

Study on the Conservation and Utilization of the Three Kingdoms Sites in Jingzhou

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Abstract

Jingzhou, China boasts a vast collection of relics from the Three Kingdoms period. Through archaeological investigations, these relics are found to be widely distributed, including ancient city walls and moats, and activity centers of historical figures. Exploring these remains can reveal the development of historical events of the Three Kingdoms period, showcasing their significant conservation value. The cultural heritage of the Three Kingdoms relics in Jingzhou is a vital cultural resource for modern city development and must be protected and utilized to its fullest potential.

Keywords

Three Kingdoms Period; Historical Sites; Jingzhou; Conservation and Utilization.

1. Introduction

Jingzhou, with a 5,000-year-old history, is a renowned cultural city located in the southwestern part of the Jiangnan Plain, which is an important metropolis in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River. Based on archaeological evidence, the ancient city of Jingzhou was first built during the Eastern Han Dynasty, with rich historical relics, legends, and stories. In 2022, the Jingzhou Museum conducted an investigation of the Three Kingdoms sites located in Hubei Province. This article presents the findings from the investigation of the Three Kingdoms sites located specifically in Jingzhou City, Hubei Province, and analyzes and interprets the data. The essential thought of this study is understanding major relics from archaeological investigations, what follows is a preliminary discussion on the protection and utilization of these relics.

2. An Investigation of the Three Kingdoms Sites in Jingzhou

2.1. The Ancient City of Jingzhou

The ancient city of Jingzhou is the earliest, largest and best-preserved ancient city in China. Brick city, earth city, and water city are three cities that complement each other. And there is the moat around the city, functioning well. Hidden army caves, archery holes, arrow-blocking walls and others are unique characteristics. On February 8, 1982, the State Council announced Jingzhou as one of the first batch of 24 famous historical and cultural cities in China. The whole ancient city wall is 3.75km long from east to west, and about 1.2 km wide from north to south, the average height of the city is 8.83m, the bottom width is 7.60m, and the whole is an irregular rectangle. The total length of the city wall is 13.5km, and the total area is 4.5km. The original six city gates, the new three three-hole city gates, total 9 city gates. There are also 4 Tibetan soldier caves and 26 gun emplacements. Outside the city is a zigzag moat, outside the wall is made of strip stone and sintered brick, the brick city is about 1m thick, the wall is made of loess rammed, the lower part is about 9m wide, the brick city is 9m high, and the circumference is 1,1281m. The wall of the brick city is built with special blue bricks and lime glutinous rice paste. Each special big black brick weighs about 4kg, and some are fired with characters. After two major repairs of the Jingzhou city wall from fifty-four to fifty-seven years of Qianlong, six gates were preserved.

2.2. Guan Yu and the Ancient City of Jingzhou

Guan Yu was noted as the earliest builder of the ancient city wall of Jingzhou in history. Geography with Picture in Yuan He states that the city originally had a central partition, with the old city to the north and the city built by Guan Yu to the south. This record indicates the ancient city wall of Jingzhou already existed before Guan Yu set up the city wall. Actually, according to The Book of Later Han: Geography, the ancient city wall of Jingzhou began to be built during the reign of King Li of Zhou over 2600 years ago. Since 1997, the excavation of the eastern section of the southern wall of Jingzhou has proven that the construction and development of Jingzhou's city wall have gone through six historical periods: from the Three Kingdoms to the Western Jin, from the Eastern Jin to the Sui and Tang dynasties, from the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms to the Northern Song, from the Southern Song to the Yuan Dynasty, the Ming Dynasty, and the Qing Dynasty. The ancient city wall of Jingzhou was made of soil during the Three Kingdoms but brick began in the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms. It is said that this excavation could not proceed further due to high groundwater levels, but it is still speculated that there may be earlier city walls stacked beneath the Three Kingdoms walls. This excavation indicates that the construction of the ancient city wall of Jingzhou dates back to the Three Kingdoms period or even earlier[1].

