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**Research on the design of urban public space from the perspective of canal
culture (on example of Yangzhou urban study)**

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The qualification work contains the results of own research

The use of ideas, results and texts of other authors must be referenced to the appropriate
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INTRODUCTION

The connection between the Grand Canal and the life of the city is still a fruitful topic for public space design in Yangzhou. The canal, formed in the past, is a part of the city's history, and the experiences of the local culture are determined by the places and activities of the present day. A city study room is where this question comes into focus. It is meant for accessible reading and learning, but it also can be used to have a conversation, cultural experience, and learning about local history. This thesis explores how canal culture can be used as an inspiration for designing such an urban public cultural space.

The research is a reaction to two closely related developments. On the other, the protection of the Grand Canal is now extending beyond the conservation of the physical remains to also include the interpretation and ongoing use of the cultural resources. Policy background includes the inscription of the canal on the World Heritage List in 2014 and the Outline for the Protection, Inheritance and Utilisation of Grand Canal Culture developed in 2019 and the implementation plan developed in 2021. Conversely, the public cultural services are increasingly being shifted to smaller locations, closer to everyday life. New public cultural spaces in urban and rural areas are encouraged in the national Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for Cultural Development. China Yangzhou City Study Room Regulations define the study rooms as public cultural facilities, which are required to spread the local culture, and stipulate cultural characteristics in the exterior design of the study rooms.

The design issue is that of the relationship between cultural material and the actual use of space. Though pictures of water, bridges or boats can imply a theme, they alone will not convey the connections between a canal, a city and its people. The spatiality of banks, bridges and landing places, the history of movement and exchange, and the literary culture of Yangzhou, all provide various kinds of materials for interpretation. They have to be carefully chosen for a study room. Cultural expression must be visible and audible within the context of a visit to the library in a way that does not interfere with quiet library use, individual study, easy movement around the library, public interaction or the essential functions of the library. The question of the thesis is thus how to transfer the canal culture into the spatial organization, unique uses and a harmonious experience in a city study room.

The theory of sites of memory is used to support this translation. The thesis is based on the cultural angle of canal culture, the design object of the city study room and uses the theory as an analytical tool for the relationship between remembered meanings, material settings and public

activities. As an instrument of environmental design, it can help to find out what parts of canal culture can be transferred to a space and how they can be experienced during reading, movement, pauses or idea exchange. It does not do either of two things: it does not make the proposed room a memorial nor does it make the theory the focus of the design. It rather provides a structured way for the relationship of particular historical associations to the function and form of a modern public cultural institution.

The investigation is a mixture of literature review, case analysis, observation of existing study rooms and design practice. The literature sets out the notion of canal culture, the city study room and places of memory and the comparative cases provide varying lessons on historical interpretation and public space for reading. Based on qualitative observation of Dongguan Street, Canal Sanwan and Shugang city study rooms in Yangzhou, it is possible to think of current situation and its limitations. These rooms are used as research design examples for the design proposal. Principles for selecting cultural content, organising functions and shaping experience are then synthesised from the cultural analysis and the cases and observed spatial needs. The data is qualitative; no survey totals, interview findings or performance data are reported.

The thesis is split in three parts. Section I reviews domestic and international studies, introduces the concept of "canal culture" and the "local characteristics of Yangzhou", reflects on the city study room and "sites of memory", and analyzes the related public cultural projects. Section II transforms the research of the current rooms and available canal related resources into requirements, principles and spatial methods. The study room project in Yangzhou is presented in Section III, ranging from the overall design concept to the key areas, cultural interpretation and materials and environmental quality. The general conclusions evaluate the contribution of the proposal for the design research and the aspects that need testing. The significance of the study is that it renders the shift from cultural interpretation to spatial decisions visible: the canal culture is the content, the development of a useful public reading space makes the content visible in everyday life.

SECTION I RESEARCH CONTEXT, CONCEPTS AND COMPARATIVE CASES

1.1 International research on cultural heritage and public space

International scholarship pertinent to this thesis address the relationship between cultural heritage and the current urban space, which is changing. The relevant scholarship has come to focus on how meanings as well as objects can be understood and utilized in contemporary contexts when considering heritage. The principles of conservation are still valid: the fabric and context of a canal or waterside settlement should not be viewed as a free-for-all for decorative elements. Meanwhile community relations with heritage are shaped by the way that access, interpretation and everyday use are mediated. This combination of conservation and participation has particular relevance to environmental design, where a decision about circulation, visibility or programme can alter what visitors encounter and how they understand it.

Research on canal heritage provides one strand of this discussion. Sun Ru's research on canal heritage examines the Grand Canal as a landscape with historical, spatial and public dimensions. Its principal lesson for the present study is methodological: a project referring to canal culture needs to consider cultural value, contemporary public function and social use in the same discussion. That lesson does not make a new reading room equivalent to a historic canal site. It suggests that historical associations should be interpreted in relation to the public activity and physical scale of the specific project. The city study room has neither the interpretive capacity of a museum nor the spatial continuity of a waterfront park. Its contribution, if developed carefully, is the possibility of a repeat encounter with selected cultural content during ordinary reading and exchange.

