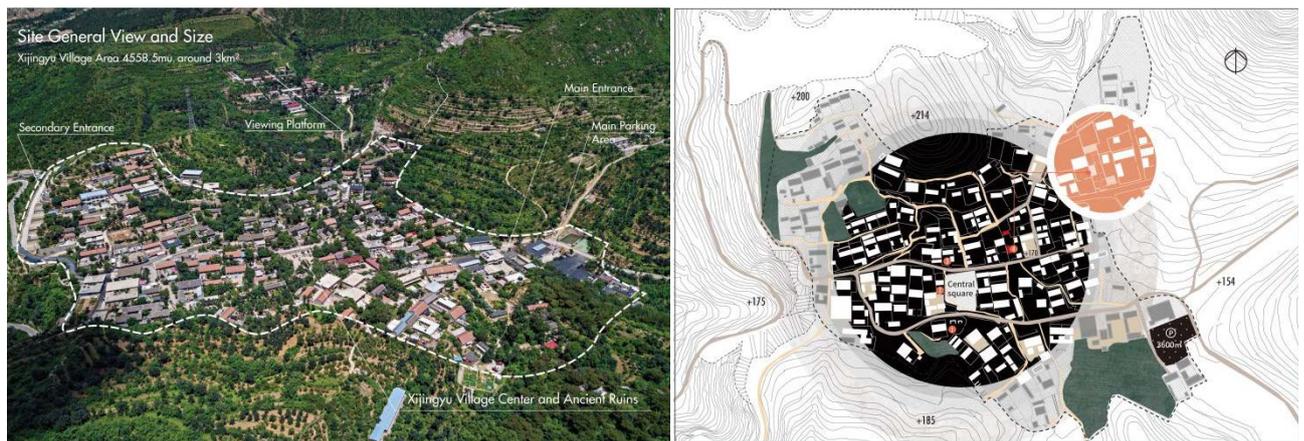


Fig.1 (a) Site General View and Size; (B) a Map Shows the Geographic General Situation of the Research Area.

## 2.4 Courtyard Layout

Xijingyu obviously presents the spatial layout of traditional courtyards. Almost all the buildings in the village are residential buildings. According to the courtyard walls, most courtyards in the village follow the traditional Chinese courtyard space system. The scale and width of houses built by villagers and the economic conditions of builders determine that the layout of courtyards is adjusted with the change of terrain. Compared with traditional rural quadrangles, the courtyards in Xijingyu are mostly three-in-one courtyards, lacking the shadow wall of inverted houses and house doors on the south side. All the courtyard walls in Xijingyu are stone walls, which are built by local original stones, and the south wall opens the courtyard door; The main building of the inner courtyard space is adjacent to the north side, facing south and is the building with the highest height and the largest area in the courtyard. The east and west sides of the courtyard are wing rooms, and some houses are connected with the courtyard wall; There will be a grain drying area near the main room in the courtyard. Small-scale planting of fruits, vegetables and flowers will be carried out on the south side of the courtyard. Water cellars will be set underground. Some courtyards have backyards, which are usually used as firewood houses.

## 3. Exploration of Art Intervening Mode

Based on the analysis of the history and culture of Xijingyu Village and the current situation of the village spatial form, we can know that Xijingyu Village has rich spatial cultural value, and activate the traditional village space from point to area by drawing lessons from the gradual renewal method of acupuncture. According to the present situation of Xijingyu Village in Jixian County, Tianjin, the author collected a lot of data, It is found that Xijingyu Village is a traditional ancient village tourist area, Improper organization of space, Caused the destruction of historical space environment and other problems, Since Xijingyu became a folk photography creation base, Attracted a large number of artists, the village lacks the corresponding art exhibition function space. Through the exploration of the “Art Intervening” mode, combined with the development status of Xijingyu Village, focusing on the local photography art, the aim is to create a modern experience space conducive to the inheritance of history and culture, and use it as a carrier to carry the cultural and creative industries.

### 3.1 Analysis of the Concept of Art Intervening

“The essence of intervention is the relationship between art and society. [5]” Art Intervening is to intervene various problems existing in the social level through an artistic practice, which can also be understood as an artistic social movement. Artistic intervention usually means that artists change the audience's behavior and consciousness through artistic creation aiming at specific social problems, so as to make the audience participate interactively and try to criticize and think about certain social problems and phenomena. The mode of artistic intervention covers diversified artistic expression and creation. When the theme of intervention is different, the way of intervention will be different.

The main body involved in this paper is the traditional village space. Chinese traditional villages contain rich local culture with regional characteristics, which needs both material and spiritual intervention. Art intervenes in public space, which is manifested as existence or setting in public artistic creation of space[6], as a mode and strategy of traditional village construction, not only achieves public aesthetic behavior in practical sense, but also shapes space places with humanistic and historical value.

