

**A MODERN URBAN PARK PRODUCED BY THE COMPLEX SOCIAL
RELATIONS OF CHINESE CITY IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC OF CHINA:
JIANGBEI PARK IN CHONGQING, CHINA, 1927**

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Abstract:

This article aims to study the intrinsic relationship between the complex social relations in the urban space of Chongqing, China in 1927, and the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park, which is based on Lefebvre's view that "Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations, but it is also producing and produced by social relations." So, the result research in the paper mainly involves two aspects: 1). The complex social relationship in the urban space of China and Chongqing in 1927, both of them were in the period of turbulent social change. 2). How Jiangbei Park, as a new type of space symbolizing urban modernization, was produced by the social relations and what unique spatial characteristics it presented. The data of the above two aspects are collected from the historical literature and historical images, such as the documents of Chongqing government during the warlord period and the Republic of China period. From the theories of urban sociology, landscape design and spatial design, the data analysis in the article is according to the social relations, motivation, and construction process of Jiangbei Park, as well as the spatial characteristics of the park, such as its space pattern, functional planning, and landscape imagery. Thus, the paper reveals the mutual relationship between the complex social relations in the urban space of China and Chongqing in 1927, and the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park, with the former molded the latter, while the spatial characteristics of the latter profoundly represented the complexity of the former.

Keywords: Modern urban park / Chinese urban modernization / The production of space / Jiangbei Park / Jiangbeicheng, Chongqing, China

Chinese modern urban parks were first built by colonists in the concession. They are essentially different from Chinese ancient gardens in terms of spatial function and spatial nature. With the modernization development of Chinese cities, as a new type of space, modern urban parks have become the symbol of the modernization of Chinese classical urban space. Especially in the early Republic of China, a large number of modern urban parks were created in cities at all levels, including inland cities, and under the influence of multiple complex factors such as modern Chinese history, politics, and social relations, the parks have developed unique spatial characteristics.

In this article, the early Republic of China refers to the early years of the National Government of the Republic of China in the 1920s and 1930s. At the beginning of the 20th century, more than 30 years before the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the modernization of Chinese cities entered a period of comprehensive development, and the modernization transformation of cities was obvious (Yimin He, 2004:133). While this article focuses on the 1920s, the period before and after the establishment of the National Government of the Republic of China in 1927. Gibert Rozman believed that the 1920s was of great significance to China's modernization. During this period, China's society was turbulent and its politics was divided, but at the same time, the nationalist trend of thought seeking national unification was rising. The establishment of the government of the National Government of the Republic of China met the initial and most strategic needs of the modernization plan (Gibert Rozman, 1982:209). That is to say, the 1920s was the most complex period of social relations in modern China. However, it was these social relations that promoted the transformation of China's social modernization and also provided the impetus for urbanization. Then, the urban parks appeared in this period are also facing the most complex social relations, and the production of space is bound to be dominated and affected by the complex social relations, and Jiangbei Park is one of them.

Jiangbei Park was founded in 1927, located in Jiangbeicheng, Chongqing, China. It was one of the symbols of Chongqing's modernization at that time and was praised as "the top park" due to the large area and unique spatial characteristics. Chongqing is located in the interior of southwest China. After more than 2000 years of urban development, the city has formed a space pattern composed of two walled cities on both sides of the Jialing River. Jiangbeicheng is one of them. As shown in Figure 1, this is a closed urban space enclosed by walls, which is a typical Chinese classical city. In 1927, driven by the Warlord Government, Chongqing entered a period of continuous urban modernization reform. The transformation of urban space had a great impact on social relations, especially the game between the Warlord Government and the local gentry. The gentry in Jiangbeicheng was one of them, and they tried their best to promote the modernization of Jiangbeicheng. It can be said that, in 1927, the closed and static classical urban space of Chongqing was full of various social relations and interest disputes, and Jiangbei Park was born here. Lefebvre believes that, "(Social) Space is a (social) Product." (Lefebvre Henri, 1974: 26) Undoubtedly, the Jiangbei Park in 1927 is the product of the complex social relations that permeate the urban space of Chongqing and has formed its unique spatial characteristics. In this sense, Jiangbei Park can be regarded as a realistic manifestation of Lefebvre's viewpoint. Therefore, this paper takes it as a sample to study the internal relationship between social relations and spatial characteristics in a real situation.

And there are a lot of studies related to modern urban parks in China, especially in Chinese, such as Yuezhi Xiong's *The Opening of Private Gardens and the Expansion of Public Space in Shanghai in the Late Qing Dynasty*, Deying Li's paper *Urban Public Space and Urban Social Life: Taking Modern Urban Parks as an Example*, Yunxi Chen's paper *The Conflict between Colonialism and Nationalism in Daily Life: An Investigation Centered on Modern Chinese Parks*, Haibin Dai's paper *Central Park and Beijing Society in the Early Republic of China*. While, due to the language limitations of historical materials, there are few relevant English researches, the representative is *From Imperial Gardens to Public Parks: The Transformation of Urban Space in Early Twentieth-Century Beijing* written by Shi. MZ. This paper has also been translated into Chinese, which has had a certain impact on Chinese academic circles. Relevant English articles published in recent years include: *The Origins of the Modern Park System of the International Settlement in Shanghai (1899-1929)* written by Mo Fei, Selman Paul, and Woudstra Jan. Sun Yuan and Aoki Nobuo published *Urban Public Space Under a Multicultural Perspective: Research on Tianjin's Modern Parks*, etc.

The above papers show the importance and value of modern urban parks in studying the subject of modernization of Chinese cities, but the park samples are mostly located in big cities with a high level of modernization in the Republican period, such as Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Guangzhou, and there is a lack of research on modern parks in Chongqing, the inland cities in China, especially Jiangbei Park. And most of these papers conduct research from sociological and historical perspectives, exploring the social role and historical significance of urban parks in the process of modernization of Chinese cities. However, the urban park as a space entity, there are very few related researches exploring the inner relationship between its spatial characteristics and social relations in modern China, which is exactly the object of this article, and the author hopes to expand the research dimension of China's modern urban parks. Moreover, Chongqing was a very special local city in the early years of the Republic of China. As the economic center of the upper reaches of the Yangtze River since ancient times, Chongqing has become a port city that penetrated into the hinterland of China in modern times. The city is a hub connecting closed inland areas in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River of southwest China with developed regions. As a result, Chongqing has shown both closed and open characteristics in terms of urban space, social relations, and economic development (Jin Zhang, 2003: 14-18). These urban characteristics will inevitably increase the complexity and contradiction of social relations, and it will become more variable and conflicting when it acts in the urban park space. In addition, Jiangbei Park was built under the leadership of the Jiangbeicheng gentry class, which involved the game relationship between the Warlord Government and the local gentry, and the social relationship that affected its space was even more complicated. Therefore, from the perspective of spatial politics theory, Jiangbei Park is also a research sample with empirical significance.

