

## **Relationship between World Heritage and Residents in Post Application Period: A Case Study from Xi'an, China**

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**Abstract:** As a suburban site, the site of Han Chang'an city contains plenty of public settlement such as villages and communities. The process of the application about the Silk Road for World Heritage and the final success has witnessed the great change of the relationship between the site of Han Chang'an City and the residents. Through the investigation and study of the present situation of the Han Chang'an city, it is found that the relationship between the residents and the ruins is not optimistic. In view of this, it is suggested that the contradiction between the residents and the protection and development of the site should be alleviated by improving the environmental infrastructure, improving the management level and promoting the display and utilization of the site.

In June 2014, the "Silk Road: Chang'an — Road Network of the Tianshan Corridor" project was successfully completed, and the site of the Weiyang Palace in Chang'an City of Han Dynasty was officially listed as the starting point of the Silk Road in the World Heritage List. However, the success of the application is not the end of the heritage conservation work, becoming a World Heritage site not only brings opportunities but also challenges.

The great ruins, represented by the site of Han Chang'an city, are more closely related to the people of the site area because of its large geographical area, wide range and numerous internal settlements, and involve a series of matters such as heritage management, cultural tourism, environmental protection and so on. However, the arduous process and success of the site of Han Chang'an city also make a great change in the relationship between the site itself and its internal residents. Therefore, it is of practical significance to study the protection and development of cultural heritage from the perspective of the residents of the site area.

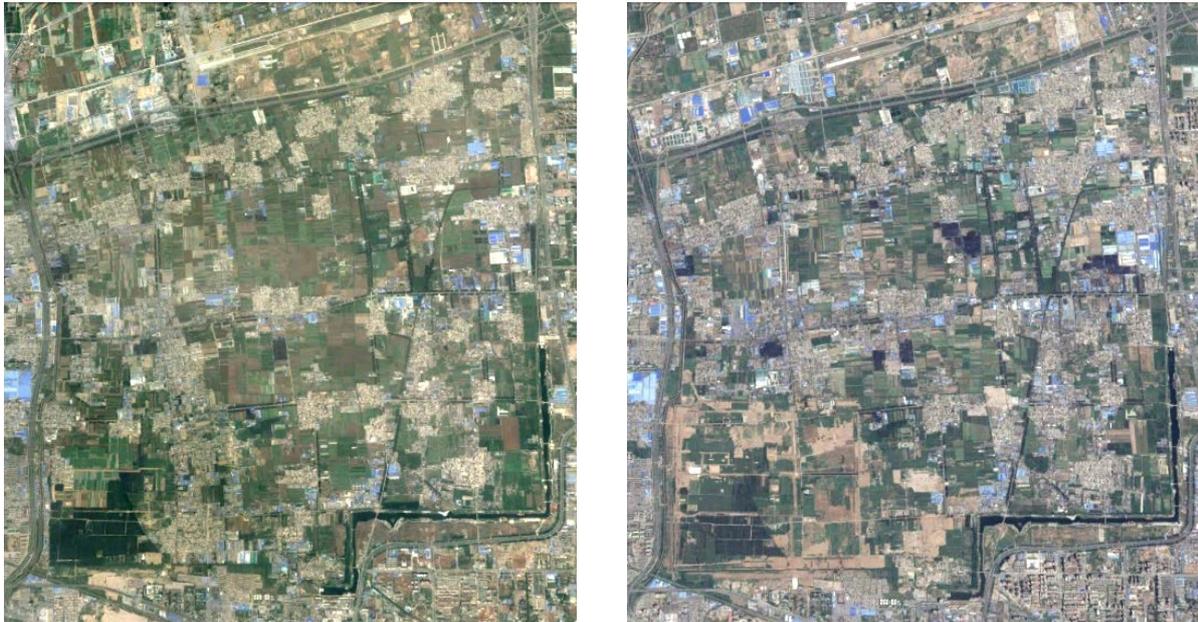
As for the protection and development of the Han Chang'an city site, scholars have made some relevant explorations before, and in the aspect of heritage protection, Zhang Zuqun and so on have analyzed the destruction factors of the Han Chang'an city site. Based on the strategy of sustainable development, the author puts forward some countermeasures for the protection and development of the city. Fan Haiqiang and others put forward a new idea of establishing a "site protection exhibition area + construction control area + cultural industrial park" in the Han Chang'an city site reserve. In the study of the residents of the site area, Chen Wenliang et al. investigated the internal residents of the two major sites of Han Chang'an city and Yongcheng respectively, and pointed out that the methods of harmonious symbiosis between the site and the aborigines should be actively explored. Zhang Hongze studied the relocation work of the residents in the Han Chang'an City Reserve, and put forward the concrete countermeasures such as setting up the protection and development management committee and raising the relocation funds in many ways. In general, the overall study of the site of Han Chang'an city involves few residents of the site area, and the only research on the residents of the site area is the lack of follow-up investigation and discussion on the status of the site after the successful application.

