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“So poor, all we have left is money”:

“穷得只剩钱了”

**Architectural Culture in
Consumerist China**

消费主义中国的建筑文化



1. Building in a Consumerist Era

一、消费主义时代的房屋建造



1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- “I am so poor, all I have left is money!” This is the sigh of a Chinese new-rich. Mixing lament with boasting, this complaint can only make others envy him the more. However, phrases like this soon become proverbial, and people use it to indicate a condition of spiritual poverty, that is, not owning anything except material things.
- “我如今穷得只剩钱了！”——这原是某个大款对自己现状的一句感叹。而且对于穷人来说，这句感叹肯定很值得羡慕。然而在中国，这种句式很快就成为了流行的叹息，说自己穷得只剩这了只剩那了，说明它确实触动了许多人。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- In the days of Chairman Mao, the typical complaint would have been “so poor, we have nothing left and especially no housing!” Indeed, Chairman Mao left us with the greatest population and the least housing. Therefore, people had no other way but to crowd together like ants.
- 如果在毛泽东时代，人们的感叹只能是“穷得什么都没剩，尤其是没剩下房子！”文革过后，留下了世界上最多的人口和最少的房子，所以人们只能像蚂蚁一样挤在一起。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- In the evening, you might find every bench along the bank of the Huangpu River in Shanghai crowded with three pairs of lovers. Nobody had, or could afford to have, a concept of privacy.
- 当时上海黄浦江边的每一个长椅，到了晚上都会坐上三对的年轻恋人，他们连最基本的隐私都没有了。

外滩“情人墙”



猎人海力布 上传于 kds.pchome.net

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- At that time, many young couples could not marry due to the lack of housing. As one popular joke had it, finding a fiancée was far easier than finding a room. If they had heard somebody complaining about “having nothing left but money”, they would take him for a madman.
- 在那个时代，很多年轻人都是因为没有房子，而迟迟无法完婚；所以当时有句流行语——妻子好找，房子难寻。那时候人们要是听说，世上还能有人发出这样的感叹，说自己“穷得只剩这个只剩那个了”，他们一定会以为他疯了。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- And to tell the truth, we have now gone somewhat insane. Since Deng Xiaoping proclaimed the period of reform and opening, the desire for wealth, and especially for housing, has brought a huge change over the whole land. Just because of long-unsatisfied demand, people are desperately pursuing housing. Activated by this desire, the Chinese have already created the biggest wave of building in world history.

- 然而，我们现在确实不太正常了。改革开放以来，正因为极度地缺乏房子，人们就极度地渴求房子，在这种消费欲望刺激下，中国开始了它有史以来堪称最大的建造运动。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- Up to the end of 2005, the total area of unfinished new housing in China reached 1,666,000,000 (one billion six hundred sixty-six million) square meters, and the total reported price of this housing reached 4,600,000,000,000 (four trillion, six hundred billion) Chinese Yuan. That alone is a quarter of our GDP. But according to some economists, the real value of the Chinese housing market may be as high as 35% of GDP.
- 到2005年12月，中国在建的房地产的总面积竟然达到了16.66亿平方米，其市价达到了4.6万亿元，占到了整个GDP的25%，甚至有可能是35%。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- Even the building activity seems to be mad, the buildings are still badly required . Then the price of the house is rising insanely, and the main plan of the government now is to reduce the rising speed of the selling price of the houses.
- 即使如此疯狂地建造，对于房屋的需求还是远远不能满足，以致房价总是在过快增长，而政府这两年的主要措施，就是控制房价过快增长。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- So why? A merchant said banteringly in the newspaper that it is girls in marriage time who help raising the price of the house. That is to say, while all the girls make their mind to refuse any boys who can not afford a house, the social want in this aspect will be largely raised up.
- 何以如此？一位房地产商半开玩笑地公开说，其实是中国的大龄女青年抬高了房价。也就是说，当所有的女孩都下定决心，绝不嫁给没有房子的男士时，人们对于房地产的需求就人为提高了，而房价也就由于这种绝不想租房子住的社会心理，而不得不大大提高。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- The output of cement is a good example. In 2005, the total annual output of cement in China reached 1,050,000,000 (one billion, fifty million) tonnes, a little more than 40% of the total output of cement in whole world. In other words, nearly a half of worldwide house construction happens in mainland China. That is why it would be better to call the place I live in a huge building site, rather than a city.
- 水泥的产量也能说明问题。截至2005年，中国的水泥产量已接近10.5亿吨，已占到世界水泥产量的40%以上。换句话说，在这个地球上，有几乎一半的房屋修建活动都发生在中国大陆。所以，我现在居住的地方，与其被叫做一座供给人们生活的城市，还不如叫做一片巨大的工地。

Where We Live





1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- One of our great poets, Du Fu, in the eighth century already had this dream: “what if a vast building with a thousand rooms were raised, where every poor scholar could find rest and joy?” As we can see, the dream of building a safe and beautiful house is an eternal one.

- 唐代诗人杜甫曾经这样畅想：“安得广厦千万间，大庇天下寒士俱欢颜。”确实，遮风挡雨的房子从来是古往今来的梦想。

1. Building in a Consumerist Era

- However, the scale of construction today has burst through the ceiling of even Du Fu's imagination. China is also estimated to contain as many as 5,000,000 (five million) empty houses. China has never known such astounding, jaw-dropping wealth.
- 可现在的难题却是，用“广厦千万间”已经不能形容中国的建造规模了：据说全国的空置房已经达到了500万套。有史以来，中国从来没有目睹过这样多的财富，它多得简直使我们目瞪口呆。

A bright yellow sun is positioned at the top center of the frame against a clear blue sky. Below the sun, the upper portion of a traditional Chinese pagoda is visible, featuring multiple tiers of dark, curved eaves. The pagoda is set against a background of a blue sky that transitions from a lighter blue near the horizon to a deeper blue at the top. The overall scene is a serene, high-angle view of the structure.