Objectives

To study the intrinsic relationship between the complex social relations in the urban space of Chongqing, China in 1927, and the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park.

Research methods

Basically, this topic is qualitative research and explores a historical issue, so restoring the historical original appearance of Jiangbei Park as much as possible is the basis of the study, which is also the difficulty of the subject. For this reason, the author has done a lot of research on historical documents and images. Fortunately, a large number of detailed documents and archives were left behind during the Chongqing Warlord Government from 1926 to 1937, such as the Monthly Magazine of the Chongqing Commercial Port Governor's Office, the Chongqing Municipal Gazette, Chongqing Municipal Administration in the Past Nine Years, and An Overview of Chongqing City. In addition, historical maps and photographs of Jiangbei Park are included in documents such as Chongqing Landscaping Chronicle, Chongqing Modern Urban Architecture, and The Old City of Chongqing, and these provide very visual information for restoring its original historical appearance.

The above documents, images, maps, and drawings provide solid support for the argument of this paper, but these seemingly detailed historical and pictorial materials are very fragmented and lack relevance. Therefore, the excavation, comparison, and analysis of historical data, to summarize the causal relationships are also the basic path of this research. Following the objectives of this article, the author first sorted the data into two aspects: the complex social relations of Jiangbeicheng, Chongqing, and China in 1927 and the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park. Then, from the theories of urban sociology, landscape design, and spatial design, the above data analysis is according to the social relations, motivation, and construction process of Jiangbei Park, as well as the spatial characteristics of the park, such as its space pattern, functional planning, and landscape imagery.

Research result

1. The complex social relations in the space

1.1 China, Chongqing, and Jiangbeicheng in 1927

In 1927, Chinese society was in the climax of anti-imperialist and anti-feudalism. And the Nanjing Nationalist Government was also established this year, it nominally unified the entire nation, but its ruling power in the country was still very weak, and the situation of warlord separatism was not over yet. In 1927, Chongqing was also under the control of the Warlord Government too, which is independent of the Central Government and the Sichuan Government, "almost completely autonomous" (Robert A. Kapp, 1973: 14). The fundamental goal of the Warlord Government was to grab as much wealth as possible from Chongqing to finance the military, but in order to gain the support of the local gentry and gain popular acceptance of its legitimacy, the Warlord Government initiated the modernization of Chongqing between 1926 and 1937, and the earliest modern urban parks in Chongqing, such as Jiangbei Park and Central Park, were built during this period.

Sen-dou Chang listed Chongqing as a prominent sample of a Multiple City in his paper *The Morphology of Walled Capitals*. He argues that Chongqing during Late Imperial China consisted of two walled cities, Ba County and Jiangbeicheng (the Jiangbei County seat), both of which had County Offices (Sen-dou Chang, 1977:101). Actually, in the feudal administrative establishment of the late Qing Dynasty, Jiangbeicheng and Ba County were county-level administrative divisions of equal rank, both subordinate to the jurisdiction of Chongqing Prefecture. In 1921, the Warlord Government began to establish the modern municipal system of Chongqing, and the above two walled cities were both very clearly

assigned to the jurisdiction of the modern Chongqing Municipality at the beginning (Figure 1) (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat, 1936: 27-28). Moreover, in 1921, Sen Yang, the warlord who was then the top governor of Chongqing's local government, set Jiangbeicheng as the target area of Chongqing's urban expansion and developed a grand urban construction plan, spent huge sums of money to build the modern road in Jiangbeicheng which is the first one in Chongqing's history. However, this ambitious plan was aborted the following year when Sen Yang fled the war and the road was washed away by floods. And in 1926 Wenhua Pan, a military officer became the top official of the Chongqing Warlord Government. He considered Sen Yang's plan to expand the city northward across the Jialing River was very expensive and unrealistic, so he changed the direction of urban modernization expansion to the west, a large area in the west of Yuzhong Peninsula outside the city wall of Ba County (Figure 1) (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat, 1936: 8).

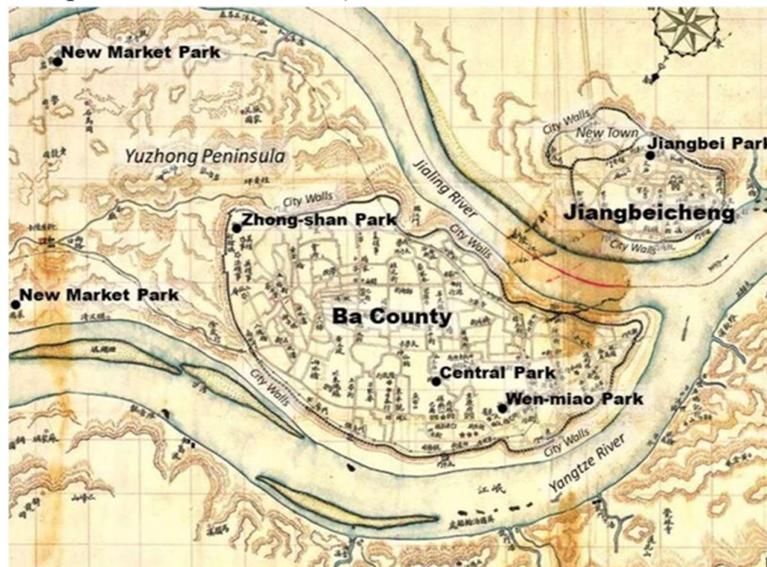


Figure 1 Chongqing, Jiangbeicheng and the urban's modern parks in the planning of the urban's development in July 1927. The original map: Map of Chongqing Opening Port and Concession in 1907. Source: Yong Lan. (Ed.). (2013). Study on Ancient Maps of Chongqing. Chongqing: Southwest Normal University Press: 204

In the urban development plan issued by the Wenhua Pan government in July 1927, five city parks were planned: Central Park, Wen-miao Park, Zhong-shan Park, and two New Market Parks (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927(07): 8-9). All four parks were located on the Yuzhong Peninsula, where Ba County is located, with Central Park and Wen-miao Park in the center of the county, Zhong-shan Park adjacent to the city walls on the southwest side of the county, and the two New Market Parks were located in the new urban area expanded outside the city wall in the west. The location layout of the parks clearly shows the urban planning intention of Wenhua Pan's government to develop to the west (Figure 1). In fact, this report still includes plans for traffic engineering and municipal construction, which are not involved in Jiangbeicheng. Instead, the urban governance planning of Jiangbeicheng was prepared by the Jiangbei Office in consultation with the local gentry. In April 1927, the office reported First-Year Administrative Plan to be Submitted by Jiangbeicheng Office of

Chongqing Commercial Port (hereinafter referred to as First-Year Administrative Plan) to the Warlord Government and obtained its approval. This detailed urban development plan covered all aspects of urban governance, including municipal affairs, municipal facilities, transportation facilities, markets, docks, culture, and education, etc., and the plan of Jiangbei Park was among

them, and was the only new construction project (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927(04): 1-11, 22-23). The above two plans for the modernization of the city show that the Warlord Government had excluded Jiangbeicheng from its plans, which meant that it would lose government investment, while the gentry actively promoted the modernization of Jiangbeicheng and sought government investment in order to avoid being marginalized in the plans of city's development. The differences and games between the Warlord Government and the local gentry on the development of the city's modernization formed a delicate and complex relationship between the two.

