

# Exploring the Sustainable Development Models of Cultural Heritage in Major International Countries

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## ABSTRACT

Sustainable development is the way to protect, inherit and utilize cultural heritage. This paper explores the sustainable development model of cultural heritage through a logical review and case study of the sustainable development practices of cultural heritage in four major international countries: the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan. In the context of globalization, the study of the sustainable development models of cultural heritage in major international countries is of great reference and significance to other countries in the world.

**Keywords:** cultural heritage; sustainable development; development model

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The sustainable development of cultural heritage has always been a hot topic of concern for people all over the world and has a profound impact on human society. Among the world's major countries, the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan have achieved remarkable success in the sustainable development of their cultural heritage.

## 2. PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE UNITED STATES

### 2.1 Specific approaches to sustainable development of cultural heritage in the USA

Cultural heritage sustainability in the United States is a cross-cutting and distinct role at the federal, state and local levels. The federal government is primarily responsible for formulating an overall strategic plan for sustainable cultural heritage development to ensure consistency of activities across the states. In response to the richness of America's cultural heritage, the federal government has introduced specific conservation programmes for different types of cultural heritage and established special cultural heritage conservation agencies, such as the National Park Service and the Advisory Council on Historic-Cultural Preservation, to provide advice and technical assistance to states and

localities. Under federal policy, local governments emphasize local adaptation, develop conservation programmes and sustainable use regulations adapted to local development, and set up historic heritage conservation offices to implement and supervise the implementation of conservation efforts. Localities are the direct venue for conservation activities. In addition to general civil society organizations, the United States has adopted a 'people-to-people' model of operation, using the Smithsonian Institution's 'quasi-governmental' role to attract more private investment into the cultural heritage sector, fully mobilizing the community and enabling the use and transmission of cultural heritage in the United States. [1]

### 2.2 A typical example of sustainable cultural heritage development in the USA

The Canal National Heritage Corridor is an important attempt to protect linear cultural heritage in the United States, and after more than 30 years of exploration, a more mature operating mechanism has been formed. The US Department of the Interior invests approximately \$1 million per year in the conservation of the corridor's resources and the improvement of its facilities. In addition, the National Park Service, together with local governments or state historic preservation offices, seeks cooperation from various parties to obtain funds for conservation and mobilizes private capital to achieve multiple financing. The Partners Committee is governed by a formal legal instrument of cooperation between the partners. The

cooperation framework of the corridor working group is usually developed in terms of specific projects, in order to make the committee more efficient and to complete the cooperation agreement more effectively and economically. In heritage corridor projects, social forces are always present and play a role, and the public is actively involved in the discussion, establishment and management phases of the programme. It also provides legal support in real time and has introduced three types of legislation relating to heritage corridors: primary legislation, special legislation and related legislation, which provide policy support for the direction of the corridor heritage project.

### ***2.3 Summary of the experience of sustainable development of cultural heritage in the USA***

From the above developments and case studies, the experience of sustainable development of cultural heritage in the United States can be summarized.

The first is the sound legal regulations and organizational structure for the systematization of cultural heritage. Since the introduction of the National Historical and Cultural Preservation Act in 1966 the US has gradually improved its laws and regulations and established a sustainable development system for cultural heritage protection, including a legal system and an operational mechanism. Second, the establishment of policy support and legal protection for the socialization of cultural heritage. The United States has a rich experience in public participation in cultural heritage protection, and has a complete legal guarantee. Thirdly, it has shaped a personalized system of cultural heritage protection and the concept of intermingling. The sustainable conservation of cultural heritage in the US is characterized by a bottom-up approach, combining federal, state and local initiatives, as well as the organic integration of natural and historical heritage, and the concept of complementary conservation and use, which fully demonstrates the value of cultural heritage and forms a sustainable development system with its own characteristics.