### **1. Site Profiles and Research Methods**

#### **1.1. General Situation of Site Area**

The site of Han Chang'an City, located in the northwest of Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province, is the

political, economic and cultural center of the Han Dynasty. At present, the site area is basically well preserved, is still preserved in our country has a walled, large-scale, earlier and better preservation of a unified empire of the capital site.



**Figure 1** Comparison of the Han Chang'an City Site before and after the application (the left picture shows satellite photo taken in June 2012 and the right picture shows satellite photo taken in August 2013)

In the process of "Silk Road" declaration of world cultural heritage over the years, the protection and utilization of the site of Han Chang'an City has been paid more and more attention by relevant departments and the general public. To support the site's application, the authorities set up the Han Chang'an City National Site Protection Zone for the overall management of the site area, and spent a large amount of money on the relocation of residents and environmental improvement work in the city of Han Chang'an. More than 50,000 residents and more than 1,000 enterprises and institutions have successfully moved out of the reserve (As shown in Figure 1, the two satellite remote sensing photos were taken before and after the application for the World Heritage of Chang'an City in Han Dynasty. The left figure shows that there are many villages, enterprises and institutions in the site area before the demolition. In the right figure, the buildings in the core area of Weiyang Palace's application for the World Heritage in the lower left corner of the site have been completely demolished, and only a large amount of yellow homestead, Cultural Administration Office, the Special Administrative Committee and other scattered buildings are left. The pattern of two horizontal and one vertical roads of Weiyang palace in Han Dynasty has also been restored); the relevant departments have carried out large-scale greening projects in the site area, and added 90,000 acres green space .

At the same time, the relevant departments have also built a number of new protection and display facilities: such as a new exhibition hall next to the former palace site; and wooden walkways and platforms built on the former temple site. The Xi'an Gate site has been displayed by means of rammed earth features combined with window display. For the sites such as government offices, Shaofu, Jiaofangdian, etc., the original sites have been backfilled and the archaeological excavations have been reproduced after covering the earth.

## **1.2. Research Methods and Data Sources**

The author understands their attitude and opinions on the protection and development of the site through interviews with the management of the special site of Han Chang'an City and the questionnaire survey of the local residents. and the SSPS19.0 software was used to carry out statistical analysis and combing of the recovered questionnaire.

A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed and 701 valid questionnaires were recovered, with an effective recovery rate of 87.6%. To understand the current living conditions of the relocated people and their views on the application work, 200 questionnaires were distributed and 164 valid questionnaires were recovered, with an effective recovery rate of 82%.

## **2. The Present Situation of the Relationship between the Ruins of Chang'an City and Its Residents**

### **2.1. Conflict between the Existing Inhabitants of the Site Area and the Site**

The results of the survey show that the relationship between the residents and the sites still living in the Han Chang'an City Site Reserve is not optimistic, mainly in the following aspects:

#### **2.1.1. Low Income and Limited Development of Residents**

In order to protect the underground cultural relics, the production and operation activities of the villages in the site area are strictly restricted, and the majority of the villagers can only use the primary industry as their basic means of livelihood (nearly 70 percent of the residents surveyed fill in the occupation column for farmers). Traditional agricultural production efficiency is low, resulting in a large gap between villagers' income and the site outside, according to statistics, more than half of the residents interviewed earn less than 1000 yuan per month. More than 73 percent of those surveyed said the site's conservation restrictions on their own development led to some resistance to the site.

#### **2.1.2. Environmental Problems Highlight Infrastructure Backwardness**

In recent years, with the rapid development of social economy, the surrounding area of the site has developed rapidly and the urban environment has changed with each passing day. The site of Han Chang'an City in the outer suburbs of the original city has now been surrounded by urban built-up areas on three sides, and the site area has become a veritable "village in the city", which is in obvious contrast to the surrounding environment. The environmental outlook of the lake scenic area near the village of —, one of the subjects of this survey, has been greatly improved. However, due to its location in the protected area, the large-scale environmental renovation and the construction of sewage pipe network are difficult to pass the examination and approval.

In addition, for the need of protection, the construction of relevant municipal facilities in the site area is greatly constrained. Some 62 per cent of the surveyed residents expressed dissatisfaction with the infrastructure in the existing place of residence. Some villages still have to rely on their own wells for water use. The existing road facilities in the village, which were built spontaneously many years ago without planning, are now seriously aged and there is serious water accumulation in many sections of the road, which affects the safety of pedestrian vehicles.