1.2. The conflicts in the construction process of Jiangbei Park

From 1926 to 1927, after consultation with the local gentry, the Jiangbei office proposed a plan to develop Kong-lin (Confucius Forest), a hillside behind the Confucian Temple, into the park (Chongqing Garden Administration Bureau. Ed., 1993: 21), and included the plan in the First-Year Administrative Plan. In July 1927, the Jiangbei office submitted the Jiangbei Park Preparation Office Organization Outline and Phased Construction Plan and Park Map (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927 (07): 59-64). This document confirms that Jiangbei Park Preparatory Office is fully responsible for the fund raising, park design, construction, and so on, which is an organization composed of social elites recommended by the gentry. The office has formulated a plan to build Jiangbei Park in four stages. It is expected that the project will be completed within five months. It has also planned in detail the specific methods to raise project funds by selling the public property of Jiangbei County, the specific construction tasks of each stage, and the functions of various facilities and buildings in the park. However, the construction process of Jiangbei Park was not as smooth as the above plan envisaged. From the historical data, the biggest problem of the project is the shortage of construction funds. In August and October 1927, the Jiangbei office submitted two petitions to the Warlord Government to fund the project (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927 (08): 60-62, Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927 (10): 56). In the end, only more than 10,000 Yuan was allocated by the government, which accounted for only a small part of the project funds. The total cost of Jiangbei Park is more than 120,000 Yuan, most of which was obtained from the sale of public property in Jiangbei County, and some parts were funded by the donation of gentry (Chongqing Local Chronicles Compilation Committee. Ed., 1999: 539). The lack of funds resulted in several years of work in fits and starts, and it was not until 1929 that the project was initially completed and opened (Chongqing Garden Administration Bureau. Ed., 1993: 21). And according to the Municipal Administration of Chongqing in the past nine years, Jiangbei Park “has been delayed due to lack of funds, and the completion date is June 1933” (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat, 1936: 55).

2. The spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park

2.1 Site selection of Jiangbei Park

The gentry of Jiangbeicheng thought that the best site for the city park was Jiangbei New Town, but since a park here would have to be built completely new and cost a great deal of money. So, the site of Jiangbei Park was chosen as the Kong-lin (Confucius Forest) behind the Confucian Temple, which is located in the center of the city, with uneven ancient trees and superior natural landscape conditions, and could be built with less money (Chongqing

Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927(04): 6). When Jiangbei Park was finally completed, its scope greatly exceeded that of Kong-lin. The public lands such as Kong-lin, Confucian Temple, Min-ce Hall, Ji-cang, Qian-ting-shu, the former site of Jiangbei Middle School and more than 20 purchased private real estates and the land donated by Wang Jing-wen Hall are included in the park. The park covers an area of 3.17 hectares (Figure 2) (Chongqing Local Chronicles Compilation Committee. Ed., 1999: 539). According to the Municipal Administration of Chongqing in the Past Nine Years and the Jiangbeicheng Community Chronicle, in addition to the surrounding plots of Confucian Temple and Kong-lin, some part was the Back Garden of Jiangbei County Hall in the early Republic of China, which also had good natural landscape conditions at that time (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat, 1936: 55, Chongqing Jiangbeicheng District Office. Ed., 2009: 412). In the end, the area of Jiangbei Park has increased several times compared with the original planning. The Central Park built in the same period is only 1.34 hectares, and Jiangbei Park is more than twice that, so only in terms of area, Jiangbei Park can be called “the top park” at that time.

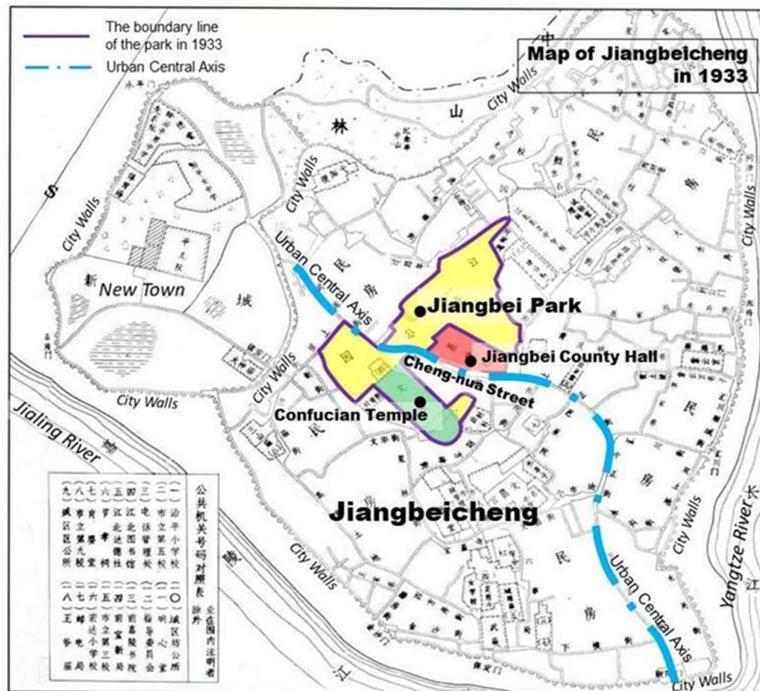


Figure 2 The urban pattern of Jiangbei Park and Jiangbeicheng in 1933. The original map: Jiangbeicheng District Street Map in 1933. Source: Zhiya He. (2010). The Old City of Chongqing. Chongqing: Chongqing Press: 176

Figure 2 is the map of Jiangbei City in 1933 the time Jiangbei Park was completed. The map clearly shows the location of Jiangbei Park and its relationship with the space pattern of the

whole city. The Park is exactly in the city center of Jiangbei City, where the Confucian Temple and the Jiangbeicheng County Government were once located. Ancient Chinese cities were often centered on the County Government, which was connected to the urban central axis. Jiangbeicheng is no exception, but the space layout of the city has typical characteristics of a mountain city, its urban axis is a winding road along the ridge shape undulated, and the County Government and Confucian Temple are just on both sides of the urban axis street. As shown in

Figure 2, Jiangbei Park covers two parts: the Confucian Temple and the Back Garden of the County Hall. Therefore, the park straddles both sides of the urban central axis and occupies the central position of the city.