## **3. PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE UK**

### ***3.1 Specific approaches to the sustainable development of cultural heritage in the UK***

Cultural heritage in the UK is divided into three main categories: scheduled monuments, registered buildings and conservation areas, which adopt different management schemes. From the Preservation of Monuments Act 1882 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1944 to the current legislative protection of intangible intangible cultural heritage, the UK's

cultural heritage legislation has undergone a process of continuous improvement and refinement. The concept of development has changed from a focus on "conservation" to "protection, use and preservation". At the same time, the UK has developed a mature organizational management system for cultural heritage protection, with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the highest authority for cultural heritage protection, established at the central level to be responsible for the protection of cultural heritage nationwide, and local governments setting up relevant administrative departments and combining the efforts of NGOs to form a three-tier management mechanism. In the UK, the public is the main owner of cultural heritage, and public participation consists of volunteers, civil society organizations, technical staff, social workers or institutions, etc. The government provides financial support to these groups. In addition to government funding, the Heritage Lottery Fund, voluntary activities and income from business activities also play an important role. [3] The UK has a series of cultural heritage education programmes, Youth Roots for young people and Our History My Heritage for the general public, which combine NRM with school and museum education to make good use of and pass on cultural heritage.

### ***3.2 A typical example of sustainable development of cultural heritage in the UK***

Since 1998, John McCarran Architects has been working on constructive conservation, adopting a model of linked regeneration and sustainable development based on both area regeneration and environmental management. The regeneration of the area includes the systematic restoration and conservation of the station and its surroundings, the restoration of the historic façade and the north side of the building, the extension of the western semi-circular arched concourse and the improvement of the operational efficiency of the station. To promote sustainable development of the area, training of professionals and enhancing the well-being of the residents has also become one of the top priorities of the district regeneration. Environmental management includes improving resource efficiency, community hygiene and green facilities.[2] Focusing on the sustainable development of the area, the renovation of historical buildings has achieved effective management of the environment, rational use of resources, economic development of the area and improvement of residents' living standards, realizing the coordinated and sustainable development of nature, culture, economy and society.

### ***3.3 Summary of the experience of sustainable development of cultural heritage in the UK***

From the above specific practices and case studies of

the sustainable development of cultural heritage in the UK, the following lessons can be drawn.

First, cultivating awareness of cultural heritage legislation and protection. Since the first law on cultural heritage protection was promulgated in the UK, the UK has been constantly improving the laws on various aspects of cultural heritage protection, including the concept of protection, the scope of protection and the content of protection, always adhering to legislation as the core. Secondly, the financial management mechanism for cultural heritage has been improved. Guided by the concept of "graded management and coordinated protection", the UK has adopted different management measures for different levels of cultural heritage, established a distinctive financial system, set up a special Heritage Lottery. Thirdly, it is important to focus on cultural heritage education and public participation. Thirdly, it attaches importance to cultural heritage education and public participation. The UK attaches importance to the use and transmission of cultural heritage, and has implemented different cultural heritage education programmes for different groups, so as to cultivate talents for the protection of cultural heritage and enhance the technical level of the cultural heritage protection team. Civil society organizations are an important force in the conservation of cultural heritage in the UK and play a huge role in technical advice, preparation of funds and project construction, so it is important to encourage the active participation of people and organizations in the conservation and use of cultural heritage.

## **4. PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN JAPAN**

### ***4.1 Specific approaches to the sustainable development of cultural heritage in Japan***

Japan enacted the Cultural Property Protection Law in 1950, and amended it three times in 1954, 1975 and 1996, including the introduction of the concept of intangible cultural property and the separate listing of folk cultural property. Japan has defined its cultural heritage into five categories: tangible cultural property, intangible cultural property, folklore cultural property, monuments and traditional building complexes, and later added "buried cultural heritage", "cultural heritage protection technology" and "cultural landscape". Cultural Landscapes", deepening the concept of concerted protection and covering almost all areas of protection. In terms of responsibilities and obligations for cultural heritage protection, Japan has clearly defined the three perspectives of the government, cultural heritage owners and the general public, so that awareness of cultural heritage protection has penetrated into all levels of society and has been carried out in an

orderly manner. In Japan, heritage education is provided from three perspectives: school, vocational and social. Heritage education is carried out through relevant courses and study tours, training for cultural heritage staff, and heritage exhibitions and lectures in the mass media and public places, and has achieved remarkable results.[3] In terms of conservation technology, Japan makes full use of digital technology, using digital recording, digital surveying, digital restoration, digital interpretation, and virtual heritage in the process of excavation and conservation of cultural heritage. The establishment of "cultural heritage databases", digital museums and online websites provides the public with easy access to cultural heritage preservation and research.