Another strand concerns narrative environments. Austin's work on narrative environments and experience design suggests that an environment can communicate cultural material through the organisation of space, its visual and material features, and the sequence of a visit. For this thesis, narrative is understood as a design relationship rather than an instruction to make every room illustrate an episode of canal history. An entry can introduce a theme, a collection area can allow closer inquiry, a quiet reading setting can support reflection, and a place for discussion can allow different interpretations to meet. Their order and connections can make cultural content easier to encounter. If those areas were designed only as an uninterrupted exhibition route, however, the everyday purposes of the study room would be weakened. A narrative approach therefore has to remain responsive to choice: some visitors seek a book quickly, some remain to study, and others may explore the canal material at length.

International research on public buildings in the digital age broadens the discussion from reading as an isolated activity to a range of ways of engaging with knowledge. Studies titled *A Public Space for the Digital Age* and *Analysis of Urban Public Building Space Design Strategies in the Digital Age* are discussed here for their attention to open spatial organisation, multiple activities and the relationship between users and technological media. The general implication is useful, although a design cannot infer particular technological requirements from these titles alone. In a city study room, printed collections, informal dialogue, digital information and individual study have different spatial and acoustic needs. Digital media can make archival images, routes and stories available, but screen brightness, sound and time spent interacting with displays must be reconciled with readers nearby. The placement and intensity of a digital component matter as much as the presence of technology itself.

Relevant studies include *Guidelines for Interactive Digital Storytelling Presentations of Cultural Heritage* and *Digital Storytelling in Cultural Heritage: Audience Engagement in the Interactive Documentary New Life*. They brainstorm ideas on how to think about participation regarding the presentation of cultural material together. Design-wise, an interaction needs to be a way for visitors to explore the content, not just another device in a “themed” inside. A visitor could take a canal route or compare how a piece of a cityscape has changed or a literary passage with a map. These are possible ways of interpreting the text, rather than claims that the specific software product has been tested under this present design. The study room can provide a brief, voluntary experience with electronic resources without sacrificing the book or direct social interaction as integral components of the public service.

These international perspectives illuminate different aspects of the present problem. Heritage studies insist that cultural content has a historical basis. Narrative design clarifies how a sequence of places can connect content with experience. Research on contemporary public buildings examines the coexistence of reading, exchange and digital media. None of these bodies of work, taken on its own, supplies a ready-made design for a Yangzhou city study room. Their value lies in informing a set of questions: which meanings of the canal are suitable for a daily public space, what physical or programmatic settings could carry them, and how can diverse visitors choose to engage with them? The theory of sites of memory, discussed below, offers a means of bringing those questions into a more explicit relationship.

1.2 Domestic research on city study rooms and canal culture

Chinese scholarship approaches urban public cultural space from several directions. General studies describe a move beyond the single-purpose provision of facilities toward public places that also accommodate cultural communication and social interaction. This is a useful context for city study rooms, whose limited area often has to support several forms of use. Yet functional expansion is not automatically a design improvement. If exhibitions or group events occupy the only suitable quiet area, the room may become less useful to readers. A study room has to organise different degrees of openness and quiet rather than simply accumulate activities.

Research on public reading space makes this concern more concrete. Liu Lan's 2012 discussion of the library as a social reading environment, developed in relation to the idea of a third space, extends attention from collections to environmental design, reader activity and informal participation. Hua Shuqi and colleagues, in a 2020 study, discuss the future development of city study rooms in the public cultural service system and the importance of their spatial and service qualities. Chi Jiaqi and Xu Jinqi's 2022 study of human-centred city study room design similarly directs attention to user behaviour and spatial organisation. Ma Hongliang's 2024 work places the study room within community cultural governance. These different emphases indicate that a reading facility is simultaneously a service, an environment for individual concentration and a local public place.

Some studies address the relationship between reading spaces and identifiable local culture. Li Xinyue's 2024 project concerning a city study room drawing on Cizhou kiln culture offers an example of a theme shaping more than a library's collection. Wang Yi's 2023 account of Yangzhou study rooms suggests that an established service network still leaves room for more carefully developed local character. These works matter to the present research because they bring cultural interpretation closer to the spatial type under investigation. Their role is suggestive rather than evidential proof that a particular form of thematic decoration produces stronger identification. The question of how readers understand the resulting design would require evaluation beyond the scope of the present research.