2.2 Space planning of Jiangbei Park

Figure 3 shows The Plan of Jiangbei Park in 1946, which is the earliest and most detailed plan of Jiangbei Park that the author could find so far. The drawing was made at a time when Jiangbei Park had already been damaged in many places due to the effect of the Anti-Japanese War. The Confucian Temple, the Hua-sheng Guan (Gallery), and other park buildings had been occupied by the garrison. Fortunately, however, the plan indicates the site boundaries of Jiangbei Park in 1933, as well as the functions. And referring to the relevant documents, the author can restore the spatial planning of Jiangbei Park.

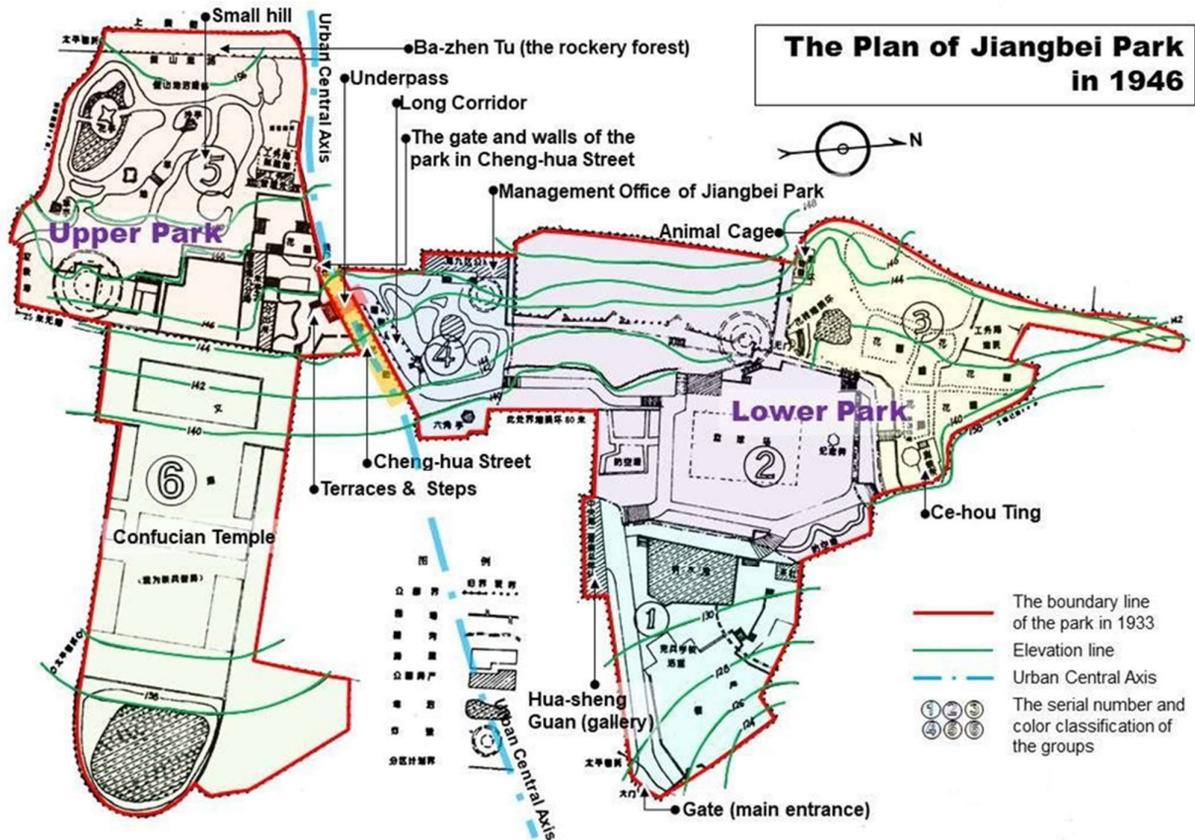


Figure 3 The analysis of function of spatial and plan of Jiangbei Park. The original map: The Plan of Jiangbei Park in 1946. Source: Chongqing Garden Administration Bureau. (Ed.). (1993). Chongqing Landscaping Chronicle. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press: 22

From the plan view, the site shape of Jiangbei Park is very irregular. And to maintain the urban pattern and preserve the city axis road Cheng-hua Street, Jiangbei Park was divided into two parts, connected by an underground passage. Under the above site constraints, the space planning of Jiangbei Park adopted a flexible grouping layout. There are five groups marked by numbers with circles in the 1946 plan (Figure 3). And the map also indicates that the Confucius Temple was included in the boundary of Jiangbei Park when the park was completed in 1933. Thus the park consists of 6 groups with irregular site shapes. Referring to the detailed

description of Jiangbei Park in the 1936 publication *An Overview of Chongqing City*, these 6 groups had different functions (Figure 3). Group ① is the main entrance area of the park, with a pond, fountain, and rockery designed to the north of the entrance boulevard, and a tea house to the east of the pond. To the south of the boulevard is the Hua-sheng Guan (gallery), a display hall for the literature documents, pictures, and films, which was an important place for patriotic education by the government of the Republic of China (Bin Xiong, 2020). Group ② is the sports field area, which was once designed as a women's and children's playground, tennis courts, and basketball courts, as recorded in *An Overview of Chongqing City*. During the period of the Republic of China, the park was not only a space for public physical education but also an important place for patriotic rallies (Bin Xiong, 2020). Group ③ is the zoo area, the southwest corner is the animal cage, and the east corner is Ce-hou Ting, which is the first weather observation station in the history of Chongqing. This group has the function of science education. Group ④ has a small area and is a traffic space connecting the two major parts of the park through the underpass beneath Cheng-hua Street, and the Management Office of Jiangbei Park is also located on the west side of the area too. Group ⑤ is a recreational landscape area. The area is the largest and was originally the Kong-lin (Confucius Forest). The designers took advantage of the original beautiful natural scenery in the area and designed landscape nodes such as the small hill, the pavilions, the bridges, and the rockery forest “Ba-zhen Tu”, etc. These became the famous attractions of Jiangbei Park recorded in many documents (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat. Ed., 1936: 103). Group ⑥ was the original Confucius Temple, and in the First-Year Administrative Plan, the Jiangbeicheng gentry made a plan to open the Confucian Temple for the public to visit. Judging from this document, the Confucian Temple demolished its walls, connected it to Jiangbei Park, and filled the Pan-chi (the pond in front of the Confucian Temple), and set up a stadium, music pavilion, library, showroom, and indoor sports field in the Temple. Thus, the function of Jiangbei Park has been greatly expanded, making it a multi-functional cultural center in Jiangbei City (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927 (04): 6).

