

Can Color be a Bridge of Modern and Tradition? --A Practice on Changzhou Xinbei Urban Color Plan

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ABSTRACT

Feudal color application regulation can still be seen in the historical architecture exists today. As a large part of those architecture which were those common people owned or lived, most of them are non-chromatic color. However, this tradition becomes the great obstacle in the urban color plan today especially when facing the rapid urbanization and modernization. In most cases, government officials and urban planners are both confused at the dilemma of keeping traditional color character or meeting with the need of contemporary architecture forms.

Changzhou is a city with long history of relics but most of them were demolished. Xinbei district is on the watershed. A large amount of new built architecture overlay the very few historical sites.

Based on the spot color assessment and analysis, residential color preferences discussion, the culture and history investigation, as well as landmarks understanding, the research group try to set up a bridge between the tradition and fashion by figuring color identifications in different areas, streets, and environmental spaces. Also, suggestions are put forward on those non-architecture elements which has been regarded as unimportant accessories but actually the every important elements for the urban color. Finally, a proposal for implementation also discussed.

KEYWORDS: Modern and Tradition, Xinbei Urban Color Plan, Implementation

BACKGROUND

Traditional Chinese urban color is formed by the restrict regulations as different social class have their own prescription colors. Most of the traditional streets or districts are with non-chromatic color as common people owned or lived. However, this tradition becomes the great obstacle in the urban color plan today especially when facing the rapid urbanization and modernization.

Changzhou is a city in the Yangzi River area. We did the urban color plan for the whole city in 2011 and that for Xinbei District in 2016. As the developed area, urban color for Xinbei District is essential to the future development of the whole city.

According to the survey result for the residential color preference in the Changzhou city we did in 2011, people in the city prefer clean, bright and distinctable color enviroment.

Changzhou is a city with long history of relics but most of them were demolished. A large amount of new built architecture overlay the very few historical sites in Xinbei district. The research group made an overall survey on the main part of Bei-Bu New Town of 75 square kilometres under the evaluation standard.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Traditional architecture information is rare in Changzhou city. Only two streets of Qiongguo Lane and Xizhi street still exists. Some other single buildings scatters in the central city. As to Xinbei District, which is formed by 9 towns, only two towns have some historical street or buildings exist like Xuejia and Menghe. In Xuejia town, only two buildings exist of Xin-za-xinling Palace with red façade and blue colored-glaze tiles, and Wu-shi-zhong-cheng-di with traditional white façade and black tiles.

The town of Menghe has more traditional buildings and streets. Nine Dragon Temple, who was built in Liang Dynasty (503 ~ 519) with 1500 years history has the pure yellow façade. Wan-sui-dong-yue Temple has pure red façade. The Menghe North street exhibits the traditional residential architecture style of Ming and Qing dynasty with white wall and black tiles including the old site of Menghe Yitai Soybean Shop, Sunlai Tea Bar, Menghe South-east Hotel and so on. Some important architecture of Fei-bo-xiong old house, Cao-wei-fang old house, old city wall relics exist and protected.



Fig 1 Traditional Color identity

MODERN IDENTITY

The core parts of Bei-Bu New town are consist of mainly new built buildings. Even many village houses in the city, the new constructed buildings since 1992 can be seen everywhere. Based on the on-site evaluation results from 5 aspects of color characters, color combinations, relationship between color and mass, color and form, and color and spatial location, as well as the AHP-MATLAB analysis, a clear idea of color in the real space efficiency and deficiency can be seen. Some façade color is vivid and harmony; some with meticulous details and design feelings; some color character is obvious. However, still some deficiency exist. For instance, some façade is characteristic but most is not; the lack of color structure; no traditional information in the inner part; environmental color is in disorder.