Domestic work on canal-related environments adds another layer. Jiang Shengrui's 2023 study of a cultural activity centre uses canal resources to inform a contemporary public space; Wang Qiuyue's 2024 work on a Yangzhou waterside landscape considers the relationship between spatial structure, landscape nodes and visitors' experience. The size and nature of such projects is different from a study room. An outdoor canal landscape can be based on direct

sightlines and movement, while a reading room can be based on selective interpretation, interior organisation and repeated use. The sharing of lessons between them thus requires critical decision making. What is helpful is the common premise that culture can and should guide structure and activity as well as appearance.

The domestic research taken together, demonstrates relevance of cultural programming, user-centred reading-environments and canal-related spatial expression. In this literature, a smaller problem is still yet to be answered: how is it possible to make Yangzhou canal culture visible in a space that is not only used by ordinary people, but also in an everyday public reading space? This research is not to say that the whole field has overlooked the topic, but the literature reviewed in this paper is selected. It does, however, point to one design issue that is not adequately addressed by just overlaying the visual vocabulary of a canal landscape with the furniture vocabulary of a library. The proposed answer must address a particular public function and to local cultural material and to the relationship between the two.

1.3 The cultural content of the Grand Canal and its Yangzhou setting

For the purposes of this thesis, the term canal culture is used in a generic sense: a historically created relationship of a waterway, physical settings, social practices and related cultural values. The Grand Canal was a transport and exchange infrastructure, but its role as a vehicle for design cannot be boiled down to engineering. Routes were defined by rivers and channels, bridges and landing places set up contact across and along the water, activities linked transport with commerce and daily life. Those physical and social conditions in time gave rise to a number of ways in which canal cities were described and remembered. The challenge of the design task is to determine which parts of this layered relationship can be experienced responsibly in a public reading space.

The UNESCO designation in 2014, and in the subsequent national planning documents, affords a broader context in which to view the canal as a protected heritage system and as a cultural resource. The 2019 outline emphasizes protection, transmission and proper use; the implementation plan for 2021 elaborates on the tasks in these three aspects in terms of heritage, interpretation and public services. They are relevant to the thesis within their context. Both do not explicitly call for canal shapes to be included in a city study room. They are, however, enough to suggest an exploration of public spaces through which the meanings selected here of the canal could continue to be accessible to current audiences. This design proposal is not a

claim to conserving a historic waterway through interior design, but rather an interpretation within this context.

The manuscript focuses on three dimensions of the relationship between Yangzhou and the canal, involving entangled histories. The first is physical. What are familiar features in the city's spatial memory are the channels, waterfront edges, bridges, wharves and buildings along the water. They can provide movement, connection and pause suggestions. For design there is more importance to those relationships than creating an exact image of a historic bridge or wharf. An arch could be a place where people stop before they enter a common room, the sense of a landing edge could be interpreted as an arch that frames a reading collection. Where such moves are required, there must be clear functional reasons eg accessibility and normal circulation. A bridge-like shape shouldn't obscure an odd path, and a whimsy water design shouldn't obscure the readability or safety of a flooring.

The second dimension relates to activity. Throughout history, people and goods have converged at common borders; the canal also provided a place for encounters, conversations and facets of family life. We cannot simply recreate the past activities in a modern library, and we shouldn't idealise the past. The design can rather delineate their spatial relationships at a smaller scale: arrival and orientation, quiet viewing alongside the active shared space, put-up exchange and spaces that allow for different durations of stay. This is what can be considered as functional memory. The value is helping to link cultural interpretation to uses a public facility can truly serve in the study room.

The third dimension is symbolic. Poems and academic exchanges are also part of Yangzhou's canal culture, which in turn highlights a greater cultural openness. A reading space is particularly well suited to this layer because books and discussions can present historical interpretations in fuller form than ornamental images. The proposed canal poetry reading area therefore gives the written word a place in the programme, although it should not depend on large wall slogans or decorative quotations. Curated books, small optional interpretive resources and an atmosphere conducive to attentive reading offer a more durable connection between cultural material and public use.

These dimensions overlap. A bridge is a physical structure, but it can also signify connection. A landing place is a physical edge, but it is remembered through arrival, exchange and departure. Poetry is a symbolic resource, but it is encountered through the practical acts of selecting a book, sitting and reading. The categories of material, functional and symbolic memory are therefore

analytical aids rather than sealed compartments. Used in this way, they allow the design to move from an inventory of heritage images toward an account of how a place might be organised and used.

1.4 City study rooms as public cultural space

A city study room is a relatively small and accessible form of public reading provision. In this study it is understood as a space that brings reading into the settings of everyday urban life, supplementing larger libraries with places for independent study, borrowing, local activities and informal contact. The Yangzhou City Study Room Regulations provide a more precise institutional definition: a facility based on public library resources and offering free reading, information inquiry and borrowing. The regulations also address public accessibility, spatial provision and cultural services. A design proposal can draw on this framework without claiming an operating arrangement that has not been agreed with an actual institution.