2.3 Landscape imagery of Jiangbei Park

The landscape imagery of Jiangbei Park mainly has the following two prominent features:

2.3.1 Mountain Garden

Jiangbei Park has significant mountain garden characteristics, i.e., the varied landscape imagery formed due to the topographic characteristics of the undulating mountains, and the terrain of Jiangbei Park has typical mountain characteristics. Figure 3 shows the elevation of Jiangbei Park. The lowest point of the park in the southeast is marked at 124 meters, and the

highest point of the park in the northwest is 156 meters, with a difference of 32 meters in terrain height. The huge difference in elevation creates special landscape imagery and spatial experience in Jiangbei Park, which leaves such a strong impression on visitors that residents of Jiangbeicheng call the lower northern part of the park as the “Lower Park” and the higher southern part as the “Upper Park” (Chongqing Jiangbei District Toponymic Compilation Group. Ed., 1982:82). Moreover, as shown in The Plan of Jiangbei Park (Figure 3), to cope with the complex mountainous terrain, a complex road system consisting of steps or underpasses has been designed to connect six groups, the most representative of which is the underpass connecting the “Upper Park” and “Lower park”(Figure 4). As shown in the figure, Cheng-hua Street is the important road on the urban central axis, in order to keep the urban pattern, a 3.4- meter-high, 3-meter-span, 4.8-meter-deep tunnel was digging underneath the street to connect the two parts of the park. And the road along the street was raised appropriately and a unique wall was built on both sides to completely separate it from the park. In this way, the arterial road and the park do not interfere with each other (Figure 5). Inside the park, the side of the Lower Park is connected to the underpass by a long corridor, giving people a gentle spatial feeling. After passing through the underpass and entering the Upper Park, the landscape imagery and space experience become steeper. Several steps and terraces are connected to the underpass, leading to the small hill in the group⑤. This series of designs strengthen the experience of the height difference for visitors from the underpass to the hill, creating a spatial interest in mountaineering. Overview of Chongqing Municipality describes this unique space experience of mountain garden landscape as: Visitors pass through the windowed veranda and the long corridor (Tingfeng Lang), and then climb the small hill. Although it is not high and steep, it gives visitors a spatial feeling of being in the mountains and forests (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat. Ed., 1936: 103).

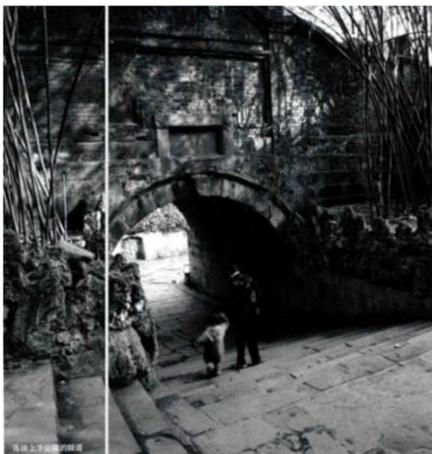


Figure 4 The underpass in Jiangbei Park. Source: Zhiya He. (2010). *The Old City of Chongqing*. Chongqing: Chongqing Press: 176.



Figure 5 Cheng-hua Street and the walls of Jiangbei Park. Source: Modern Mythology, (Sep 07, 2016). *The Quaint Street, Cheng-hua Street*. Retrieved May 23, 2022, from <https://www.meipian.cn/5toy09u>

In addition, Jiangbeicheng is located on the peninsula between the two rivers, so the topography gradually rises from the riverbank at the tip of the peninsula to the foothills in the northwest, in a sloped shape. Jiangbei Park is located at the top of this slope. According to relevant documents, its altitude is 225 meters. Figure 6 shows the profile of Jiangbeicheng taken by American Sidney D. Gamble in 1917. The pavilion shown in the photo is Wen-xing Ge (tower)

in the Confucian Temple. Before it was bombed in 1939, the building had been the commanding height of the center of Jiangbeicheng. During this period, the Confucian Temple was part of Jiangbei Park. Therefore, it can be inferred that the location of Jiangbei Park is at the top left of the picture where the mountain forest and buildings including the pavilion, which is on the city's highland (Figure 6, Figure 7). As the photograph shows, the view from Jiangbei Park was unobstructed, thus creating a unique viewpoint which the visitor can overlook the two rivers from the highland of the park. The *Three Thousand Years of Humanistic History: An Investigation of Jiangbei District, Chongqing* likens the distinctive topographical features of Jiangbei Park and the space experience of the mountain city to “a tiger perched on a high slope overlooking the two rivers” (here “tiger” is the metaphor of Jiangbei Park) (Qingzhong Li, Ed., 2009: 63).

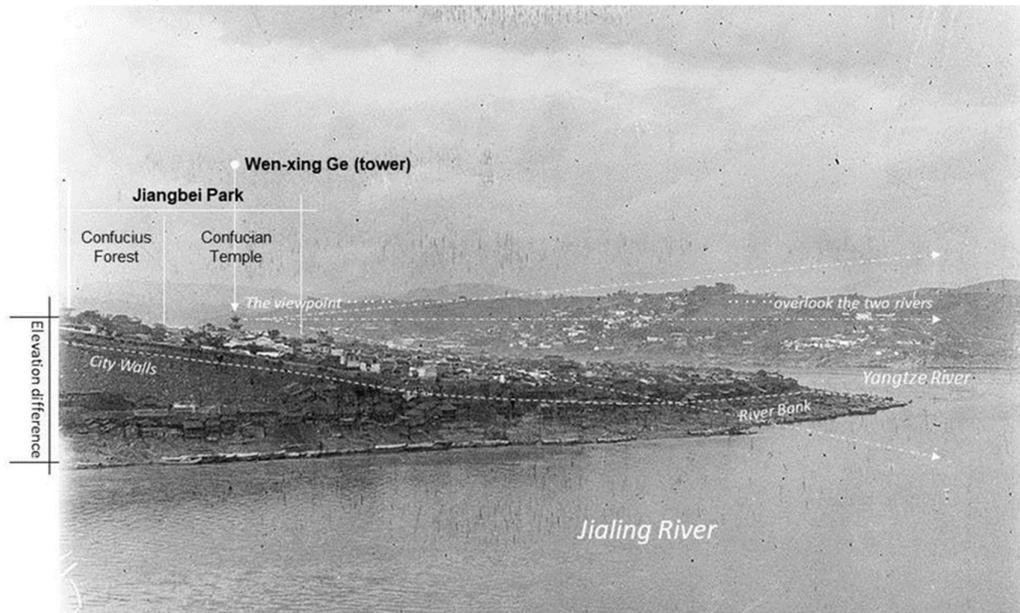


Figure 6 The analysis of the topography of Jiangbeicheng and the viewpoint of the landscape of Jiangbei Park