Fig 2 Modern Color identity

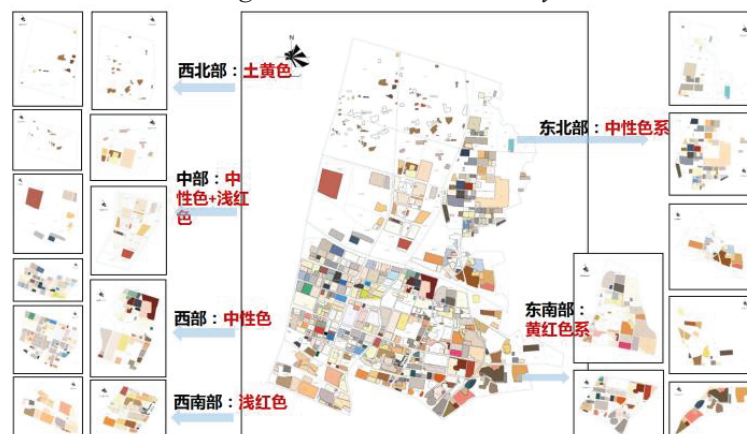


Fig 3 Present color distribution

DIALOGUE BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERN

Color image

Here we use the word of color image to explain our overall idea for the whole area. Actually, color image in only in words explanation. The overall color image is “Ink Jiangnan, Gentle Color”. The outer circle color

is named as light and neutral color with the traditional way of white or whitish as the most, together with dark roof color of Jiangnan Style. Then central part is named as colorful with warm color as the dominate one. As the central part has no any traditional information but contemporary style and color identity, it is not necessary emphasis the traditional way. But the contrast shows more impression.

Tradition color reconstruction and spillover

With the traditional town of Menghe as the breakthrough, the outer part is to form the traditional color information. As the Menghe town has the traditional Jiangnan color character, based on the way of continue the traditional color by the restoration of historical architecture and streets, the traditional façade color information of white wall and black tiles can be kept. As to the other construction area in Qi-liang ecological recreation area, by the way of assuming white color, black or black-grey brick, and the traditional color identity can be spilled over. Furthermore, this idea is also exhibited in other five functional area.

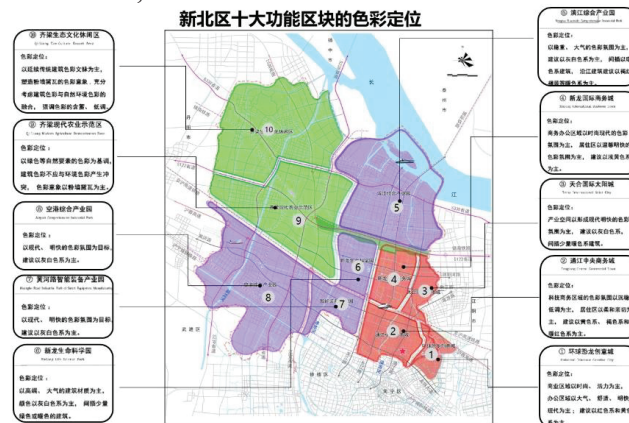


Fig 3 Color identity for different functional area

Modern color construction and concentration

Considering the modern architectural form and functional requirement, and most of all, the existing situation, color for contemporary area is considered mostly the color bias, habitat, idea and so on. Therefore, in the arear of the central and developed part of Bei-Bu New Town, we assume a different color idea.

To meet the aim of forming the color identity, and also to form the color integrity and diversity, we adjust the present urban color to form the urban color structure of two-horizontal, two-vertical, four parts, nine districts and five nodes.

Architectural Color

It's easily to convert among the dominate color, auxiliary color and decorative color, considering the Operability and tolerance, we assume the idea of recommended color. For instance, the color of red can be used as dominate color, auxiliary color and decorative color, only facing the specific plots and architecture, its role can be decided.

According to the color image, the selected color are framed in the color triangle with four color lines of red, pink, blue and green for A,B,C,D four parts.