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

二、缺少文化的建造活动

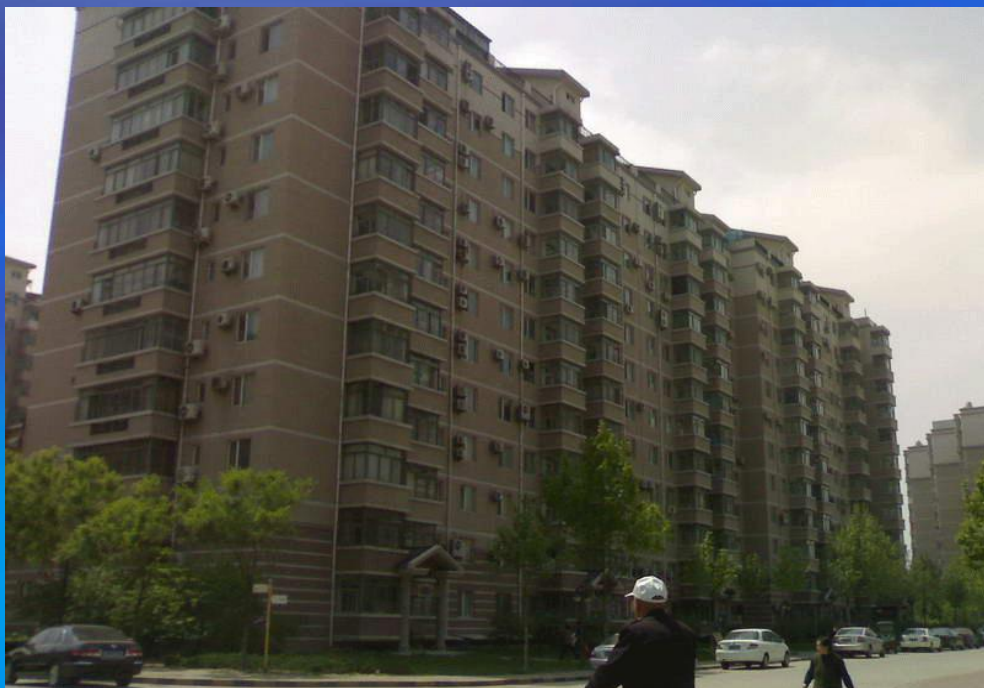
2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- On the other hand, we still go on complaining of poverty. This time we are so poor that all we have left is houses. We suddenly find that amidst our forest of buildings, we still lack that thing named culture.

- 然而，我们还是在不断地叫穷——这次是“穷得只剩房子了”了。因为我们转过来又发现，偏偏是在林立的楼群中，我们又缺少了某种须臾离不开的东西——那就是文化！

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- For instance, I live in Tian Tong Yuan outside Beijing, the biggest single residential area in Asia. My residential area boasts a population of 330,000 (three hundred thirty thousand) people, but no formal bookstore, not to mention a concert hall, theater, library or museum.
- 我目前居住的五环外的天通苑，据说是整个亚洲最大的小区，居住人口足有33万，却连一家像样的书店都没有，更不要说音乐厅、剧院、图书馆了。



2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- The contradiction is truly ironic! On the one hand, China is genuinely becoming richer, as befitting its role as the so-called factory of the world, it is producing the most steel, cement, and housing. On the other hand, China seems still to be poor, and even poorer than ever, because although people are rich enough to pay for a house, they still cannot afford the expense of design.

- 这真是尖锐的矛盾或讽刺！一方面，中国确实已经开始富裕了，这座世界工厂目前生产着世界上最多的钢材、水泥、乃至房屋。另一方面，中国仍然显得很穷困，甚至更穷困，因为人们虽然付得起房屋的造价，却付不起房屋的设计费。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- What is more, even when they are willing to hire a designer, they will soon regret that somebody failed to pay good money to support the education of those so-called architects.
- 而且更糟的是，即使他们愿意请人设计，当年也未曾为那些所谓的“建筑师”付出足够的教育费。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- Urban design in Beijing can be regarded as a representative example. The need for rapid urbanization is destroying ancient architecture, while the overheated market for architecture results in monotonous reduplication of buildings. In this way, the urban landscape has been completely altered, eliminating both cultural memory and individuality.
- 以北京为例，粗放的城市建设被形容为“摊大饼”。迅速扩张的都市功能要求像是不可商量的推土机，把大量的老旧建筑彻底荡平；而极度旺盛的建筑市场，又逼迫得建筑师的工作等同于拷贝。由此，建筑语言既纷乱、随意又贫乏，新楼的格调既光怪陆离，又千篇一律。城市的景观都已面目全非，既失去了人文记忆，也失去了个性特征。

长安街上的北京十大最差建筑之一 ——东方广场



长安街上的北京十大最差建筑之二 ——交通部大楼



长安街上的北京十大最差建筑之三 ——光华长安大厦



长安街上的北京十大最差建筑之四 ——国家大剧院



2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- Such a vision of the city can only be called vicious. In spite of its socialist veneer, the government secretly follows naked market fundamentalism, while ordinary people openly lust for an American dream of ever increasing, never satisfied consumption.
- 这样的城市面貌，只能用“恶俗”二字来形容。尽管名义上尊奉社会主义，但政府暗中奉行的，却是赤裸裸的“市场原教旨主义”，而老百姓毫不掩饰地向往的，更是“多少都不算够”的美国梦。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- Therefore, although the appearance of contemporary Chinese cities hardly makes sense in terms of architecture, it provides good material for cultural studies. It is a symptom of the lunacy of the people.
- 正因此，当代中国的城市景观，尽管从建筑学上没有什么意义，但却成了文化研究的好题目，它作为非常贴切的表征，反映出了当代中国人的精神疾病。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- For instance, one of the strange symptoms of today is that every family is madly decorating their home, with the same energy that every family put into “battle brigades” during the Cultural Revolution.