Guan Yu is a prominent historical figure in China. There are numerous relics related to him in Jingzhou. For example, the Galloping Horse Spring Site is related to the Red Hare that Guan Yu rode, which is located in Galloping Horse Village at the southern foot of Baling Mountain. There originally stood a stone tablet that was erected in the thirtieth year of the Wanli reign of the Ming Dynasty (1602), and the other one was erected in the twenty-sixth year of the Daoguang reign of the Qing Dynasty (1846). The later stone tablet titled "Inscription of the Galloping Horse Spring of Duke Guan Yu in the Han Dynasty" beside the spring says, "The spring is named after the running horse, symbolizing the strength of the city, and it is said to be a place that Duke Guan Yu rode through in the Han Dynasty..." The epitaph also quoted the main content of the older stone tablet from the Wanli reign: When Liu Bei was trapped in Dangyang, Guan Yu came to his rescue with the army and took this route. Both men and horses were in distress, but their loyalty and righteousness led to a spring of water bursting forth, which has been told and passed down to this day...

2.3. Zilonggang Site

The Zilonggang Site is also connected to the history of the Three Kingdoms. It is situated at a crossroads southeast of Yanglin Mountain in Bailuo Town, Jianli County, Jingzhou City. The site is located approximately 1 kilometer southeast of Jianhong Road, about 200 meters northwest of the Yangtze River, about 40 meters southwest of the Yanglin Mountain Pumping Station, and approximately 2.5 kilometers northeast of the Jingyue Bridge. Yanglin Mountain, formerly known as Yanglin Ji, stands on the north bank of the Yangtze River, about one hundred miles from Wulin. The mountain features winding and twisting terrain and lush vegetation, and was a crucial location for the Cao army's retreat from Red Cliff to Nanjun[2].

2.4. Lv Meng City Site

The Lvmeng City Site, located in Qijusi Village, Jiazhuoyuan Town, Gong'an County, Jingzhou City, is another significant site related to the history of the Three Kingdoms. Annals of the Three Kingdoms record that Lv Meng made significant contributions in capturing Jingzhou, was appointed as the Prefect of Nanjun and was granted the title of Marquis of Chanling. He was stationed at Gong'an, but soon fell ill and passed away. Annals of Jingzhou Prefecture of the Qianlong reign, Volume Six, Historical Sites: Lv Meng City, Gong'an County records, "Lu You's Record of Entering Shu mentions an abandoned city behind Guangxiao Temple, as if it still exists;

The Atlas refers to it as Lv Meng City; The General Annals of Hubei and Hunan states it is thirty li (li, a Chinese unit of length . One li is equal to half a kilometer) north of the county."

There is still controversy over whether the city was built by Lv Meng. Gu Zuyu referred to the city as built by Lv Meng in Essentials of Geography for reading history. However, according to the old records in Volume One of The Gong'an County Annals during the Tongzhi reign, which contains "the Ancient Monuments of Lv Meng City", it can be concluded that Lv Meng City was not constructed by Lv Meng himself. Instead, it was named after him by later generations as a way to commemorate him.

2.5. Liu Bei City Site and Xiulin Pavilion Site

The Liu Bei City Site is in the northwest suburbs of Zhidou Lake Town, Gong'an County, Jinzhou City. In the fourteenth year of Jian'an (209 AD), Liu Bei served as the Governor of Jingzhou, overseeing the four counties of Lingling, Guiyang, Wuling, and Changsha in southern Jinzhou. The Record of Jinzhou indicates that Liu Bei was then the general of the Left, known as the Left Duke. A Biography of Jiang Biao suggests that Liu Bei was stationed at Youkou and renamed it Gong'an. In the twenty-fourth year of Jian'an (219 AD), Sun Quan commanded his troops to capture Gong'an and relocated the Prefect of Nanjun to govern here, making Gong'an one of the essential military strongholds.

The Xiulin Pavilion Site is in the north of Shishou City. During the Three Kingdoms period, Sun Quan's sister, Sun Shang Xiang, married Liu Bei in Jinzhou, which became a famous story. To commemorate this event, later generations renamed the Yangqi Mountain where they held the wedding as Xiulin Mountain and built the Xiulin Pavilion on the peak[3]. Today, the Shishou City government has constructed Xiulin Mountain Park here, with tourist attractions such as a statue of Lady Sun and the Xiulin Pavilion (rebuilt in the 1980s), combining natural landscapes with cultural relics, making it a typical example worth promoting[4].