#### **2.1.3. The Existing Management System Has Led to Poor Communication**

In order to solve the internal affairs of the Han Chang'an city site area, the higher authorities specially set up the Han Chang'an city site special zone. However, in view of the current operation, the Special Administrative Committee has only the authority to approve the land in the site area, while the administrative power of the villages in the area is still owned by the local government at a higher level, so there is a situation of management confusion and mutual wrangling. As a result, although the willingness of the residents of the site area to participate in site management is not low (nearly two-thirds of the respondents expressed their willingness to participate in site management and decision-making), it is difficult to find suitable ways to participate.

#### **2.1.4. Successful Application for the World Heritage Failed to Bring More Benefits to Local Residents**

Survey results show that more than 70% of the respondents believe that the conservation and utilization of the site has not effectively improved their living standards. This result may be

related to the fact that all the villages that have not been relocated are located outside the core area of the application — Weiyang Palace site area, and the existing conservation and utilization of the site is mainly concentrated in the Weiyang Palace area, resulting in the residents of other site areas not receiving their due attention; secondly, it is difficult to promote the development of the related industries in the surrounding villages because of the relatively small number of visitors soon after the site park was built; in addition, the management committee of the Special Administrative Region has not employed more local villagers in the site management and construction project, and has not been able to bring more employment opportunities to the local people.

## 2.2. Issues Relating to the Relocation of Residents from the Site Area

The results of the survey show that the residents who have been relocated are not particularly satisfied with their current situation. The main problems are as follows:

### 2.2.1. Poor Satisfaction with Placement Compensation

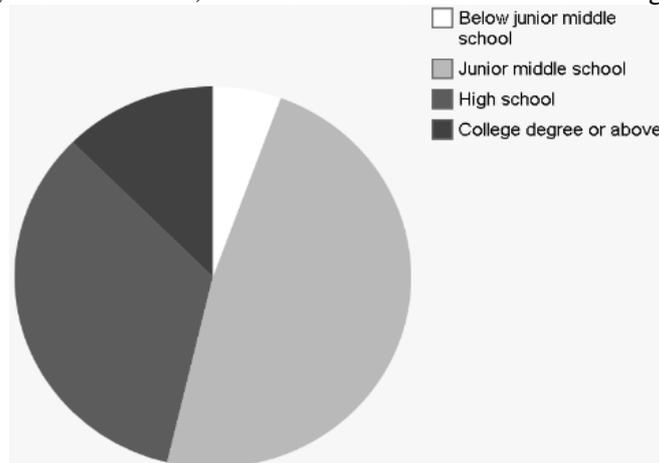
More than half of the relocated residents were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the compensation for the relocation. The reasons for the general dissatisfaction of the villagers included the following:

First of all, because the government mainly adopts a one-time compensation strategy, lack of attention to the residents' long-term livelihood, some villagers because of the low level of education, no long-term financial planning, after the compensation quickly squandered, and then into a life dilemma.

Secondly, although the relevant departments actively coordinated the allocation of more than 1000 mu of resettlement land, and the timely start of the resettlement area construction project, but the villagers generally believe that the resettlement area north of the high speed around the city is too far away from the original village site, resulting in the feeling of being estranged from the site.

### 2.2.2. Reduced Living Standards

Some 77 per cent of the relocated population believe that the application for the site of the Han Chang'an city, including the movement, has reduced their standard of living.



**Figure 2** Survey of academic qualifications of relocated residents

The displaced villagers lost the land on which they depended and had fewer other special skills, coupled with a generally low educational background (see figure 2), which made it difficult to find an ideal job and lost a stable source of income (more than 65 per cent of respondents thought their income was lower after the move). These residents believe that they still have deep feelings for Han Chang'an city, understanding the value of the site is more thorough than others, the Special Administrative Committee seldom hires the relocated villagers to participate in the protection and construction, which hurts their feelings.

### **2.2.3. Villagers Feel Worthless for Self-Sacrifice**

After the villagers had expected to move out of the site, the government would use the original land for large-scale tourism development to bring benefits to the surrounding people, but after years of work, they found that most of the land they had been expropriated was still "idle ". In fact, at present, the use of the relocation of the Weiyang Palace site is mostly based on the original appearance and logo display, this way of display is mainly aimed at professionals and enthusiasts, ordinary people lack understanding of this. The villagers generally believed that the land had become a so-called "wasteland ", creating the idea that their own sacrifice for the conservation of the site was not worth it.