The study room's modest scale changes the design problem. As a large museum, it can be used to designate an interpretation route, a library can be divided into several dedicated departments, and a park can be used to distribute activities through a landscape. A study room is smaller and can sometimes make the decision to put reading, a collection, a short conversation and interpretation next to each other. This fosters opportunities for cultural experiences as people use the space in various ways, and can also pose a nuisance in terms of noise and visual disturbance. The basic conditions for cultural expression are functional zoning, thresholds between active and quiet zones, adequate circulation and comfortable seating. If the reader can't focus he won't appreciate a well-structured story.

There's another responsibility added by local culture. An invitation from local regulations to Yangzhou's study rooms to spread local culture, coupled with the theme of the city's canal history, provides a suitable topic. A room can fulfil that responsibility by its collecting, programmes, material environment and associations that are indicated by its organisation. None of these should be assumed sufficient alone. A themed display may be informative but static; a striking form may be memorable but vague; an activity programme may be valuable but depend on ongoing staffing. Their combination can provide several levels of engagement, from a fleeting sense of local character to sustained reading and discussion. This diversity is important because the study room should remain useful to a person who does not come for a heritage experience.

The city study room is consequently treated as a specific urban public cultural space, not as a miniature version of every kind of public space. Findings about its reading areas and programme

cannot automatically be transferred to a square or riverfront. The more transferable aspect of the inquiry is its method of connecting a locally meaningful cultural resource with public function.

1.5 Sites of memory as an analytical and design tool

The theoretical account of sites of memory begins with Maurice Halbwachs's understanding of collective memory. Remembering is not presented as a collection of purely private images: social relationships and shared environments help shape what groups recall and how they interpret it. Pierre Nora's later idea of *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory, directs attention to material and symbolic points through which collective remembrance is organised. It has been used to examine settings, objects and practices associated with a remembered past. In this thesis, those ideas are relevant because canal culture comprises physical remains and social meanings that have changed over time. An interior design cannot reproduce that history. It can, however, select and interpret a small part of it in a public place where readers may encounter it.

For environmental design, three dimensions are useful: material, functional and symbolic. The material dimension concerns recognisable carriers, such as buildings, physical settings, artefacts or spatial forms. The functional dimension concerns what people do and the relationships that use establishes. The symbolic dimension concerns meanings attributed to a place, including cultural identification and emotional association. These are working categories for design analysis. They should not be presented as a rigid formula supplied directly by Nora, nor as proof that a newly designed space will automatically become a collective memory site. Their practical purpose is to force a design decision to answer more than an aesthetic question. What historical association is being invoked? What element gives it spatial form? How can a visitor use that part of the room? What interpretation will be possible if the visitor does not know the reference beforehand?

Material memory is especially tempting to reduce to form. A bridge can become an arch, a canal can become a curved floor line, and a wharf can become a platform. Yet a recognisable outline may convey little if it is detached from meaning and use. The present study therefore distinguishes between tracing a spatial relationship and copying an object. The continuity of a watercourse can help organise movement; a bridge's role in making a connection can inform a transition between areas; an edge associated with stopping can become a place to read or meet.

Functional memory likewise requires interpretation. The historically specific practices of canal transport and trade cannot simply be inserted into a reading room. What can be examined are patterns of behaviour associated with arrival, waiting, exchange and shared attention. A small

public lounge may support informal conversation; a reading table may support the exchange of a poem or a historical account; a curated display may invite a visitor to move between a book and an image of the canal. These are contemporary activities, not staged reconstructions of past canal life. Their connection with historical material needs to be made clear through the overall concept and available information. This distinction allows the design to remain grounded in the needs of today's users.

A symbolic memory challenge is added. There is no one inevitable meaning of a material or functional reference. The bridge arch can be seen as a link to one visitor, and as just an architectural shape to another. The design does not presume that all visitors would respond in the same way, and as such provides a variety of ways to gain knowledge: an atmosphere to capture attention, select books to provide context, and occasional collective activities to enable cultural material to be discussed. A symbolic meaning is thus suggested by a correlation between spatial form and possibilities for interpretation.

1.6 Comparative public cultural spaces and reading environments

The case studies were chosen for two complementary reasons. The China Beijing–Hangzhou Grand Canal Museum houses artifacts related to the canal and thus provides a study on the interpretation of a particular heritage topic, Hangzhou. The city study rooms at Wenzhou depict a miniature, accessible reading room that is part of everyday city life. The international examples of modern public reading rooms with different proportions of open spaces, shared activity and quiet study are Helsinki Central Library Oodi and Kanazawa Umimirai Library. The four cases are not the same size or have the same institutional purposes. Their comparison is helpful as long as those differences can still be seen and the design does not move an element without taking into account the scale of the Yangzhou study room.