3. The Value of the Three Kingdoms Sites in Jingzhou

3.1. Confirming the History of The Three Kingdoms

Archaeological discoveries provide direct physical evidence of historical events and help to correct or verify historical records, further ensuring the accuracy of historical research. For example, it is recorded in Annals of Jingzhou Prefecture that Guan Yu built the ancient city wall of Jingzhou. The earth city wall of The Three Kingdoms Period discovered in October 1970 can confirm this historical fact. Geography with Picture in Yuan He reveals the earlier existence of the ancient city wall of Jingzhou, and The Book of Later Han: Geography records that the construction of the ancient city wall of Jingzhou began in the period of King Li of Zhou. From 1997, through excavations of the Southern and eastern sections of the city wall, it was speculated that there were also earlier walls under the city wall of The Three Kingdoms, which indicates that the city wall of Jingzhou began to be built as early as The Three Kingdoms period or earlier.

3.2. Study of the Society and Economy of the Three Kingdoms

By analyzing the layout of ancient cities, burial forms, and production tools, we can infer the social structure and economic conditions of that time. Studying the geographical location and environmental conditions of ancient sites helps us understand how ancient humans adapted to and transformed the natural environment. At the same time, the tools of ancient technology and craftsmanship provide us with evidence of technological evolution, helping us understand the progress of human civilization. The ancient city wall of Jinzhou was built with earth walls during the Three Kingdoms period, and the Lady Sun City site was also constructed with rammed earth. From the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period, special blue bricks mixed with lime and glutinous rice paste were used to build city walls. During the Song Dynasty, texts were even

inscribed on the blue bricks for the management of personnel involved in building the city. This shows the unusual changes in the construction industry and personnel management methods from the Three Kingdoms to later dynasties. Therefore, through archaeology and analyzing the Three Kingdoms sites, we can explore the evolution of social economy, technology, culture, and other aspects.

4. Protection and Utilization of the Three Kingdoms Sites in Jinzhou

The protection and utilization of historical relics from the Three Kingdoms period are complex and multi-dimensional issues, involving aspects such as cultural heritage protection, economic and social development, and urban cultural construction. The following will explore the topic from four perspectives: the application of modern technology, economic development, public participation, and policy support.

4.1. Application of Modern Technology

Jinzhou keeps pace with the development of the times in the application of modern technology. Firstly, the Jinzhou Cultural Relics Protection Center is at the forefront of the protection and restoration of unearthed bamboo, wood lacquerware, and bamboo slips. The center has successfully developed a set of techniques using traditional materials and craftsmanship to repair wooden lacquerware artifacts, providing a reference for the restoration of cultural relics in many other regions. In addition, paperless drawing, modeling, non-destructive testing, spatial analysis, and virtual restoration are carried out in the archaeological process. Secondly, 3D laser scanning technology and digital preservation technology play an important role in the protection of historical buildings and sites, providing high-precision 3D data for digital recording and restoration of historical sites. Thirdly, in the field of augmented reality interactive technology, the Jinzhou Museum uses high-tech multimedia display methods such as touch screens and digital projection to make cultural relics vivid and interesting, allowing for more detailed observation and understanding of the artifacts. Finally, through the use of modern technologies such as 3D scanning, 2D imaging, and information management digital platforms, unearthed cultural relics can be timely and effectively repaired and protected, making the collection management information systematic[5]. These technologies not only improve the efficiency and effectiveness of historical site protection but also promote the dissemination and education of cultural heritage, providing new ideas and methods for the sustainable development of historical sites.

4.2. Economic Development

Economic development of historical resources is an effective approach to protecting and utilizing historical sites. By establishing cultural industry clusters around Three Kingdoms sites and leveraging their historical resources to develop the tourism industry, local economies can be stimulated while simultaneously promoting cultural values. For instance, the Red Cliff Battlefield in Wulin, Honghu City, Jingzhou, has made excellent use of its rich Three Kingdoms cultural and historical heritage resources, including the Three Kingdoms Wulin Ancient Battlefield Site, Cao Cao Bay, Wu Wang Temple, White Robe Temple, White Bone Collapse. By integrating these Three Kingdoms historical resources, various tourism themes have been created, such as the Three Kingdoms cultural leisure tourism centered on the Wulin Hot Spring International Resort Area, temple-style Three Kingdoms cultural tourism featuring Wu Wang Temple and White Robe Temple, and the Three Kingdoms ancient battlefield site experience tourism themed on the Yangtze River[6]. These are all typical cases of revitalizing and developing the economic utilization of Three Kingdoms' historical sites. In addition, there is Sanyi Street located in the ancient city of Jingzhou, which was named after the Peach Garden Oath made by Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei during the Three Kingdoms period. This street is