## **3. Countermeasures for the Symbiosis of Chang'an City Site and Residents**

### **3.1. Reasonable Compensation for the Relocation of Residents to Improve Their Living Standards**

Judging from the actual situation of the investigation, the villagers of the site area had been restricted by the policy of heritage protection for a long time before the relocation, and made great sacrifices in order to take into account the overall situation of the protection of the site. The relevant departments can not ignore their subsequent development problems because the relocated residents do not live in the site area. If the people who have lost their native land can not be properly settled, it will not only lead to the gathering of social contradictions, but also undermine the enthusiasm of the residents who still live in the site area to participate in the protection and development of the site. To effectively address the remaining issues, the following should be done:

First of all, the remaining problems of levy and relocation compensation should be solved in time, and the relevant government departments should promptly implement all the compensation funds in place, and arrange for the payment of transitional expenses in a timely manner. Relevant departments should hold financial management knowledge lectures for relocated villagers, guide villagers to do a good job of income and expenditure planning, make rational investment, and change the previous one-time "buyout" compensation practice, so as to realize the sustainable development of the villagers' own economy.

Secondly, as residents move out of the site area, they lose the land on which to live, while they have long been engaged in agricultural production and have less other skills, making it difficult to find an ideal job. Therefore, as far as possible, the management should arrange for such residents to undertake some basic work with low technical requirements and academic qualifications in the site area, such as: garden hygiene, security inspection, etc., or free job vocational skills training for villagers who have lost land, so as to broaden their employment channels.

### **3.2. Improvement of Environmental Infrastructure by Residents in Classified Resettlement Areas**

The survey showed that most of the residents still living in the site said they were reluctant to leave their homeland. And from the current actual situation, because of the huge cost of the requisition and relocation work, has left a lot of problems, plus the site area residents are the site of the human environment is one of the indispensable components, therefore, it is not likely or necessary to move all the residents within the Han Chang'an site reserve out.

In the case of unsuitable unified requisition and relocation, the relevant departments may selectively retain the villages that have not yet found the remains of the pressure-bearing sites, subject to the prohibition of the addition of new production and living facilities, and make appropriate arrangements for the renovation of the backward infrastructure of the existing villages. For the villages that occupy only part of the ruins of the pressure site, only some residents who occupy the ruins directly can be moved out, and the remaining retained parts can be reformed according to the style of the Han Dynasty residence. Some villages with a small number of large areas occupying important sites should draw lessons from relevant experience and lessons, draw up

a long-term and reasonable compensation policy by extensively soliciting public opinion, and gradually guide villagers to participate in the work of requisition and relocation voluntarily.

### **3.3. Improving the Operational Management System to Promote Villagers' Participation in Decision-Making**

Cultural heritage protection and management pay attention to people-oriented, so we can not ignore the needs of the public in the site area, and the degree of successful participation in decision-making in the site area will also affect the protection of the site on a large level.

According to the survey, more than 80 percent of the residents surveyed said the authorities had never consulted their views on the policy and planning for the protection and development of the site.

Therefore, it is very important to implement the corresponding policies and measures to promote the participation of the people in the protection and development of the site. Specifically, the following two areas should be achieved:

First of all, the residents of the site should be unblocked to participate in the decision-making channels. On the basis of the original network of village people's cultural protection in the site area, we can gather the strength of the village society, establish the township virtuous workstation, coordinate the contradiction between the site and the residents, expand the formation of the mass autonomous organization, and stimulate the participation enthusiasm of the ordinary residents. Before formulating planning measures for major conservation and utilization, information briefings should be held in advance to hear the public's views. At the same time, frequent interviews or telephone opinion polls should be conducted to residents and informal meetings should be held to empower villagers to independently formulate village rules for the protection of sites.

Secondly, it is necessary to ensure the effectiveness of residents' participation. The residents of the site area are mostly ordinary farmers, although their participation enthusiasm is high, but because of their own quality is uneven, the narrow access to information, resulting in their own ideas and suggestions can not be recognized by the relevant departments, the effectiveness of participation is low. Experts and scholars can be invited to train the villagers to improve the participation ability of the residents; at the same time, set up a planning audit team, coordinate the relevant suggestions of the villagers as a whole, and establish a feedback system to ensure the effectiveness of the participation of the public.

### **3.4. Increase Publicity and Education to Raise Residents' Awareness of Protection**

The fundamental to the protection of the site lies in raising the people's awareness of protection. Only by making the people aware of the outstanding value of the site, can the residents of the site area form a common understanding of love and management of the site, and the site can be better protected and developed.

However, from the results of the present survey of the villages in the site area, more than half of the residents surveyed believe that they have nothing to do with the site protection or have little to do with it, and the relevant departments rarely carry out targeted publicity and education work in the area. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the education and publicity of the residents in the region.