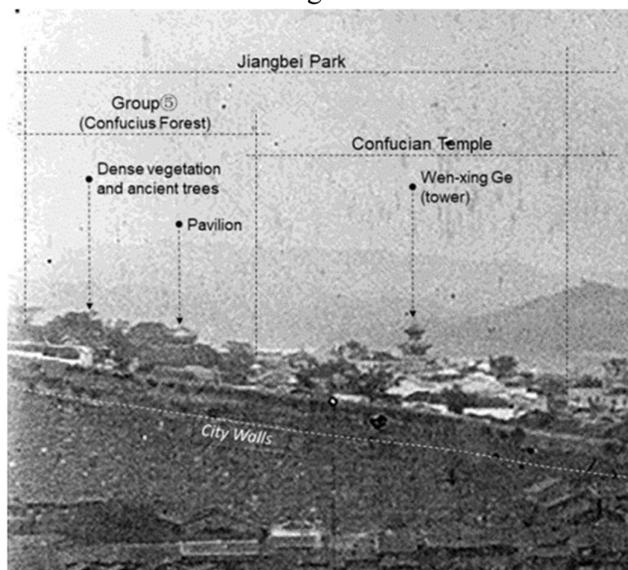


Figure 7 Enlarged part of the photo (The section of Jiangbei Park)

Source of original photo in figure 6, 7: Sidney D. Gamble. (1917). Sidney D. Gamble Photographs Collection. Duke University David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Retrieved May 24, 2022, from

https://repository.duke.edu/dc/gamble/gamble_081A_454

Note: this original photo was credited as Suining, Sichuan, China on the website of Duke University, but Prof. Yuzhen Yang, School of architecture and urban planning, Chongqing University, believes that the photo was Jiangbeicheng, Chongqing, China (Yuzhen Yang, 2018: 398). The author agree with Yuzhen Yang after comparing this photo with other relevant image data in the same period.

2.3.2 Chinese Garden (Traditional style)

The second characteristic of the landscape imagery of Jiangbei Park is the distinct tendency toward the traditional style of Chinese garden. Although the individual park buildings show an imitation and eclectic style of the Western classical style, which was also a popular architectural style in China in the 1920s and 1930s (Shaozhou Wang, 1987: 8-12), the overall landscape imagery shows that Jiangbei Park not only basically adopts the landscape elements of the Chinese traditional style, but also continues the traditional design concept of Chinese gardens in its space layout.

First of all, the space design of Jiangbei Park reflects the traditional design concept of Chinese gardens, which pursues reproducing the flexibility and variability of natural space.

Figure 8 shows a corner of Jiangbei Park in the 1930s, in which the pavilion, boulevard, and climbable rockery are distributed in three spaces of different elevations, and the boundaries of the three spaces undulate along the terrain, naturally forming organic curves. In the plan of Jiangbei Park, we can find that the space design adopts many such organic curves, and the shapes of these curves are mostly based on the original elevation lines of the site (Figure 3,

Figure 8). The plan form of space of such natural organic curves is different from the geometric shape of the plan of Western-style garden. This is due to the large difference in elevation of the Jiangbei Park site and the extremely irregular shape of the site. While in view of the limited funds, the park did not conduct large-area site leveling, nor did it change the pattern of urban during the construction process. Instead, according to the design principles formulated in the First-Year administrative Plan, the park “build the paths along the terrain and the pavilions according to the mountains.” (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927(04): 6) This is an extremely cost-saving design principle but also can greatly maintain the spatial characteristics of the mountainous terrain and the original natural appearance of the site. The design principle not only can save money, but also conforms to the traditional design idea of reproducing nature in Chinese gardens, which is a common space design technique.

Secondly, the landscape design of Jiangbei Park mainly adopts the traditional elements of the Chinese garden, and the overall landscape imagery and artistic conception presented the significant Chinese traditional style. In his book *Chinese Garden*, the Swedish scholar Osvald Sirén summarizes the traditional elements of Chinese garden as Shan-Shui (literally, “mountain-water”), plant, and building. The term “Shan” (mountain) refers to the use of

rockeries in Chinese gardens to create the artistic conception of the natural mountain. Osvald Sirén considers the rockery as the most original element that makes up the distinctive Chinese garden (Osvald Sirén, 2017:15). And the combination of rockeries and water features (Shui) forms the unique landscape imagery of “Shan-Shui” in Chinese gardens. Rockeries and water features are widely used in the landscape design of Jiangbei Park, and from the description in Overview of Chongqing Municipality, all four of the six groups in the park use rockery and water elements, except for the sports field and the Confucian Temple (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat, Ed., 1936:103). The most famous landscape node of Jiangbei Park, the “Ba-zhen Tu” which is recorded in all relevant documents, is also a Chinese maze garden formed by stacking rockeries (Chongqing Garden Administration Bureau, Ed., 1993: 21; Chongqing Local Chronicles Compilation Committee, Ed., 1999: 539). In Overview of Chongqing Municipality, according to the landscape sequence of visitors' tour, the author used a lot of space to describe the four nodes designed by Shan-Shui elements in the six groups of Jiangbei Park, and summarizes the feeling of this landscape sequence as: When you travel here (the last node of the whole landscape sequence), you feel like you are on a rocky beach in nature. This is a typical imagery of Chinese garden that based on the landscape elements reproduced the beauty of nature. So, obviously, the design of Jiangbei Park not only adopts Chinese traditional elements but also focuses on creating a Chinese garden artistic conception.

The landscape design of plants of Jiangbei Park also adopts the traditional way, as shown

In

Figure 8 and Figure 9, which are photos of Jiangbei Park in Chongqing Municipal Administration in the Past Nine Years, whose landscape imagery of plant was full of natural and wild interests that were different from the geometric and regular Western-style gardening. In addition, Jiangbei Park was expanded from the Kong-lin (Confucius Forest) and the Back Garden of the County Hall. According to the First-Year Administrative Plan, the original vegetation environment of these two sites was good, and there were many ancient trees (Chongqing Commercial Port Supervision Office, 1927(04): 6). And the image in Gamble's photos also intuitively confirm this point (Figure 7). These ancient trees were preserved during the construction process of Jiangbei Park, which became the most representative landscape imagery after the project was completed. The Municipal Administration in the Past Nine Years specifically describes the ancient trees in Jiangbei Park, “there are several ancient trees, which can be surrounded by many people. The canopy is so huge that it seems to cover the sky. It is said that these trees are more than 200 years old, which is rare in old cities.” (Chongqing Municipal Secretariat, 1936: 55)

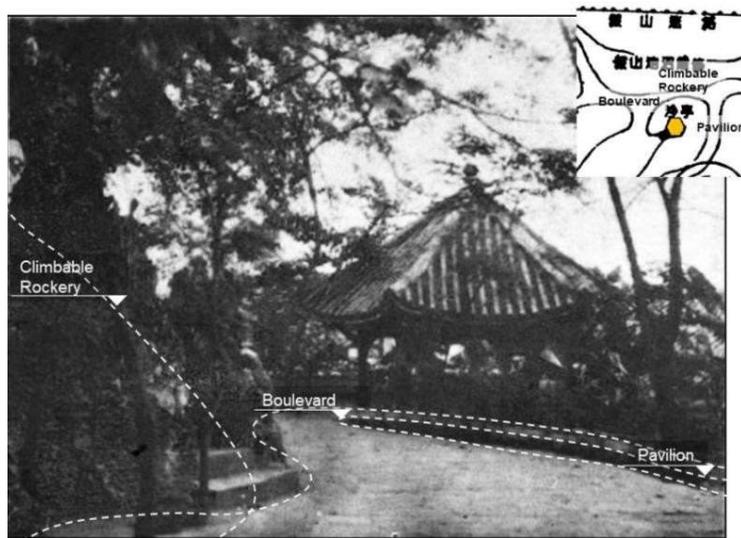


Figure 8 The analysis of the landscape of a corner of Jiangbei Park in 1933. Source of original photo: Chongqing Municipal Secretariat. (1936). Chongqing Municipal Administration in the Past Nine Years. Beijing: Beijing Library Collection.