### ***4.2 A typical example of sustainable cultural heritage development in Japan***

The Heijo Palace site, the first historical site in Japan to be listed as a World Heritage Site, is located in the north-western part of Nara City and spans several villages, with a core conservation area of 1.2km<sup>2</sup>. The conservation of the Heijōgu site dates back to the end of the Edo period and was a pioneer in the conservation of archaeological sites in Japan, and in the second half of the 20th century the Cultural Property Protection Law was formalized, and the protection and promotion of cultural heritage became increasingly standardized and conservation activities were widely carried out. Guided by the media and scholars on the conservation of the Heijo Palace site, the Nara Institute of Cultural Properties was established in 1952 to take charge of the excavation and conservation of the Heijo Palace site, and in 1963 the Department of Excavation and Investigation of the Heijo Palace site was set up to develop a scientific, research and planned excavation programme. With the guarantee of government and private funding, scholars and technicians were organized to successfully restore the Zhuque Gate, the main gate of Pingcheng Palace, in 1997 against the background of repeated research and many experiments.

### ***4.3 Summary of the experience of sustainable development of cultural heritage in Japan***

From the above practices and cases, the experience of sustainable development and conservation of cultural heritage in Japan can be summarized.

The first is the establishment of a law covering the whole field. The three amendments and additions to the Cultural Property Protection Law show that the Japanese people have a strong legal awareness, and the concept of "world intangible cultural heritage" is based on the introduction of "intangible cultural property" in the Cultural Property Protection Law. Japan's cultural heritage protection work is world-renowned. Secondly, it

has strengthened the awareness of "cultural consciousness". The Japanese government has pursued a strategy of cultural nationhood, making use of the uniqueness and creativity of its own culture, fostering a sense of "cultural consciousness", strengthening the nation's sense of cultural belonging, and actively participating in the protection of cultural heritage to promote its sustainable and healthy development. Thirdly, digital applications should be strengthened. A successful example is Himeji Castle in Japan, which has not only improved the efficiency of cultural heritage conservation, but also facilitated the dissemination of cultural heritage to the public. The management and use of digital technology have also contributed to the scientific and standardized development of Japan's cultural heritage.

## **5. SUMMARY OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MODELS**

From the sustainable development practices and experiences of the above four major international countries, a "five-in-one" (legal, economic, social, ideological and technological) model of sustainable cultural heritage development can be summarized to ensure the precise protection, innovative use and effective transmission of cultural heritage.

At the legal level, the sustainable development of cultural heritage requires a comprehensive legal system, including a sound organizational structure and operational mechanisms, and requires that laws and regulations be updated and supplemented in real time as the times progress and knowledge and awareness levels increase. At the economic level, this includes the development of incentives in terms of interest rates and financial subsidies, the establishment of heritage foundations, etc., to encourage the participation of all people in the sustainable development of cultural heritage, and to promote the innovative development of cultural heritage related businesses in conjunction with the development of local tourism, so as to achieve equal emphasis on the protection and use of cultural heritage. At the societal level, it is important to clarify responsibilities and obligations, whether for the government, the general public or the owners of cultural heritage, so as to facilitate the protection of cultural heritage. This will prevent the inheritors of the skills from having low incomes and being unable to meet their food and clothing needs, as well as attracting skilled cultural heritage personnel, which will greatly facilitate the transmission of cultural heritage. At the ideological level, for other countries around the world, strengthening heritage education and fostering public awareness of cultural heritage protection is crucial, and the power of the public cannot be ignored. [4] This is closely related to whether cultural heritage protection can be implemented at every level and step by step, and

is also related to the effectiveness of cultural heritage transmission and use. At the technical level, the introduction of advanced cultural heritage protection technologies and the promotion of cultural heritage databases and digital museums will facilitate the public's access to information about cultural heritage, as well as provide convenience for cultural heritage researchers and promote the effective transmission of cultural heritage. [5]

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Based on the dimension of comparative analysis, the case study method is used to sort out the practices and experiences of the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan in the sustainable development of cultural heritage, and to summarize the basic models of sustainable development of cultural heritage. When formulating laws, policies and institutions, countries can draw on the relevant experiences of the above-mentioned countries, but should take into account the actual situation in their own countries and comprehensively examine their own cultural heritage sustainable development environment, so as to create a cultural heritage sustainable development system with their own characteristics.

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