By means of display boards, leaflets, banners, newspapers, magazines and television media, the Special Administrative Region shall organize regular publicity activities related to the protection of the heritage; it may promote the residents' understanding of the ruins by guiding the local people to visit the Han Chang'an City ruins and other measures; and the local education authorities may, together with local academic and research institutions, compile local teaching materials suitable for the local areas, integrate the historical evolution of Han Chang'an City and cultural relics and monuments into the local teaching materials, and cultivate the residents' feelings and identities of the sites in the original works so that they can understand the Han Chang'an City ruins and love the Han Chang'an City ruins, and then actively participate in the protection and development of the Han Chang'an City ruins.

### **3.5. Promoting the Development of Site Tourism and Raising the Income Level of the People**

The above research shows that the residents of the site are not satisfied with the current development and utilization of the site, although the majority of residents only from their own point of view, the views are inevitably some one-sided, but the relevant departments should also actively respond to the needs of the public, accelerate the rational use of the site, with a view to promoting regional sustainable development at an early date.

The relevant departments should innovate the means of site display and utilization on the basis of strictly protecting the site of Han Chang'an City. It can make plans for archaeological exploration and excavation to show the process of exploration and excavation to the public on the spot; it can hold regular sinology lecture hall in the site area, invite experts and scholars to teach the traditional ideology, culture and literature art of the Han Dynasty; it can combine heritage protection and utilization with public life, leisure, physical exercise, create small-scale city square, green space and other people's livelihood projects, enrich tourist attractions and facilitate the people's life in the area; it can transform the original residence into Han cultural and creative courtyard, provide local artists with employment or living opportunities, create unique cultural tourism souvenirs while also making art and community development closely integrated. In addition, the Han culture exhibition area can be established from the way of museum settlement, and the charm of Han culture can be displayed from different aspects: if the villages that have not been relocated can be transformed into characteristic catering service area, the characteristic diet of Han Dynasty can be provided to tourists through research; the new Science and Technology Park of Han Dynasty can be built to show the astronomical and geographical instruments such as Huntianyi(celestial globe) and ground-moving instrument, and demonstrate their working principle and usage method; the Han Dynasty military history museum can be established as the core of Han Chang'an Wuku site, with emphasis on displaying the cultural relics such as the ruins of Wuku(armory) and its unearthed weapons, and so on, and the scene of ancient war can be reproduced by high-tech means; The commonly used carriages and ox carts in the Han Dynasty as means of transportation in the site area, combined with the newly excavated Weihe River Bridge and the ruins of ancient ships, can establish a museum to show the achievements of the Han Dynasty transportation.

### **3.6. Protection and Display of Indigenous Intangible Cultural Heritage**

The site of Chang'an City of Han Dynasty contains not only extensive and profound Chinese culture, but also intangible cultural heritage such as traditional folk customs left over from various villages in the region. However, in recent years, due to the change of social structure and the increasing of foreign population, many villages and towns have been impacted by urbanization and foreign consumption culture.

Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the investigation of the folk customs of the villages in the district (including the villages that have been demolished) and the collection and arrangement of the village history. At the same time, the intangible cultural heritage itself has historical, artistic, entertainment, education and other values, is a good tourist viewing resources, therefore, through the establishment of the village historical memorial and folk museum, to show its long-standing way of life, traditional customs, so that visitors to the site of the Han Chang'an City can deeply feel the evolving long history and folk customs.

In addition, we should support the development of cultural and creative industries in the site area, encourage the public to create more jobs, build a bridge between the residents of the site area and the enterprises and design units, and create more employment opportunities while developing original cultural products with Chinese characteristics, national characteristics and regional traditional characteristics, and creating the cultural and creative brand of the site of the Han Chang'an City, so as to promote the harmonious symbiosis between the site and the residents.

## **4. Conclusion**

As the best of the cultural heritage, the vast area of the site determines the existence of a large

number of villages in the area. The production and life of the original residents of the site are closely related to the site, which contains both damaging factors and potential for protection. Residents are the carrier of heritage and sharing of the cultural heritage of Han Chang'an City, and the sustainable development of Han Chang'an City site can not be separated from the residents of the site area. First of all, we should resolve the remaining problems of the displaced residents, mediate the contradictions between the existing residents and the sites on this basis, support the participation of the masses and social self-government organizations in the management of the sites, improve the environment and infrastructure in the areas, strengthen publicity and education, promote the development and utilization of the material and intangible cultural heritage, and ease the conflict between the protection of cultural relics and economic and social development in the sites.

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