- 比如，当今中国的一大奇观是，家家户户闹装修，就跟文革时代家家户户闹战斗队一样。



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2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- People spend almost all of their money and energy trying to make their homes magnificent. However, the result of their effort is that the air inside their home is becoming more polluted, while outside their home the debris of construction pile up.
- 人们几乎耗尽了财力和心力，想把这个小家装出几分富贵气来，到头来却把室内弄得更加污浊、室外又都堆满了建筑垃圾。！



2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- The whole country is suffering from the new fever of decoration. If there were no evidence, this would be enough to prove the imbalance of our whole society.
- 可以说，当代中国正发作着“装修热”，而且再没有别的什么，能比这种狂热更暴露出我们社会的神经官能症了！

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- It seems that the original cultural DNA of Chinese contains too few antibodies to resist the temptations of material enjoyment. In addition, following the repression in Tian An Men Square, people suppressed their desire to participate in politics and retreated instead into their private worlds, neglecting the public sphere.

- 在我们的文化基因里，原本就缺乏针对追求现世享乐的抗体；再加上天安门广场上对于参与意识的打压，更迫使人们龟缩回小天地里，再不管公共空间里是好是歹。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- Therefore, the worsening of the appearance of the whole city, and the dramatic changes in residential space, plus the destructive effects of the over-emphasis on decorating private space, combine to form the symptom of our community.
- 所以，整个城市空间的不断恶化、以及对于这种恶化的惊人麻木，跟各个居室空间的刻意装修、以及装修效果透出的恶俗气息，恰巧叠映在一起，微妙地对应着当下的社会病态心理。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- I think the use of mirrored glass in new Chinese architecture can demonstrate our condition. As I have read, when I. M. Pei (Bei Yiming) considered this new material when designing the John Hancock Tower in Boston, his aim was absolutely not to display the mirror as such.
- 镜面玻璃在中国的应用，最能说明这种恶俗。贝聿铭当年率先在波士顿的汉考克大厦（John Hancock Tower）上应用这种材料，其动机并不是为了炫耀。



John Hancock Tower

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- On the contrary, he intended to make full use of the invisibility-effect of mirrors, so as to lighten the sense of the skyscraper's material thickness and make it almost transparent.
- 恰恰相反，这种设计巧妙利用了镜面的幻觉效果，既突出了平滑立面的整体感，又收敛了庞大体量的厚重感，使你尽管明知这是幢摩天大楼，然而在蓝色镜面的折射和融入下，仍觉得它有点“秀美”，亭亭玉立在蓝天白云中，而不像寻常的混凝土怪物，只会给视觉留下压抑和沉重。



2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- But unfortunately, when the architectural language of mirrored glass is spoken by people who belong to a different level, its effect becomes something thoroughly different. If I. M. Pei used thousands of mirrored windows to emphasize his understated style, our architects in Beijing only need a few hundred mirrors to bring out their petty, overstated style. If I. M. Pei used this idiom to make the whole building melt into its background, our architects choose the same material only for the sake of its dazzling effect.

- 可惜玻璃镜面这种建筑语言，一旦被不同层次的人群言说，却能显露出不同的意义。如果贝聿铭调动上万块镜面，意在强调紧凑和简洁，那么在我们的长安街，只需装点它百十来块，就能表现出琐碎和零乱。如果贝聿铭想用这种语言的匠心，是想让大厦化入周围的景观，那么在长安街，竞相搬用这种脆弱而耗能的材料，竟只因为看中了它的炫耀效果。



2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- As I once put it very sarcastically, just as a cheap prostitute will never abandon spangles and costume jewelry, so our low-class “architects” will never be cured of their addiction to mirror glass, but stick it on their buildings right and left.
- 我曾经非常刺激地写道，就像沿街拉客的低等妓女总也离不开亮闪闪的水钻一样，那些低劣的所谓“建筑师”，也在东一处西一处地显摆着对于镜面玻璃的低等迷恋。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- By dazzling the eye with their visual pollution they try to seduce the pedestrian, competing to achieve the most down-market effect and prove the poverty of their education.
- 他们打算用令人厌恶的光污染，向眼花缭乱的行人大送媚眼，打算以额外糟蹋的昂贵造价，来证明自己早先穷得受不起教育。

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- Accordingly, although the mirrored glass is an imported device, it has already melted into the Chinese national character. During the war in Yugoslavia, I was deeply worried about beautiful Belgrade. One day while watching the news from that city, I suddenly saw a building with mirrored surface. “What a decadent taste,” I thought to myself. Later, I realized that this was precisely my country’s embassy.