From the analysis of the current situation of Xijingyu village, the traditional tourist area has gradually lost its vitality. It urgently need to tap new resources and explore new paths to get out of trouble. The introduction of cultural and creative industries can become a new possibility to activate traditional villages and help achieve the goals of spatial coexistence, cultural symbiosis and resource sharing (Figure 2).

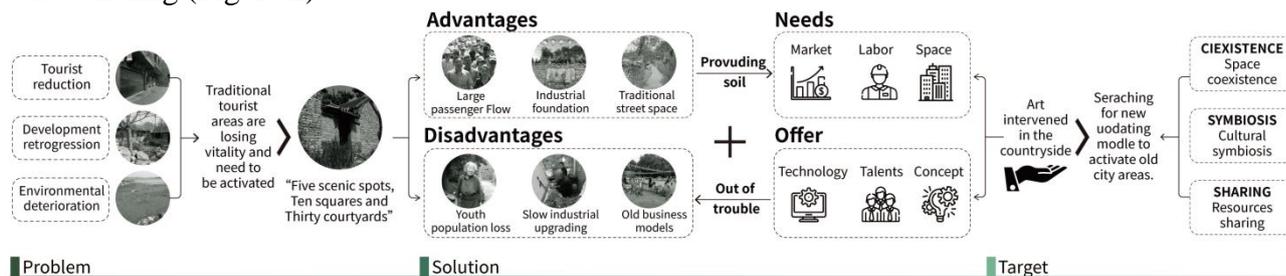


Fig.2 Diagram of Art Intervention in Xijingyu Village

### 3.2 Relationship between Art Intervening and Traditional Villages

In the stage when the style of Chinese traditional villages is gradually lost and the historical value is gradually disappearing, art is an opportunity for the protection and development of traditional village space, and Art Intervening also provides new ideas for the construction of traditional villages. The relationship between art intervening and traditional villages is symbiotic and republican. It can be said that art comes from traditional culture, and traditional villages also contain artistic philosophy.

Art originates from traditional culture, and the historical context of more than 5,000 years in China breeds strong cultural memory and forms a unique aesthetic category. From ancient times to the present, the “Tao is natural” emphasized in Taoism has laid the foundation of ancient artistic creation, which is manifested in the creative artistic conception of “integration of things and me” in the field of landscape painting creation; In Garden Metallurgy written by Ji Cheng in Ming Dynasty, it is advocated that gardening skills should conform to the romantic artistic conception of poetry and painting, and space has formed building skills such as “different steps and different scenery”. Traditional philosophy, Chinese landscape painting and the generation and development of Chinese classical gardens all complement each other, which shows that art and culture are closely linked.

Traditional villages also contain artistic philosophy. For example, the idea of building traditional villages pursues “harmony between man and nature”, and the location of villages needs to pursue the organic harmonious relationship between man and nature; The Confucian “the way of neutralization” and “the order of respect and inferiority” have influenced the spatial order of ancient Chinese residential buildings and classical gardens; The survival experience summed up in geomantic omen theory has influenced the formation of villages to live by choosing water, sitting in the north facing south, and taking negative yin and embracing yang. Due to the geographical environment, climate and other natural factors, it will lead to the difference of construction technology, material technology and building structure. Therefore, the protection and renewal of traditional villages can also use artistic ways to build space places with a sense of belonging.

### 3.3 Elements of Spatial Renewal of Traditional Villages under the Mode of Art Intervening

To shape the unique geo-culture and historical memory of traditional villages, we must extract their cultural quality according to the existing cultural capital and regional differences, highlight the characteristics and identifiability of traditional villages, shape unique place significance and spatial

intention, and enhance villagers' sense of belonging and identity to villages. This process is long, so the following three update elements need to be followed.

### **3.3.1 Regionality**

Hans-Georg Gadamer, a German philosopher, pointed out that traditional history is not a finished product inherited, but a common participation in the process of understanding history, thus defining tradition, which is not only the precipitation of the past, but also a dynamic development. Residential buildings in traditional villages have symbolic regional symbols and cultural value. Art Intervening is not simply beautifying buildings, courtyards, roads, etc. Its purpose is to highlight the characteristics of each village and retain homesickness. The construction of traditional villages should return to the native land and retain the regional characteristics, instead of rejecting the traditional style like modern architecture, resulting in the phenomenon of “one side of a thousand cities”. Therefore, we need to excavate the historical resources and local culture in traditional villages, and accumulate materials for art to intervene in village construction.