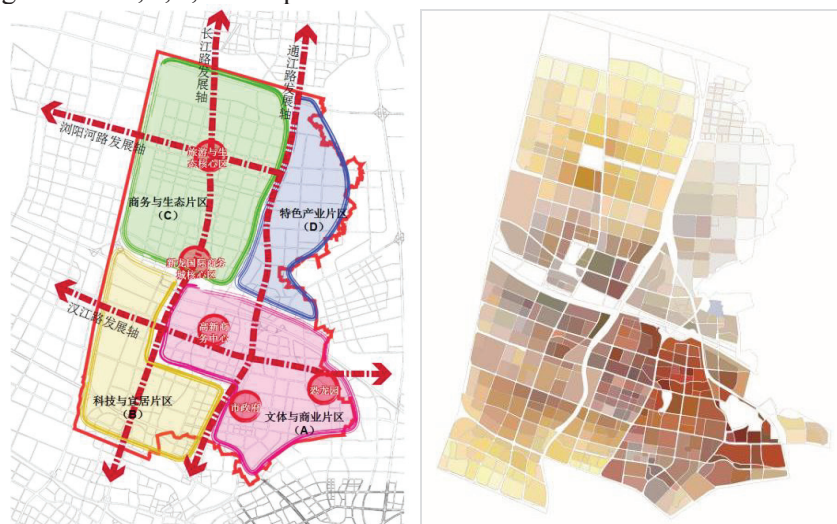


Fig 5 Color structure

Fig 6 Color image

Color structure and chromatogram for Bei-Bu New Town

Color image for four parts are: Cultural and Commercial (A): keeping the present good color impression, deleting and changing the dark and cool green-blue family, to form the vivid and warm red-yellow color image; Science and residential (B): To form the stable brown-yellow color impression, assuming the warm and top color in the color triangle; Commercial and ecology (C): To form the bright light yellow family, avoid the dark color and green-blue family, as well as those close to the C value; Special industrial (D): To form the bright and modern grayish color image, avoid those two dark or two pure color.

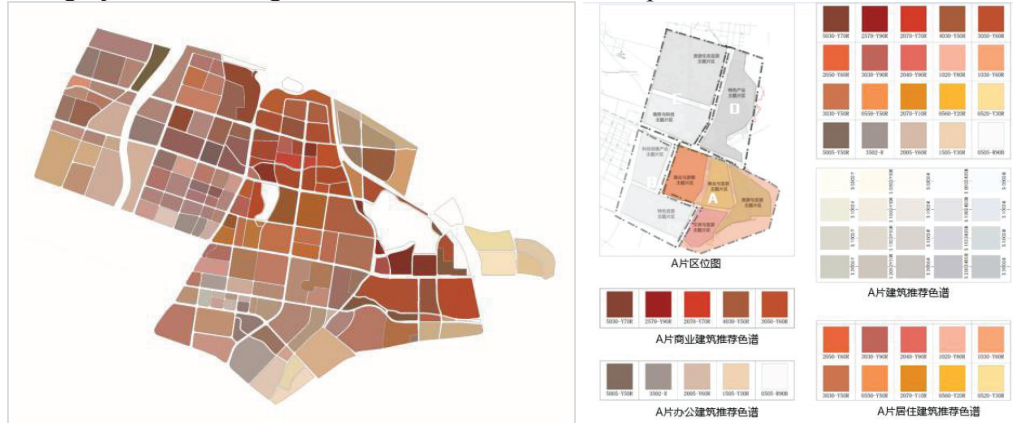


Fig 7 Color for Part A

CONCLUSION

a, Color can be one of the way of bring tradition to today. As most cities in China, traditional architectural forms and color is very few in Changzhou, the color can be inherited to some extent.

b, Color can be used to set up the space identity. The idea of color streets is recommended in Bei-bu New Town with façade color, street element color, and plant color.

DISCUSSION

a, Other elements like advertisement, greens, pavement, street furniture, ect. are essential to the urban Chroma. Therefore, compiling the guideline for street space is important.

b, Elastic planning and management is the basement. In urban color plan and management, it is important to encourage the great works by blurring the edge of dominate color, auxiliary color and decorative color. A color range is far effective than a fixed color code.

c, Color education is very urgent but neglected in Chinese management field. The aesthetic ability is essential for color understanding and fulfilment.

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