- 就这样，镜面玻璃虽属于舶来品，却成了道地的“中国特色”。北约轰炸科索沃期间，我正为美丽的贝尔格莱德担忧，却偶然从电视上瞥见，那里竟也有一片玻璃幕墙，遂为他们的品味堕落而吃惊。谁知再定睛细看——那却正是我们中国的大使馆，也正是后来被美国人炸坏的那座！

2. Building activity without cultural meaning

- Not to mention, it is exactly this building which was bombed out by the American Air Force. I once joked that the CIA's excuse that they had made a mistake in planning could not be anything but a lie. There was only one ugly building in that city with a glaring surface like that, so it was impossible to turn a blind eye to it!
- 我开玩笑说，这完全可以作为新的证据，来反驳对于“误炸”的解释：整座城市就那一座难看的房子，那么刺眼地站在那里，难道你们还看不见么？

A bright yellow sun is positioned at the top center of the frame against a clear blue sky. Below the sun, a traditional Chinese pagoda with multiple tiers and a dark roof is visible. The pagoda is centered in the lower half of the image. The overall scene is a serene, high-contrast composition.

3. The life-and-death of cities

三、城市正处在生死关头

3. The life-and-death of cities

- Every year I publish around 20 academic books in the series I edit, but I never pay attention to their market effect. Recently, however, I unwittingly made a real best seller, that is Jane Jacobs' The Death and Life of American Cities. The book even stood in the booksellers' Top Ten list for several months and became an indispensable fashion item among modern readers, which made my publisher very happy.
- 每年在我主编的丛书里，差不多都要推出20种左右的新书，但我却从来不在意市场效果。可最近在不经意间，却做出了一本真正的畅销书——简·雅各布斯的名著《美国大城市的死与生》，它在中国图书排行榜上，出乎意料地雄踞了好多周，弄得几乎人手一册，使得我的出版商大为快乐。

JANE JACOBS



◎ 美国大城市——城市生活与城市设计

美国大城市的死与生 纪念版

The Death and Life of
Great American Cities



人民邮电出版社
POST & TELECOM PRESS

3. The life-and-death of cities

- However, I wonder how many readers really understood the book. For instance, I often learn that people recommend it as a landmark in the field of city planning. But from my point of view, the author's purpose in this book was to discredit such a subject itself.
- 到底有多少人真正读懂了这本书，仍然值得怀疑。比如我总是听人们吹捧说，这是一本“城市规划”方面的名著。但照我看来，这本书的精义其实是从根子上反对城市规划。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- Against rigid masculinist rationalism, Jacobs offered a protest and an answer, with the extreme subtlety of a female. She reveals the limitations of orderly rational planning when set against the vivid diversity of city life.
- 以女性作者特有的敏感，雅各布斯针对大男人们刚性的理性主义，提出她的解毒和抗议。她凸显出了总是整齐划一的理性规划在生机勃勃的城市生活多样性面前的捉襟见肘。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- According my first impression these days, the landscape of your city seems to reflect a kind of empiricist idea, and perhaps it happens to be the right case in the sense of Jacobs.
- 这两天在伦敦观光，发现这里的景观反映了某种经验主义的试错观念，或许正是雅格布斯意义上的正面案例。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- The architecture is only semi-art, since it have to answer the functional demand of the mankind. Therefore, it can be varicolored, motley, and even a little ugly. But it can not bear the rationalist uniform layout, even if in the name of science or aesthetics.
- 建筑只是一种半艺术，要首先满足人类的功能要求。因此，它可以允许斑驳、混杂，甚至一定程度的丑陋，只要它能容纳活跃的社区生活。但它不能忍受理性主义的统一规划，哪怕那种规划是科学的和美学的。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- It is obvious that old-time Beijing has been damaged by this kind of rational planning, including the Second Ring Road. It is also obvious that more recently this city has been damaging for the same reasons, including the construction of Ping An Avenue.
- 当年的北京，就是这么着给理性规划坏的。包括二环路、长安街。如今的北京，也还在以更快的速度和同样的理由被败坏着。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- The remaining places with surviving urban energy like Xiu Shui Street were never rationally planned; unfortunately, the autonomous vitality of Xiu Shui Street has recently once again been damaged by a governmental rational design.
- 而且即使在北京已被规划坏以后，像三里屯酒吧一条街、秀水街等等，这些比较有活力的地方，却又都不是被规划出来的；可惜的是，后来秀水街又被理性规划逐渐扼杀了。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- Similarly, in the 1950s the main universities of Beijing were exiled to a distant suburb, Haidian, and therefore disconnected from the famous press houses, book stores, showplaces, concert halls, and museums. It seems rather that the teachers and the students of these universities ought to be the base of the cultural life of the city, especially the fine arts.

- 同样，主要的大学都被一道命令发送到了海淀，那原本是一个郊区，脱离了老城区的出版社、书店、剧院和音乐厅；然而我们人数众多的师生，原本却应当是这座城市的文化生活、特别是属于小众的文化生活的基础。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- So the result is easily imagined: it is very difficult for teachers to organize cultural activities for our students in the centre of the city, while it is also very difficult for actors to find an adequate audience for their performances.
- 结果当然是两伤：我们的学生看个戏非常难，失去了基本的文化涵养，他们的票又卖不出去，失去了基本的观众支持。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- Every misstep Jacobs mentions in her book were replayed in our city. For instance, in contrast to her ideal of multi-use neighborhoods, the vast residential area I just mentioned, Tian Tong Yuan, has been planned to serve a single function only: sleep.