### **3.3.2 Principle of Gradual Progress**

Art intervenes in traditional village space, and its transformation and renewal process is not accomplished overnight, which needs to accumulate experience through repeated experiments in stages. In the design process, we can refer to the “acupuncture” renewal technique in urban renewal design, and should follow the principle of gradualism. Graduality is mainly divided into two levels. On the one hand, it is gradual in time. According to the different status quo of different types of traditional villages, the renewal time sequence is determined, and the phased construction plan is formulated. The design is repaired according to the actual situation, and finally the long-term planning goal and sustainable development are realized. On the other hand, the spatial gradualism. The activation of the vitality of traditional villages needs to focus on continuous optimization in many aspects at the spatial level according to the current situation of problems in different degrees in villages.

### **3.3.3 Principle of Continuity**

Traditional villages leave their own characteristics in the precipitation of history, and the impact and integration of local culture and modern civilization will also react to the future development of villages. The continuity of time is not only a consideration of the continuity of history and culture, but also an estimation of the future development potential. First of all, we should pay attention to the continuation of the original traditional style and lifestyle of the village. The architectural space has a strong life attribute and cannot change people's lifestyle with modern standards. Secondly, it is to continue people's living conditions, put residents' needs in the renewal design of space, and respect and retain the folk culture and customs produced in the long-term life of residents.

## **4. Practical Exploration: Renewal Design of Village Residence Space in Xijingyu, Tianjin-Photographic Art Exhibition Hall**

### **4.1 Present Situation of Residential Buildings**

Through the exploration and mapping of four sets of old residential courtyards in Xijingyu Village, the author's team finally selected the No.4 base near the square as the renovation of the exhibition space-Photographic Art Exhibition Hall (Figure 1).

The building is located in the residential group, and its east and west sides are adjacent to other buildings, which are seriously affected by other buildings. The interior of the building has been idle for many years, in disrepair, the walls collapsed, and the doors and windows were seriously damaged; The building space is closed and the use area is small; Building materials are mainly local stone, and the walls are too thick, occupying too much space and using area; Simple toilet is set in the backyard, and the shape lacks connection with the main building. Indoor use space area is narrow, space sequence is single, and functional rooms such as toilets are lacking. It can go straight from indoors to the backyard. The beam-column structure of the main building is well preserved, the wall of the wing

is dilapidated and collapsed, and the column structure in the wall is exposed. The current situation of courtyard space is manifested in the single streamline of space and the lack of interest; Vegetation planting in the courtyard is disorderly, blocking sight and passage; The wall stack around the livestock shed collapsed, and the materials used for paving and fencing in the courtyard were single (Figure 3).

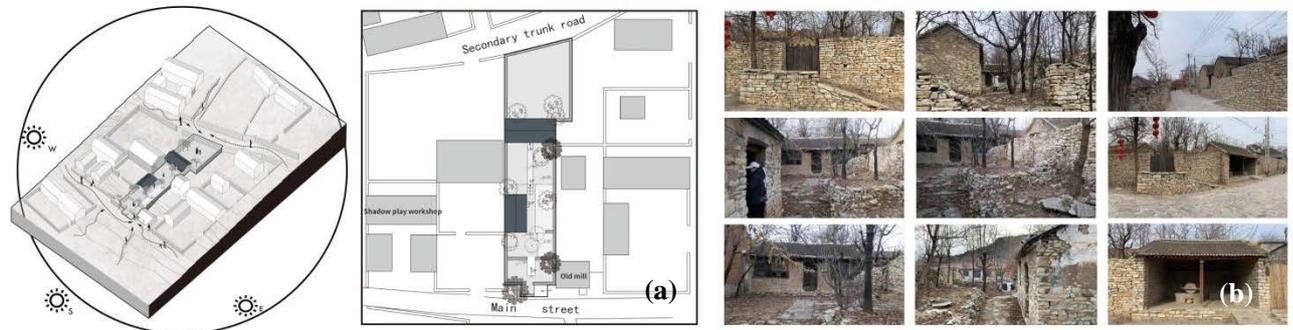


Fig.3 (a) Aerial View and Plan of No.4 Base; (B) Survey Photos of No.4 Base

## 4.2 Design Scheme

This project is a display space design. Based on the long and narrow characteristics of the plot itself, it enriches the space form and enhances the interest by increasing the turning and circuitous design as much as possible in the moving line arrangement. Functionally, three different types of exhibition halls are designed. The first part is the humanistic exhibition area through multimedia screening, which is used to show the local humanistic feelings; The second part is the life exhibition area, which shows the local unique customs and culture through sculpture artworks or handicrafts; The third part is the natural exhibition area, which shows the natural scenery of Xijingyu Village through traditional photography exhibition.