The China Beijing–Hangzhou Grand Canal Museum. The Hangzhou museum offers a public cultural space for the interpretation and history of the canal. Exciting exhibits, environmental presentation and interactive media come together to inspire visitors to grasp historical change and the canal's connection with urban memory. The key assumption that is typically made in a museum is that cultural interpretation is the primary purpose of the operation. A sequence of exhibition can therefore be organised with a lot of information and lead to movement through themes. The lesson in relation to the proposed study room is that of going from facts to experience. A reader may find a brief introduction and then be given the option to select a book, a map or a small discussion. This more contained sequence can articulate links

between various facets of canal culture without the need to have the study room serve as a permanent museum exhibition.

The difference of scale also sets limits. The intensive display of the museum cannot be transferred directly to a setting that is designed for quiet reading. An interactive screen that operates in the gallery might be distracting next to a study desk. If there is a long fixed route to tell a story, it may hinder those who intend to come to borrow a book. Thus, the case is in favor of selective interpretation: select what themes there is more to tell the room than an image, and present them through places and activities suitable for public reading. This separation assists in transforming the case into a design strategy instead of its exhibits.

Study rooms in Wenzhou city. The study rooms of Wenzhou are examined as small accessible spaces where the activity of reading has been embedded in community life. Their significance for this thesis lies in the type of space they represent. A study room works when people can find a seat, use a collection and remain without the formality of a larger cultural institution. Comfortable scales, an understandable arrangement and places for either brief or extended visits can bring public cultural services closer to everyday routines. The case also provides an occasion to reflect on the formation of new urban memories through repeated use. This is a conceptual interpretation, not an empirical finding about the memory of particular Wenzhou users. For the Yangzhou proposal, it suggests that local cultural expression should coexist with the dependable, ordinary usefulness of a reading room.

Wenzhou offers a warning against equating a varied programme with indiscriminate openness. Reading, conversation and a small activity may coexist, but each needs an appropriate setting. The Yangzhou design therefore draws on the case's public accessibility while giving more explicit attention to gradients of noise, seating choice and the placement of cultural interpretation. The goal is to prevent the canal theme from occupying every surface or every activity. A visitor must be able to use the study room as a study room.

Helsinki Central Library Oodi. Oodi is examined because it demonstrates how a public library can combine reading with exchange, learning and creative activity. Its openness communicates an understanding of the library as a shared civic resource. Different spaces support different modes of participation, allowing visitors to move between public gathering and more focused reading. As a much larger institution than a city study room, Oodi provides a principle rather than a direct template. The Yangzhou proposal can borrow the idea of offering

more than one form of participation and of making the transitions between them legible. It is not possible to adopt the same floor area, staffing, technical services or programme of events.

The present thesis is not used as evidence for a specific representation of history, and Yangzhou canal culture is not the subject of Oodi. Its significance is to try out an operational hypothesis: Is it possible for a place to be recognisable as a public reading room and also to be a place for other cultural functions? Case Proposed Answer: Spatial differentiation in a unified whole. This could be indicated in a modest study room by the inclusion of an informal exchange area close to the entrance, a quiet study area located away from the busiest service area and a more sheltered location for quiet study. The following choices are made in Section III based on the proposed scheme, not on features observed in Oodi itself.

Kanazawa Umimirai Library. The case highlights the importance of the natural light and the accessibility of the library and its role in community life. In the interpretation, strong public identity may materialize in the form of environmental quality and continuous use without over-representation of traditional decorative elements. This observation is significant to a thesis on canal culture because it expands the definition of ‘culture’. A friendly scale and the option of being able to choose where to sit can make a public space gain significance by “just sitting.” This reading experience may be culturally particular, depending on the type of content and practice, but alone, comfort does not create an architectural interior that is an interpretation of canal history.

The Yangzhou proposal thus borrows two things from Kanazawa. In the first place, the daylight and the easy forms of reading should be considered as a design element and not as a background to a thematic presentation. Second, there is a need for space, for users to make their own connections over time, in any interpretation of local culture. For example, a window seat bench can provide an opportunity to stop and read; appropriate reading selections or optional interpretive material can connect the stop to the canal theme. This is still a hypothetical response from actual visitors. This is a measured reading of the case which does not ascribe Yangzhou meanings to an unrelated Japanese building.

There is a regular difference between the content of a cultural place and how it is used in all four cases. The Hangzhou museum puts the thesis to consider how to select and sequence the canal material. A small public reading type can be seen in every day Wenzhou study rooms. Oodi demonstrates that there can be many ways of participating in a public institution. Kanazawa is about comfort and long-term use. The combined lesson for the proposed study room is to link

well selected canal related material with well functioning reading and exchange surroundings. The method that will be developed in the next section is not a list of copies of forms. It is the process of translating cultural resources into spatial interpretation to plausible public experience.

Conclusions to Section I

In Section I, the three elements that the design research relies on have been defined. Canal culture offers material related to Yangzhou's history, society and symbols. That material is to be interpreted in the specific public cultural space of the city study room. The concept of the place of memory provides a perspective to consider relations between cultural associations, spatial carriers and everyday actions. The four cases provide more tangible points of comparison; relevant points of concern raised by domestic and international research include conservation, cultural interpretation, reading environments and public participation.