- 雅各布斯书中所说的种种恶劣情况，几乎样样全都在我们那里被验证了。比如，刚才提到的天通苑就跟她的多元主张相反，只是被理性规划出一个晚上有地方睡觉的功能。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- That is why this residential area soon got the nickname of “Shui Cheng” (sleep city, or, as they say in America, the “bedroom community”). And as a result of such planning, the whole of Beijing now has to be renamed “Du Cheng” (The gambling city, alluded the town of traffic jams), because the people there have to leave their sleep city all at once in the morning to go earn their living.
- 正因此，那里后来就成了有名的“睡城”，而睡城的另一面则是赌城（堵城），因为人们要倾城而出上班。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- In any case, due to the popularity of Jacobs's works, "death and life" has become a new idiom to describe our cities. The phrase helps at least to explain a few things. I just learn from newspaper that when a official in charge of city planning read the book by Jacobs, he found that all his understanding has thoroughly changed!

- 但无论如何，靠着这本书的流行，“城市的死与生”又成了新的流行语，这本身至少说明了某种问题。在我来英国之前，刚刚从报纸上读到，有一位负责城市设计的官员说，他看了雅各布斯这本书之后，整个的思路都改变了！

3. The life-and-death of cities

- In the 1990s when I visited Harvard and discussed the future of my city with Professor William Kirby, he pointed out without any hesitation: Beijing is at risk of becoming another Los Angeles. Now, thanks to the wisdom of Jacobs, we do not need the wisdom of a Harvard professor in this aspect, since so many ordinary Chinese have begun to understand that a city has its own life, in other words, that it can die, if we do not take care of it.
- 九十年代访问哈佛的时候，我跟柯伟林教授谈起北京这座城市，他马上讲起它将来可能“洛杉矶化”。而现在，不需要一位哈佛教授来指点了，很多普通中国人都已经开始懂得，一座城市是它的生命的，从而也有可能死掉的。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- Whenever a government's power to issue directives is too great, the city under its rule will die. In the 1980s, before I moved to Peking University, I worked in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The CASS is located on Chang An Avenue, and its main gate should certainly open onto that wide boulevard. However, an order by the government directed that all the buildings along this road must install a patch of green at their gate, in order to make a uniform park-like scene.
- 当长官意志太过强烈的时候，一个城市就开始死去了。我以前工作的中国社会科学院，其大门原本应当对着长安街。但突然来了一道命令，要求整个长安街面都搞绿化，所以所有的建筑都只好把门开向两侧。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- So our CASS had no choice but relocate its entryways to both sides. In this way, the whole of Chang An Avenue could not become a street in Jacobs' sense, since all the buildings shut their gates on it and on each other.
- 就这样，一个强硬的来自行政部门的要求，使得整个长安街永远都不可能变成雅各布斯所说的那种街区，因为大家干脆连门都出不来，更提不上什么交流。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- Whenever a leader misunderstands architecture as a form of sculpture, the city under his rule will die. Architecture designed for the leader's eye must from outside to inside, not from inside to outside.

- 当政府太把建筑当作雕塑的时候，一个城市就开始死去了。因为这种建筑的原则永远只能是自外向内，而不是自内向外。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- For instance, our National Library in Beijing was not designed for the readers inside it, but for the inspection of officials outside it. Most of its space has no function, and its only purpose is to allow the surface of the whole building to tell a lie. You have to pass through a long series of useless spaces to find a reading room, and then you have to go through another labyrinth to find another reading room. Soon you tell yourself, better to avoid entering it at all.
- 比如北京的国家图书馆，就不是为里面的读者设计的，而是由外边的视察者选定的。这里面大量的建筑空间都是在撒谎的，无非是要让外立面显得好看。你要走到一个阅览室，居然要通过很多完全无用的空间；然后你再要去另一个阅览室，又要穿过许多迷宫式的空间。结果你只好对自己说——最好少去！

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3. The life-and-death of cities

- What is more, whenever we have nothing but architects in the modern western sense, the city, especially an ancient city like Beijing, will die.
- 甚至，当只剩下近代意义上的建筑师的时候，一座城市就开始死去了，特别是对北京这座古城来说。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- These architects can do nothing but compete with each other; their projects are like body-builders showing off their muscles. They strip off all their clothes and wipe the whole body with oil first, then they strike their most exaggerated poses and glower at each other on the stage. How can a harmonious street life be created out of such angry architecture?

- 这些建筑师总是在争奇斗巧，他们的作品就像浑身涂满油脂的健美选手，个个都脱得精光亮出肌肉，然后再摆出最夸张的造型，在表演台上相互怒目而视。在如此生硬的建筑之间，怎么可能产生出融洽的街区生活？

3. The life-and-death of cities

- In short, this time we are really so poor that we only have houses left, because we have lost the basic culture of dwelling together. When every family, every building, and every residential area have to guard themselves against possible harm, a city will begin to die.

- 的确，我们又变成“穷得只剩下房子了”，因为我们失去了最基本的居住文化。当每一个家庭、每一座楼房、每一个小区都在相互提防的时候，一座城市就开始死去了。

3. The life-and-death of cities

- The dying process, it is interesting to note, also has its special scenes. Nobody will dare to tell you the inhabitants are happy if you find burglar-proof bars bolted to the windows of first, second, and third floors, and even four, fifth, and sixth floors! Similarly, nobody will tell you that the inhabitants are happy when they have to surround their buildings with high walls and then spend a lot of money to hire many guards to watch them.
- 有意思的是，这种死亡的过程，也会带来一些耐人寻味的独特景观。如果防盗窗被从一楼、二楼、三楼、四楼、一直装到五楼、六楼，那么谁要再告诉我们，这里的人们是在安居乐业，那也不过是玩笑。同样，如果每一个楼区都要严密地围起来，再花大量的钱去雇佣保安，那么谁要再告诉我们，这里的人们是在安居乐业，那也肯定是在欺骗。



2007/04/27

A glowing yellow sun or moon is positioned at the top center of the frame against a deep blue sky. Below it, a traditional Chinese pagoda with multiple tiers and a dark roof is visible, partially obscured by the text. The pagoda is set against a lighter blue background, and a white fence is visible at the bottom of the image.