Figure 9 The landscape imagery of a corner of Jiangbei Park in 1933. Source of original photo: Chongqing Municipal Secretariat. (1936). Chongqing Municipal Administration in the Past Nine Years. Beijing: Beijing Library Collection.

There are not many buildings in Jiangbei Park, mainly Chinese-style pavilions and attics. From the descriptions in documents such as Overview of Chongqing Municipality, Chongqing Municipal Administration in the Past Nine Years, Chongqing Architecture Annals, and so on, there are two main types of buildings in Jiangbei Park in the 1930s: landscape buildings and buildings with specific functions. The landscape buildings in Jiangbei Park are small in size, but large in number. The related literature lists Shui Xie (waterside pavilion), Ting-feng Lang (long corridor), Le-guan Ting (pavilion), Feng-yan-qi-gu Ting (pavilion), Shui-xin Ting (pavilion), the small bridge, the thatched pavilion, Grape Corridor, etc. Judging from above names, these buildings should adopt the typical architectural form of Chinese gardens. The architectural style of the pavilions in

Figure 8 and Figure 9 is completely Chinese traditional style, which also confirms this speculation. The buildings with specific functions in Jiangbei Park are large in size but less in number. Documented ones include the Hua-sheng Guan (gallery), the Ce-hou Ting, the Management Office of Jiangbei Park, the gate and the walls of Jiangbei Park in Cheng-hua

Street. Judging from the information the author has obtained so far, Hua-sheng Guan (gallery) lacks records of relevant literature and picture. And Figure 10 shows Ce-hou Ting, which is a traditional Chinese architectural style. Figure 11 shows the Management Office of Jiangbei Park, with elements such as vaulted corridors, sharp-angled spire facades, and Western classical columns, so the architecture was the imitation of Western classical style obviously, which was a popular architectural style in China in the 1930s. The gate and walls of Jiangbei Park in Cheng-hua Street adopt an eclecticism style that mixes Chinese and Western elements. As shown in Figure 12, the arched lintel and doorway, as well as the columns, are typical of Western classical architectural elements, while the supporting walls on both sides adopt the curved shape commonly used in Chinese gardens to echo the arched form, forming an eclectic style. Figure 13 shows the walls of Jiangbei Park (Cheng-hua Street section) and the underpass. The basic shape of the walls in the picture adopted the “cloud wall” style common in traditional Chinese gardens. The wall at the corresponding position of the underpass in the park is designed with an acute angle shape and decorative column head. This shape design with Western classical architectural characteristics forms an eclecticism style and echoes the spire facade shape of the park’s office. It can be said that the eclecticism style of the gate and walls of the park in Cheng-hua Street is a transition, which unifies the Chinese classical style of the landscape architecture of Jiangbei Park and the Western classical style of the Management Office of Jiangbei Park. While, from the perspective of the entire Jiangbei Park, the architectural style is generally consistent with the landscape imagery of Chinese garden. The proportion of buildings imitating Western classical style and eclecticism was very small, which did not form an impact on the traditional Chinese landscape imagery. As in Figure 13, the rockery, the pond, and the bamboo, which is a symbol of classical Chinese culture, are the main landscape elements that determine the traditional style of this park, while the eclecticism style and the Western classical style buildings have a smaller proportion in the whole park, and just played the role of embellishment and setting off. Therefore, the overall evaluation of Jiangbei Park's landscape imagery in Overview of Chongqing Municipality is “The landscape of the entire park is distinguished by trees and rockeries”, while the summary of Central Park’s landscape points out that “the scenery in the park is a mixture of Chinese and Western styles” (Chongqing Municipal Government Secretariat. Ed., 1936: 103), which shows that the two parks built at the same time have obvious differences in the visual style of landscape imagery, each with its characteristics.



Figure 10 Ce-hou Ting



Figure 11 Management Office of Jiangbei Park



Figure 12 The gate and walls of Jiangbei Park in Cheng-hua Street



Figure 13 The walls of Jiangbei Park (Cheng-hua Street section) and the underpass

Source: Hua Ouyang. (2010). *Modern Urban Architecture in Chongqing*. Chongqing: Chongqing University Press: 175, 187, 197

Conclusion

Above, the author has analyzed the background and complex social relations of Jiangbei Park in 1927, as well as the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park, such as its space pattern, functional planning, and landscape imagery. And Lefebvre argues that, “Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations, but it also is producing and produced by social relations (Lefebvre Henri, 1979:186).” In other words, there is a profound mutual relationship between social relations and space. According to Lefebvre's view, the complex social relations in the urban space of Chongqing in 1927 jointly molded the space of Jiangbei Park, and the spatial characteristics of the park also deeply represented the complexity.

The mutual relationships between the two can be summarized in Chart 1.

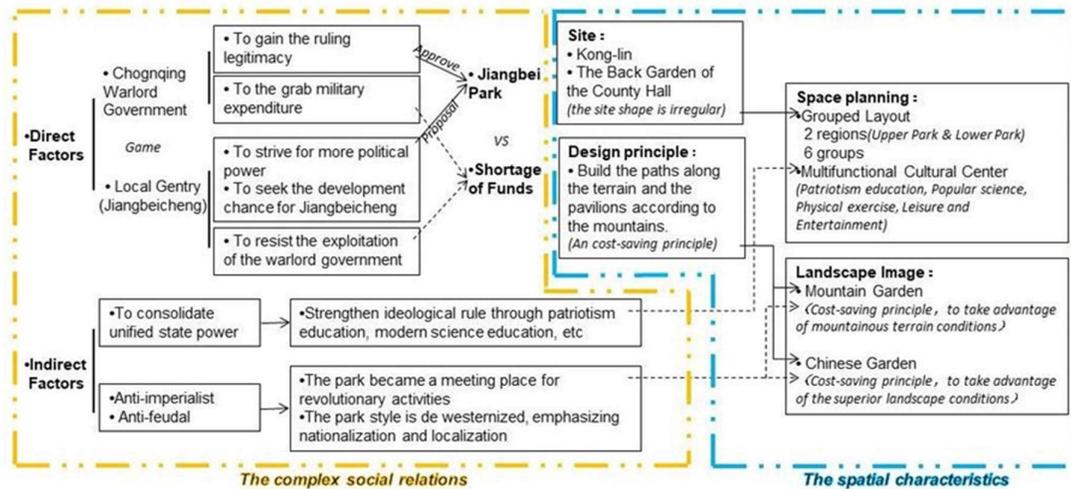


Chart 1 The mutual relationships between the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park and the complex social relations of Chongqing, China in 1927

As shown in Chart 1, the complex social relations that affect the space product of Jiangbei Park can be divided into two levels: direct factors and indirect factors, and the spatial characteristics of Jiangbei Park represent these factors from different levels.