The analysis also imposes constraints. A proposal for a city study room will not be able to conserve the canal heritage, as a conservation project will; will not be able to share a museum's entire exhibition model with a quiet reading room, as a museum will; and will not be able to guarantee that a designed motif will create a specific memory for every visitor. It has a more exact assignment. It has to select a limited number of meanings related to canal, explain how they relate to spaces and activities and give the functional and environmental conditions in which it is possible to encounter them. Those requirements are further developed in Section II following the observations in Yangzhou field and a classification of the resources related to the canal.

SECTION II REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS FOR A CANAL CULTURE CITY STUDY ROOM

2.1 Existing Yangzhou study rooms and the design requirements

Field investigation is conducted on three study rooms of Yangzhou city: Dongguan Street City Study Room, Canal Sanwan City Study Room and Shugang City Study Room. They were selected to encompass a variety of different settings of reading facilities and their context - an existing historic street, a canal-associated landscape, and a more typical urban public space. The investigation considers their functions, cultural expression and spatial experience through qualitative observation; it does not report visitor counts or interview data. The analysis below treats those descriptions as qualitative observations. It is a basis for identifying design questions rather than a statistical comparison of Yangzhou's entire city study room network.

Dongguan Street City Study Room is described in relation to its historic urban setting. A visitor may arrive for reading or study and may also experience the surrounding streetscape as part of a wider encounter with Yangzhou's culture. The case illustrates the advantage of a recognizable cultural context: an interior does not have to carry every aspect of historical interpretation when urban life and built fabric already offer associations. It also raises a question for the design of a different study room. Cultural character inherited from a surrounding street is not the same as a deliberate relationship between cultural content and the internal arrangement of reading, exhibition and exchange. A proposal with a canal theme needs to develop its own coherent spatial and programmatic means of expression, whatever the character of its actual site.

Canal Sanwan City Study Room is associated with a waterside environment and opportunities for leisure alongside reading. Its setting makes a canal connection readily available, yet the qualitative observation suggests that the interior expression of canal culture remains relatively dependent on that context. This is an interpretation of spatial character, not a measured judgement of the facility's users. It points to a relevant design distinction. Views of a water landscape can invite attention and provide a strong sense of place; they do not necessarily explain the histories, activities and cultural associations through which that landscape acquired meaning. A city study room concerned with the canal may therefore need both openness to its environment and selected content within its own spaces, including the collection and opportunities for interpretation.

Shugang City Study Room has a strong everyday service role for surrounding users. Reading, self-study and ordinary cultural activities form its core functions. Its cultural expression

is observed mainly through furnishings, displayed books and general environmental treatment, with a less explicit link to a specific Yangzhou cultural resource. This observation is useful because it keeps the design from treating cultural expression as a substitute for dependable provision. A facility may function well as a reading service and still leave room for a more deliberate cultural identity. Conversely, an over-themed scheme might lose out if it diluted the qualities of place that bring readers back. The intended design response is to work on both concerns in the same plan.

The three examples show varying levels of needs. On the basic level, the reader needs a clear entrance, an usable collection, as well as comfortable seats and settings for uninterrupted studying. At an intermediate level, the room can accommodate shared reading and short conversations and small cultural activities, but not be dominated by these activities and not at the exclusion of the quiet uses. At a cultural level, visitors might require varying degrees of access to canal-related content: a welcoming atmosphere that is immediately accessible, incidental information in short bursts through books or on-line resources. The observations indicate a constraint in the integration of cultural expression in the spatial design, in the variety of activities and in the continuity of the cultural experience. These observations are not used to suggest the prevalence of these observations and their rank is not numerically established as part of the investigation, but are presented rather as design hypotheses that contribute to the proposed scheme.

Potential conflicts between activities should also be considered in the design brief. Informal discussion around an entrance can provide a study room social life, and long term study a relative acoustic stability. A display will draw people in, whereas a focused path of desks to research and study may distract. The geometry of a prominent cultural form can obstruct shelving or access to movement; its geometry can also create identity. The solution is to create a distinct zone hierarchy and to use places in close proximity to the entrance for lively activities and places further into the room for more peaceful ones. This is a design proposal based on the type of needs identified in the survey and the exact size and operational details would be based on the information gathered from the site and building that is measurable, which is out of the scope of the present study.

The Yangzhou regulations introduce an institutional framework for the implementation of these needs in design. They talk about the freedom to read and borrow, reading and study space, lectures, exhibitions and cultural exchange and convenience to various groups of users. They also need to have internal zones set up, seating and accessibility arrangements. Those

requirements are used as checks against a thematic scheme used in the research. In a graduation design, since no one is operating, or there is no technical approval process, the drawings can set forth service points and activity settings, but cannot state that a fully compliant public facility has been provided. The main design issue is whether the intended functions are readable and usable, and whether they are compatible with canal culture expression.