4. The real meaning of tradition

四、传统的现实意义

4. The real meaning of tradition

- In the distress of cultural disorder we can not help recalling Professor Liang Sicheng. Recently a new book appeared: "The Scheme for Beijing as Designed by Liang & Chen". Liang is Liang Sicheng, and Chen is Chen Zhanxiang. This book shows us another possible blueprint for Beijing city, presented to the new Communist government in the early 1950s before the first round of destruction and modernization took place; it enhances our regret and the pain of cultural loss. It also reminds people who are living in cultural poverty how rich they had once been.
- 在这种失落的痛苦中，人们不禁回忆起了梁思成。最近出版了一本《梁（梁思成）陈（陈占祥）方案与北京》，把梁思成在建国初期的建议，跟北京城市的糟糕现状，进行了触目惊心的对比。这就再次提醒陷入文化穷困中的人们，他们当年曾经多么富有。

梁陈方案与北京

梁思成、陈占恒著

王德信编

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4. The real meaning of tradition

- It makes me think of the big cultural gap between China and Japan in the middle of the 19th century, as described by Samuel Wells Williams. When he accompanied Commodore Perry on his initial visit to Japan in July 1853, he found a sharp contrast between the elegant Chinese and the crude Japanese. But when I visited Kyoto the year before last year, my impression was thoroughly reversed.
- 这使我想起了卫三畏陪同美国将军佩里首次登陆日本时的感受，这位来华传教士当年觉得，日本当时无论从哪方面都赶不上中国，跟我前年访问京都时的感受正好相反。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- We have been too eager to smash our own culture! Last summer my wife and I took an outing to the Great Wall with Professor Marshall Berman of New York City University. We passed by the imposing old city gate, Desheng Men, on our way. I told him that this gate was originally destined to be demolished, like all the other gates along the Second Ring Road. Fortunately Mao died just in time before the last gate could be knocked down. With Mao out of the way, a few courageous intellectuals dared to step up and beg for the preservation of this magnificent piece of ancient architecture. Professor Berman kept silent. Probably this sad story did not fit with his strong Marxist views.
- 我们曾经太糟蹋文化了！有一次，我陪同马歇尔·伯曼教授去参观长城，途中路过一座雄伟的城门——德胜门。我告诉他：这座城门跟所有被二环路荡平的城门一样，也是预定要被拆除的，只是因为拆到这里正巧毛泽东死掉了，才在知识分子的呼吁下，侥幸地得以保留。伯曼教授听罢无言，也许这跟他的马克思主义倾向太悖反了。



4. The real meaning of tradition

- The main merit of Liang Sicheng is that in the chaos of war he did his best to salvage, by measuring and sketching, the forms of some rare traditional architecture. His lost in his personal professional struggle also symbolizes the cultural meaning of our old architecture today.
- 梁思成的意义在于，他不仅在以往那个传统正在流失、且国力极度式微的年代，对传统建筑进行了一些抢救式的记录，而且他本人的挫折在今天也成了一种符号，在不断地提示传统建筑的文化意义。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- It is pity that we have only now begun to realize that the ancient civilization, which was absolutely rejected in the recent past and cannot recover in contemporary life, was so mature and so rare that every brick of its architecture is full of a sense of aesthetics.
- 事到如今我们才发现，当年被毫不犹豫地予以拒绝的古代文明，而且确实已经无可挽回地被破坏殆尽的古代文明，竟是开化得那样成熟，那样的不可多得，一砖一瓦都浸染了文明的光辉，都具有相当完备的形式感，而且都是现在难以复制的。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- In fact, the word “architecture” seems too artificial to describe the living environment in ancient China, because the world in which the Chinese dwelt was been so effective in integrating with nature. Therefore, it would be better to call it “environmental art” instead of architecture.
- 甚至可以说，仅仅用“建筑”这个外来语，来刻画中国古代的居住环境，或许会显得太割裂和太人工了。那会使人们想起某种遗世独立的夸耀人力的构造，它跟周遭的自然形成强烈的反差。可那个曾经完整过的中国生活世界，无论单独看去还是整体看去，却跟大自然有机交融相映成趣。由此，对于这种生活艺术的结晶，也许更应当称其为“环境艺术”。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- On the other hand, in ancient China, the living environment could never be a pure and detached art. There was never so clear a demarcation between house and architecture as we observe today. We might say that the accumulation and trials of civilization produced the smartest and most skillful artists. They not only catered to basic needs, but also developed fascinating artistic forms by using resources most economically.
- 另一方面，这种供人栖居的立体生活世界，却又从来不是可以超脱功利的纯粹艺术。那时候在所谓“房子”和“建筑”之间，并不存在像现在这般泾渭分明的界限。可以说，文明活动的尝试和累积本身，成了最精明和精巧的艺术家。它既满足着最基本的功能需求，又利用着最经济的资源条件，却竟发展出了极具魅力的形式感。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- Ancient architectural creations come from the total atmosphere of their cultural life. Our ancestors had their cultural values first. As the atmosphere surrounded the whole city, culture set up the basis of the city life, and provided a habitual feeling of form. Under this atmosphere, people would, unconsciously and as if by chance, perform gradual creations, adding small touches to perfect the whole.
- 其所以如此，是因为有一种总体的文化生活垫底。古代人怎么建造的？他们是先有一种文化——笼罩整个城市的作为一种氛围的文化，这构成了整个城市的基座，构成了人人习以为常的形式感，然后，他们再在这种基础上，悄悄地进行几乎不为自己所意识到的渐进创造，来获得画龙点睛的效果。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- Whatever content a civilization has, it must show itself in its aesthetic style, and this style will necessarily affect the forms of building, subconsciously determining the limits of architects' imagination.
- 无论是哪种文明的蕴涵，都必然焕发出相应的审美格调，而且这种格调一定会点染到房屋造型上，潜在地规定着设计师的想象界限。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- I once published a piece arguing that Su Dongpo's studio lacked the impressiveness of the palaces of the time and certainly could not compare with the splendor of modern gardens, but had a more inspiring harmony. That is to say, history has its standard of elegance, which must first be based on spiritual content. A house has to be filled with human and cultural character before it can have any life of its own.
- 我曾经撰文指出，建筑于东坡之上的雪堂，既没有当年皇宫王府的气派，更没有如今花园别墅的富丽，却更富于韵致更令人神往，这说明历史自有它的风雅标准，那首先要基于精神的内涵——房子里面一定要充盈人气，要贯注了文化意蕴方能生气勃勃。