connected to the nearby Duke Guan Yu Washing Horse Pool, creating a local folk culture street with a Three Kingdoms theme for visitors to enjoy while exploring the area. Furthermore, a well-planned tourism route for Three Kingdoms sites can enhance the aesthetic value of historical sites, improve the visitor experience, and create a desire to revisit. This approach is also an effective way to promote the integration of culture and tourism.

It should be noted that excessive commercial development often results in the destruction of the original characteristics of historical sites, and may even alter their cultural significance. Therefore, in the process of economic utilization, it is important to avoid distorting historical sites through excessive development. It is necessary to take a comprehensive approach that considers cultural heritage preservation, economic development, social needs, and environmental sustainability, to achieve a harmonious coexistence between historical site preservation and economic development.

4.3. Public Participation

Public participation is a significant part of historic relics' protection and utilization. Strengthen public participation can reduce information asymmetry between the government and the public, increase public trust in the government and safeguard the common interests of both parties[7]. If the public is expected to actively engage in the protection and utilization of the Three Kingdoms relics in Jingzhou, the mechanism of public participation must be perfect. We can make an effect in areas such as popularizing through education, improving the mechanism of participation, increasing information transparency and enhancing reward systems. In terms of popularizing through education, we can enhance education for students and increase vivid power by launching activities such as "The Three Kingdoms Opera in Schools". Setting up a public participation institution to publicize Jingzhou culture of the Three Kingdoms hard, to strengthen public historical awareness and cultural identity. In the field of improving the mechanism of participation and increasing information transparency, relevant departments can establish an app or mini-program as an official platform where authorities interact with the public to promote openness, transparency and information sharing. On the one hand, the authorities can announce information about online and offline activities and publish various types of events connected with mass interests on this platform. On the other hand, the public can use this platform to make a post, upload photos, and provide some feedback and suggestions, which will heighten the interactivity and efficiency of the participation channels. At the same time, open data will tightly combine archaeological exploration with community development, getting more people involved in the research and protection of historic relics. When conducting relevant activities, a reward system can be sufficiently exploited to stimulate the enthusiasm of tourists to participate. For instance, offering several cultural and creative gifts including medals, hairpins, etc, then tourists will obtain them by sharing information or drawing a raffle.

4.4. Policy Support

Policy support is the foundation for the protection and utilization of historical sites, and the government plays a key role in this process. First of all, starting from legal protection, the protection of site cultural heritage needs a clear concept, perfect legislation and corresponding supporting measures to prevent its unique value from being further damaged. Secondly, in terms of finance, the public expenditure of the central and local governments is the most important way of capital investment in the management and operation mechanism of site cultural heritage, and the government should provide financial support for the protection of sites and relics. Finally, in terms of policy and planning, the history of China's historical and cultural heritage protection shows that protection can be divided into three levels: protection of cultural relics protection units, protection of historical and cultural blocks, and protection of

historical and cultural cities. Such hierarchical protection is an effective way to solve the Contradiction between site protection and urban development.

5. Conclusion

Historical and cultural resources are important cultural resources of modern cities, which play an important role in urban planning, design, protection and utilization. The innovation of urban culture needs to explore the historical records and historical stories of different periods of the city and enrich the modern cultural elements of the city. The culture of The Three Kingdoms is another important cultural type in the history and culture of Jingzhou Ancient city. During The Three Kingdoms Period, the culture of Jingzhou had a fierce collision with the culture of southern and northern China at that time, and they blended, leaving the ruins with rich historical and cultural connotations, which are valuable for protection and utilization. At present, the development of Chinese cities should fully combine the history and culture of the city, speed up the construction of the composite protection system of the urban cultural heritage, integrate the historical resources into the urban construction, and realize the continuation and innovation of the urban context.

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