2.2 Canal-related memory resources and spatial needs

This study classifies Yangzhou's canal-related resources into material, functional and symbolic memory. The categories are useful because they prevent a design from defining the canal only by a single instantly recognisable silhouette. A resource becomes design-relevant when its meaning can be explained and an appropriate setting can be found for it. The selection process therefore begins with a question of specificity. Does the material refer to Yangzhou's relationship with the canal, or merely to a general image of water? Can the proposed spatial element provide a use that makes the reference intelligible? Could the same form be used in a completely unrelated project without any change of meaning? These questions do not automatically rule out abstraction, but they demand an account of why it has been chosen.

Material resources considered here include watercourses, banks, bridges, wharves and waterfront buildings. Each can be read as a spatial relationship before it becomes a formal motif. Examples of a watercourse, a bank, a bridge, a landing place imply direction, continuity, an edge, something to look at, to pause at. Their possible translations into a study room include a continuous route, a reading edge, an arched transition and a small gathering platform. These are simply proposals of spatial analogy, rather than statements that the study room is a place with historic canal fabric. All you use of Bridge Arch should be sympathetic to structure and head room, and any floor inlay indicating motion should remain flat and not be visually stimulating.

Functional memory relates to the past association between activity, commercial exchange and daily exchanges along the canal. Although the activities in the old study room cannot be replicated in the new study room, the spatial qualities of the former can be used to structure the latter for contemporary activities. A short-term talking space can remind of a common place of arrival, but not a commercial café. A common reading table can provide readers with a space for book-sharing and interpretation. A collection set up for browsing can stimulate some movement between cultural information and personal discovery. They must be derived from the real public programme – if a named thematic area is not logical in terms of reader activity, the functional association is not strong, even if a visual association to the canal is apparent.

Symbolic resources consist of poetry related to canals, scholarly discussion and cultural openness. They translate based on content selection, as well as form. Documents on Yangzhou history, culture about the canal and literary customs can be available in the collection, and digital interpretation can link words to places and images. The arrangement and lighting of a common reading space can facilitate reading aloud, discussion or individual reflection. Here, the visual economy of the design is important. Extensive typographic surfaces and the repetition of slogans and an abundance of symbols can make complex cultural information into branding. A short and truthful compendium with a minimum of "interpretation" if this is desired and requested by the tourist visitor will leave cultural material with the depth it is capable of.

Collectively, the three resource groups suggest a variety of functional requirements. Cultural parts should be recognisable, but do not need to be visited by all visitors in the same sequence. The room needs places where concentrated reading and informal discussion can occur at different intensities. It should make the connection between a spatial analogy and its historical source understandable, whether by placement, associated books or optional interpretation. It also needs visual coherence: a limited set of material and colour relationships can carry a theme more effectively than many unrelated motifs. These requirements guide the principles and methods below.

2.3 Principles for the spatial expression of canal culture

Cultural authenticity. The first principle is to begin with a demonstrable cultural association rather than with an attractive form in search of a story. The cultural analysis identifies canal banks, bridges, docking and exchange, poetry and other dimensions of Yangzhou's canal culture. A design may interpret the spatial qualities of these resources, but should not present a newly designed interior element as an original historic artefact. Interpretive content, quotations and images would require source checking before public display. The proposed design can be contemporary and still be responsible to history if it makes the difference between historical reference and design interpretation clear.

Local relevance. The theme must belong to Yangzhou rather than to a generic imagined canal city. This doesn't mean that you have to cover the room with all the familiar tourist pictures. The relationship can be continued from a set of curated materials on the theme of Yangzhou's waterside culture, an account of the waterside exchange based on local history, and a language of materials which reflects the characters of a calm reading space in Yangzhou. The design proposal is based on minimal light wood, warm white surfaces and minimal mineral light

blue green accents. The presence of those colours does not establish local identity. They are significant in association with a coherent scheme of the waterway, with reading and within the cultural associations of Yangzhou.

Continuity of experience. Material concerning memory should be grouped together across the room and not exist as separate items. The visitor may enter with an entry that can be read, move to a zone for common reading, cross an archway into a collection, and then optionally read a digital story. A different visitor might proceed straight to a quiet area. Both paths have to be comprehensible. Continuity is therefore a relationship between spaces and opportunities and not a necessary immersion into a preordained story. However, it can be assisted by sight lines, repetition of materials and a consistent programme without becoming an exhibition corridor for circulation.

Functional suitability. The cultural proposal is publicized by the reading service. Seating, books, study surfaces, access and environmental comfort issues must also be addressed in addition to symbolic references. A wharf like setting for gathering should provide a space for engaging in conversation without the effect of a noisy "bottleneck". There shall be shelving which is accessible and space for movement within an arched book area. A digital device should not be a requirement for quiet study. If a cultural analogy is in conflict with use it should be revised.