### 4.2.1 Volume Reconstruction

As the basic unit that constitutes the entire village landscape, the volume of the dwelling determines the volume of the street space. At the same time, the interspersed combination of streets and alleys constitutes the volume of the entire village, which reflects the progressive relationship from micro to macro in architecture. The height of the main house in the site selection base is about 5m, and the wing room is about 3.2m, all of which are single-storey buildings, and the residential buildings are located in the building group. The height of the adjacent buildings on the west side is about 8m, and the height of the adjacent buildings on the east side is about 4.8m. The courtyard is relatively narrow and the depth is too long. Considering the mass relationship with the surrounding buildings and the status quo of its own base, it was decided to maintain a single-storey building to form a contrast with the adjacent buildings in terms of volume. To ensure a relatively comfortable distance on the spatial scale, the roof also conforms to the form of the surrounding building groups and adopts a double-pitched roof. Among them, the roof on the west side of the main house is partially raised to enrich the spatial form vertically and increase the sense of hierarchy of the building.

### 4.2.2 Group Recombination

The terrain of the whole courtyard is from low to high. Based on the advantages of the height change of the terrain, different landscapes are used to link the space in the design. The author decided to use the veranda form to connect the long and narrow courtyard space with a depth of about 45m in series, extract the mountain form in the environmental elements, and connect the various elements in the courtyard with different zigzag radians on the plane and elevation, at the same time provide shade for navigation and communication, and lead visitors to other functional spaces (Figure 4). This project attaches importance to the symbiosis and mutual transformation of virtual and real space in design techniques and artistic treatment, The transition space is increased through the enclosure and restriction of space. In the sculpture display space part of the project design, a relatively independent virtual space is created through the enclosure of surrounding buildings, which limits the scope of this

space. At the same time, the attributes of this space are defined by endowing this space with functions.



Fig.4 (a) Explosion map of residential buildings; (b) Renderings of courtyard landscape, multimedia space, cafe, and backyard.

#### 4.2.3 Color and Material Treatment

According to the features and requirements of traditional villages, try to restore the original features of buildings or reduce the conflict with the overall environment of ancient villages[7]. Based on the relatively narrow and compact space form of the courtyard, in order to highlight the visual sense of volume of the building itself, the wall chooses white and light gray colors with relatively low lightness, which not only enhances the volume of the building, but also makes the space appear less depressing. In terms of materials, on the basis of retaining some original materials, concrete, glass and some metal materials commonly used in modern style are selected to enhance the connection between traditional architecture and modern design. For example, in the design of building roof, the original structure of roof and some blue tiles are retained, and then new materials are used for overlapping with its architectural form, thus reflecting the integration of new materials and old materials, and the integration of tradition and modernity (Figure 4).

### 5. Conclusion

Chinese traditional villages need to explore and adapt to the development path according to their own status quo[8]. The purpose of its renovation is to pass on the traditional culture it represents under the impact of modern civilization. The renewal strategy under the art intervening mode is the author's reflection on the protection of traditional villages. Xijingyu Village is a microcosm of many over-developed tourism villages. The protection and renewal of traditional villages not only rely on academic research, but also need to improve relevant laws and regulations, provide financial support from the government, and cooperate with various staff and villagers. By creating the artistic and cultural atmosphere of the village and creating regional characteristics, the influence and radiation of the village can be effectively enhanced, thereby opening up a broader development path for traditional villages.

#### Acknowledgement

2017 The National Social Science Fund of China, Arts, General Project “Research on cultural value excavation and protection of traditional villages in Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei” (17BH175).

#### References

- [1] Zhang Jingxiang, Shen Mingrui, Zhao Chen. Rural Revival: The Transformation of China's Rural Areas under Productivity and Post-Productivity[J]. International Urban Planning, 2014, 29(5):1-7.
- [2] Shen Kui. The predicament and reconstruction of rural culture in the process of urban-rural integration [J]. Theory and Reform, 2013(04):156-159.
- [3] Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, State Administration of Cultural Heritage. Notice on Promulgating the Fifth Batch of Famous Historical and Cultural Towns (Villages) in China [EB/OL]. (2010-07-22). <http://www.mohurd.gov.cn>.
- [4] Li Changhong, Li Xiaojuan, Lv Yongquan. Research on the regeneration mechanism of settlement space in historical and cultural villages and towns based on topology modeling—Taking Xijingyu Village in Tianjin as an example[J]. New Architecture, 2016(04):129-131.
- [5] Wang Chunchen. "Art Intervenes in Society": New Sensitivity and Reaffirmation[J]. Art Research, 2012 (04): 25-30.
- [6] Shi Jianyi. New rural community construction and management [M]. Beijing: China Society Press, 2010.
- [7] Zhang Chunran. Research on the protection of ancient villages in the construction of new countryside. Master's thesis.
- [8] Zhou Jianming. Traditional Chinese Villages: Protection and Development. China Construction Industry Press. 2014.