4. The real meaning of tradition

- Therefore, our conclusion is that if a city refuses to be murdered, the most important thing is to cultivate a total cultural atmosphere. If we get such a vivid culture, the plural demands of all kinds of people and the judgment and commentary by educated citizens will provide the motive of development and revision.
- 于是我们的结论是，如果一座城市如果拒绝死去，那么最重要的就是，必须首先培育出一种文化氛围。有了生机勃勃的文化，那么，各种人群的功能要求，各种文化人的评议，就会带来永恒的发展和修正动力。

4. The real meaning of tradition

- Otherwise, the city's root will be cut down. Such a conception of the functioning of culture is much more important than the mere demand for forms and skylines. Any formalist plan divorced from the cultural activities of human beings will bring nothing but the death of a city.
- 否则，一个城市从根上就断了。这种文化功能的概念，对于城市建设来说，绝对大于任何视觉的要求。任何脱离人类自身文化活动的形式主义发展规划，都只会加速城市的死亡。

A bright yellow sun or moon is positioned at the top center of the frame against a clear blue sky. Below it, a traditional Chinese pagoda with multiple tiers and a dark roof is visible, partially obscured by the text. The pagoda is situated on a platform with a low wall in the foreground.

5. Does China still have a Chance?

五、中国还有机会吗？

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- Nevertheless, I dare to say that the effort of Liang Sicheng is not enough. During the truceless time, he had no choice but worked as a historian, other than an architect. However, we are living a time of large-scale reconstruction, and find we can not be merely satisfied by a kind fever of antiquary.

- 然而，我却要挑战性地指出，光有梁思成是不够的。这位当年清华建筑系的老主任，在那个战乱频仍的年代，也许是不不得已地，把自己的身家性命主要定位为历史学家，而不是建筑学家。然而，到了大规模建设的现在，光有了一种古董癖的心态，却是远远不够的。这些人确实是在表达珍惜，但他们拿出的却是一派破落户的架式，从一开始就认定，东西只能是一天比一天少了。

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- We find Liang Sicheng often play three roles in his career: an architect, a protector of ancient buildings, and an archaeologist of architecture. However, I would like to say, a architect more believe himself, while an archeologist believe ancestor; a architect must believe the next will be better, while an archaeologist always think the - elder the better.
- 梁思成经常扮演的三个角色，即建筑师、文物保护者和建筑考古学家，其实还是有着微妙的却是原则的区别。比如，建筑师更相信自己，而考古学家更相信古人。建筑师要求主动行动，而考古学家要求最好别动。建筑师总是觉得下一个更好，而考古学家总是觉得越老越值钱。建筑师要求营造新貌，而考古学家要求保留原貌。建筑师追求现实功能，而考古学家保存历史价值。



5. Does China still have a Chance?

- 此外，我还要提到一层关系，就是梁思成夫妇跟费正清夫妇的关系。众所周知，他们之间保持了长久的友谊，甚至曾经结伴去考察测量，散落在乡野的古代建筑。然而，费正清“冲击-回应”模式跟梁思成古代建筑史之间，有什么深层的联系。不知为什么这么巧，在他们笔下，中国传统在当代社会中全都是没有能动性的。



丹枫家园



5. Does China still have a Chance?

- It will confuse if we mix the three roles up. For instance, dose an architecture as a cultural relic still have the actual function of habitation? It will be very difficult to reach consensus between a protector and an architect.
- 把这三个角色混淆起来，会发生很多职能上的矛盾，从而在实践中带来困惑。比如，最简单的问题是：可否再拿被保护的文物来执行居住功能？——在这方面，文物保护专家和建筑学家的态度很难一致。再如，如何对待层层累积到古代建筑上的历史遗存？——在这方面，考古学家和文物保护专家的见解也很难趋同。