1) The direct factors refer to the local social relations in Chongqing where Jiangbeicheng was located. On the one hand, the Warlord Government tried to establish the legitimacy of its governance through the modernization of the city. But at the same time, it tried to grab wealth from Chongqing to its military expenditure. On the other hand, the local gentry in Chongqing tried to gain more political power in the process of urban modernization, while they also extremely rejected the exploitation by warlords. Therefore, a delicate game relationship was formed between warlords and gentry. This game relationship was prominently reflected in the lack of construction funds in the Jiangbei Park project.

Therefore, the gentry gave up the new city, which needed a lot of construction money, when choosing the site of Jiangbei Park, and chose the Kong-lin (Confucius Forest) and the Back Garden of the County Hall, which had better landscape conditions. This resulted in the Jiangbei Park site having a large elevation difference, an extremely irregular shape, and being divided into two large blocks by the city's main road. To solve the problem of the land parcel under the condition of limited funds, Jiangbei Park did not conduct large-scale land parcel leveling but adopted the flexible way to organize the space with two major areas, the Upper Park and the Lower Park, and the six groups.

Due to the funds shortage, the gentry formulated the park design principle of “build the paths along the terrain and the pavilions according to the mountains”, which is based on saving construction costs. Following this design conception, the designers of Jiangbei Park made full use of the original topographical conditions of the site to design the landscape imagery with the obvious characteristics of mountain gardens. The designer also took the advantage of the original natural landscape and vegetation of the site, without large-scale plant transformation, to design the landscape imagery with the natural landscape characteristics of Chinese gardens.

2) The indirect factors refer to the complex relationship of Chinese society in 1927. The newly established Nanjing Nationalist Government was trying to establish a unified and powerful regime. Municipal construction projects, including the modern urban parks, were

signs of the advanced status of the regime (Wenxue Tu, Lu Gao, 2013: 117-121). Meanwhile, patriotism education, modern science education, and physical education were also important channels for the Nanjing National Government to strengthen ideological rule, and the modern urban park just provides space and place for the development of these educations. Therefore, modern urban parks in China during this period have many functions, especially education. From 1926 to 1937, the Chongqing Warlord Government launched the urbanization construction of the city, taking Shanghai and other coastal cities in China as an example, so it flaunted its progressiveness by building a modern urban park and setting a variety of functions in the park. Jiangbei Park was no exception, after completion, it has become a multi-functional cultural center of the whole Jiangbeicheng.

In addition, in 1927, Chinese society was at the upsurge of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movement, and parks were important places for people to gather for revolution. Moreover, driven by the nationalist trend, the landscape design of urban parks began to emphasize national style and local characteristics (Yunqian Chen, 2005: 82-95). Therefore, the style of the Chinese garden presented in the landscape imagery of Jiangbei Park was not only to save money but also reflected the widespread influence of nationalist thinking at that time.

Discussion

Lefebvre noted that “Space has been fashioned and molded from historical and natural elements, but in a political way (Lefebvre Henri, 1970:170-171).” From this perspective, Jiangbei Park is the spatial product of the political process of the game between gentry and warlords.

Lefebvre's words make it clear that the way space is produced is a political way. This is particularly prominent in the fundraising methods and site selection of Jiangbei Park. Most of the funds for Jiangbei Park were obtained by selling the public properties of the old regime, which showed the absolute control of the gentry and the local government over the spatial properties of the old regime. Lefebvre said, “Is space a social relation? Yes, certainly, but in the relation of property (the ownership of land, in particular), it is also linked to the productive forces that fashion this land (Lefebvre Henri, 1979: 186).” The change of land property rights of Jiangbei County's public property shows that social relations and productivity in the urban space of Jiangbeicheng have changed radically in 1927, the new social relations and productive forces in the space have the power to reshape the site. Judging from the site selection of Jiangbei Park, Kong-lin and the Back Garden of the County Hall used to be the Political and Cultural Center of Jiangbeicheng during the imperial period, and it was expanded into a modern urban public space with a symbolic meaning of urban modernization. The subversive transformation strongly represents the transfer of spatial political rights between the old and new regimes, as well as the transformation of the urban social structure. As Lefebvre said, “Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally populated with ideologies (Lefebvre Henri, 1970: 170).” From a strict imperial political ruling center to an enlightened civic public space, Jiangbei Park (former Kong-lin and the Back Garden of the County Hall) is a product populated with

ideologies, and the transformation of its space function symbolizes the shifts in political ideology in space.

As a symbol of the modernization of the city, the city park in 1927 undoubtedly represented a progressive ideology. Lefebvre noted that “Space has become for the state a political instrument of primary importance (Lefebvre Henri, 1979:188)”, and it was because of this political value of urban parks that the Nanjing Republican Government used them as an important space for its ideological domination, the Chongqing Warlord Government's motivation for building modern urban parks was to flaunt its image as an advanced government to gain popular support for its rule, and the Jiangbeicheng gentry took advantage of this to seek more development for their class and district. As a result, Jiangbei Park, like many modern Chinese urban parks, was set up with a variety of functions aimed at ideological education, which “additionally took on many functions that Western parks did not have, and the spatial forms, functions, and themes of Chinese urban parks are complex and heavy.” (Bing Qiu, Fan Zhang, 2016: 124-131). For this reason, the spatial functions of Jiangbei Park are also very diverse. Moreover, the extreme irregularity of its plot form and the complexity of its mountainous terrain further exacerbate the complexity of Jiangbei Park in terms of spatial characteristics.

In addition, the development history of modern Chinese urban parks is unique that it is a product of imperialist colonization. More importantly, with the development of anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movements in China, urban parks became a space symbol of patriotic nationalism in the early twentieth century (Yunqian Chen, 2005: 82-95). This confirms Lefebvre's argument about the historicity of space (Lefebvre Henri, 1979:187). The unique historical trajectory of China's urban parks has given them unique spatial characteristics that are different from those of Western parks. As a modern urban park, Jiangbei Park tends to have a Chinese garden style in its landscape imagery, which reflects the historical peculiarities of modern Chinese urban parks and is the result of a combination of historical and era factors.

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