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- 尽管文物保护是重要的，但仅仅保护却是不够的，仅仅照抄它的某种建筑元素也是不够的。文化原本是主动创造的产物，是在适应乃至改造环境之余，应着人类心理层面的更高企求，逐渐升发和积淀出来的意蕴和味道。所以，古代建筑所独具的“民族形式”，首先是以适应已往环境为基准的，否则早就被历史磨洗掉了。这话听起来似乎无甚高论，却属于建筑学的第一要义，它先验地规定了整场营造运动的成与败。

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- Liang Sicheng's concept of "repairing the old as it is" is also disputed. According to the demand of the archeologist, this concept would be even worse than just repairing the old as the new, otherwise you will leave an imitation to your children, and they will need more archeologists to study our imitations.
- 整旧如旧这个说法，其实并不像看上去那么无懈可击，如果从建筑学家的角度，那么整旧如旧也算得上一种特殊的仿古技法；但如果按照文物保护专家的看法，后世层层累积的痕迹也许同样算得上一种历史遗存，并不需要被简单地抹去；而如果按照考古学家的要求，整旧如旧甚至还不如整旧如新，因为前者乃是一层更加迷惑人的伪装。

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- The campus of our university was originally built as such an imitation. The purpose of this archaize yard was to fit the style of buildings around it. However, this mission school survives while other buildings disappear, and people have no way but come here pretending to enjoy the ancient Chinese architecture.
- 我们北大的校园，原本是美国建筑师墨菲在清代王家园林的基础上，建造出来的一座仿古建筑，但由于它曾经属于一所教会学校，所以完整地保存了下来，甚至成了专供人们体验传统魅力的地方。

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- However, as a teacher of this university, the most ironic thing is that, to the requirement of teachers and students, such an archaistic campus of colonialist time seems to be totally useless.
- 然而，作为一位北大的老师，我感到最突出的矛盾是，这样一个殖民主义时代的仿古建筑，对于我们的教学任务而言，竟然是美丽而没有功能。

Gate of PKU







5. Does China still have a Chance?

- 因此，仅以中国的人口与资源之比便足以判定，在环境已经剧烈变化以后，照搬任何既有的建筑类型，不管是本土的还是西洋的，都不会有出路。也许不必赞成布朗（Michael Brown）所谓“人口污染”（People Pollution）的提法，因为它确实有损于人类的尊严。但在进行建筑创造时，仍要时刻想着巨大的人口压力，并以此作为构思的底线，不然就只能仿造赝品，比如那种比一般楼距更加逼仄的所谓“别墅”。

5. Does China still have a Chance?

- If you dare to waste the resource of whole country, of course you can fabricate several amazing buildings, such as the boiled egg nearby Tian An Men Square, or the nest of birds for Olympic Games. However, if you want to resolve the problem of 13 hundred million dwellers, you can not lie in the structure and function of the architecture.

- 前边已经说过，建筑毕竟只是一门半艺术，不能完全脱离功能和功利的考虑。你若是以倾国之力做一个作品，当然可以无限度地调动资源，比如天安门广场上那个荒唐的水煮蛋，比如那个用巨大钢铁支撑起来的鸟巢；但如果你想要解决十三亿人的民居，而且让他们安居，就绝不能在结构和功能上撒谎。

National Opern nearby Tian-an-men



5. Does China still have a Chance?

- We must go on our dancing, but we can only dance with the heavy chains. The chain is the serious limitation of our resource. We must make much more use of our resource than any other nations in the world.
- 这意味着我们只能戴着镣铐跳舞——但我们毕竟还能跳舞！在我们这块土地上，人口和资源之比从来就不理想，但它并未妨碍过文化创造活动。比如，中国一向缺少短缺牧场，所以古人只能饲养吃腐食的猪和鸡。然而，这种局限妨碍过他们的文化创造么？妨碍过他们把中餐发展成为如此的美味么？所以，我们的建筑师真要有出息，也得同样“置之死地而后生”，拿被别的文明扔掉的猪肚子反复实验，终于做出色香味俱佳的“麻辣肚丝”来。

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- We need a thoroughly new revolution of our view, from outside to inside, otherwise the few districts of luxury houses will pay the price of numerous bustee and at last the whole city will definitely damaged into ruins.
- 这意味着一场彻底推倒重来的、自内向外的视觉革命，否则少数豪宅就势必要以大片的贫民窟为代价，而基于这样的极限对比，整座城市的最终表象鲜有不沦为一片废墟的。

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- 要进行这种创造，就必须鲜明地反对“经济阶段决定论”，这种腔调在今天的会议上很有市场，总以为形式感是一种奢侈品，而眼下我们还只能先造实用的房子。尽管造价无疑更高，但从视觉艺术的角度看，前三门的塔楼顶得上老北京的四合院吗？顶得上安徽乡村的民居吗？甚至顶得上印第安人的茅屋吗？所以，在造型和造价之间并不存在机械的对应关系：较低的造价并不注定造型的粗陋，经济发展也并不自动保证形式感的顿悟。

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- So we can not only copy the answers of any good examples, since the answer can only hind in our own solution to our special difficulty. Only when we find a special architectural form which fit our special recourse and cultural want, the urban view in China can regain its cultural significance.

- 在上述双方的问题意识背后，将来或许能找到契合点，因为本土性问题的答案很可能就存在于中国特殊问题的特殊解决方式当中。从长时段的视角看，也只有找到了匹配特定资源的特定建筑方式，中国的城市景观才能重获文脉化品味；而正因为这种资源的限定，届时传统建筑的精髓也许就可以复活，从而使那个古老的生活世界不再仅仅属于考古学。