Contemporary translation. The last principle relates to the expression of the inherited material. In a new public reading environment one can have difficulty discerning original and contemporary fabrics and can create an environment that has a theme, but no purpose. Instead of this, the thesis reads the movement, connection, pause and exchange into contemporary spatial relationships. This principle involves limited use of cues and an acceptance of the fact that the design does not know. Materials, details and lighting are all design intentions and not necessarily indicative of a finished specification or a confirmed user response.

All these principles act in combination. While cultural authenticity and functional suitability may lead to an informative but uncomfortable space, functional quality and not local relevance would leave little reason for the particular canal theme, and continuity without visitor choice can lead to a forced route. Each main space in the design is tested for all five considerations. The outcome is a process which is a means to maintain the relationship between cultural content and ordinary public life throughout the proposal.

2.4 Translation and experience methods

The first one relates to material memory. The proposal does not copy water or bridge decoration, but only finds a few spatial operations from elements related to the canal. A linear inlay, if subtle, can indicate continuity and make a connection between spaces, if it is in level with the floor, subdued in colour and secondary to usual way finding. If the bridge geometry permits, a collection of books can be accommodated as a bridge-like arch and serve as a signpost for a transition between settings, as long as the sight is clear, a good width for access is ensured, and there is no doubt about its structural integrity. A low reading ledge may understand the concept of an edge where people come to an end next to a way. There are two checks for each operation: the operation must be related to an intelligible cultural source and the operation must enhance or at least facilitate a useful spatial condition. The same operation shouldn't be repeated all around the room just for the sake of the theme being visible.

The second method concerns functional memory. The landing place is associated with pause and exchange. In the design, this association becomes a small informal setting, provisionally called Dockside Conversation, where readers can meet, discuss a book or rest briefly. It has a different atmosphere from the self-study area and is located so that conversational activity is less likely to interrupt concentrated reading. Likewise, the canal's historical role as a route of exchange informs a shared reading setting in which material about poetry and local history may be browsed and discussed. The proposed spaces do not recreate historic work activities; they reinterpret the social relations of arrival, circulation and conversation within the legitimate programme of a city study room.

The third method addresses symbolic memory and narrative. A place for shared reading of canal poetry can connect textual material with the broader space without relying on permanent large lettering. In the book collection, historical and literary material can be grouped in a way that remains easy to browse alongside general reading. A compact digital component can provide optional depth by linking images, maps and selected narratives. The content must be curated and sourced; any proposed interface belongs to the concept stage until its information design and maintenance are developed. Spatial narrative arises from the way these opportunities are encountered. An entry gives orientation, a series of everyday reading settings provides different levels of attention, and the optional interpretation allows those interested to learn more. Readers should also be able to choose a direct and quiet route.

Experience requires attention to time as well as space. A few minutes one might spend borrowing a book could include seeing the curved transition or a themed shelf. One visitor, who is at the gallery for an hour, might discover the connection between a window bench, the reading collection and the quieter study area. A small cultural exchange group can access the common reading table and then visit the interpretive exhibit. The proposed room should accommodate all three patterns, but not require that every visitor take the same "take-home lesson". This flexibility is especially crucial to a public facility that is used daily, as opposed to a one-time visit with a specific purpose in mind.

The visual language that is being suggested for these methods is simple. Light timber and warm white surfaces create a serene reading environment; muted blue-green is used sparingly, in connection to water and yet not an overpowering accent in the room. Curves may indicate a bank or current movement, but they are used sparingly in areas that lend themselves to the framing of circulation, shelving or seating. The fine bronze-toned lines can articulate an edge or a joint, and floor graphics can be turned into believable material inlays. These decisions relate to material conception of the proposal in Section III. They aren't replacements for cultural info. The nature of the relationship between space, selected books, interpretation and public activity will determine the depth of understanding of a visitor.

Practical coordination of the methods is also needed. There needs to be acoustic separation of interactive areas to silent areas; daylight should be provided but without unacceptable glare on books and screens; fixed shelving should be accessible; seating options should be provided to suit varying users; and finishes should be in compliance with public use and maintenance. Even if the visual concept doesn't involve decorative wall text, clear functional wayfinding, safety information and accessibility are still needed. These are at this stage still design requirements and solutions. A subsequent technical phase would have to solve the dimensions, services, accessibility review, and material performance in the context of the real project information.

Now the way from cultural content to design can be expressed more precisely. An association related to the canal is found and is verified as relevant in the locality. One of the spatial relationships, or one of the public activities, is chosen that can express it without confusion. The selection of an appropriate location is based on the study room programme and the needs of the users. Material, light and optional interpretive resources are coordinated with that location. The proposed outcome is then compared to ordinary use, which is defined as the ability to enter, borrow, read, study, exchange, and leave without interference from the cultural

theme. The sequence provides the design a line of reasoning and lets the eventual appearance of the design have room for free development within functional boundaries.

Conclusions to Section II

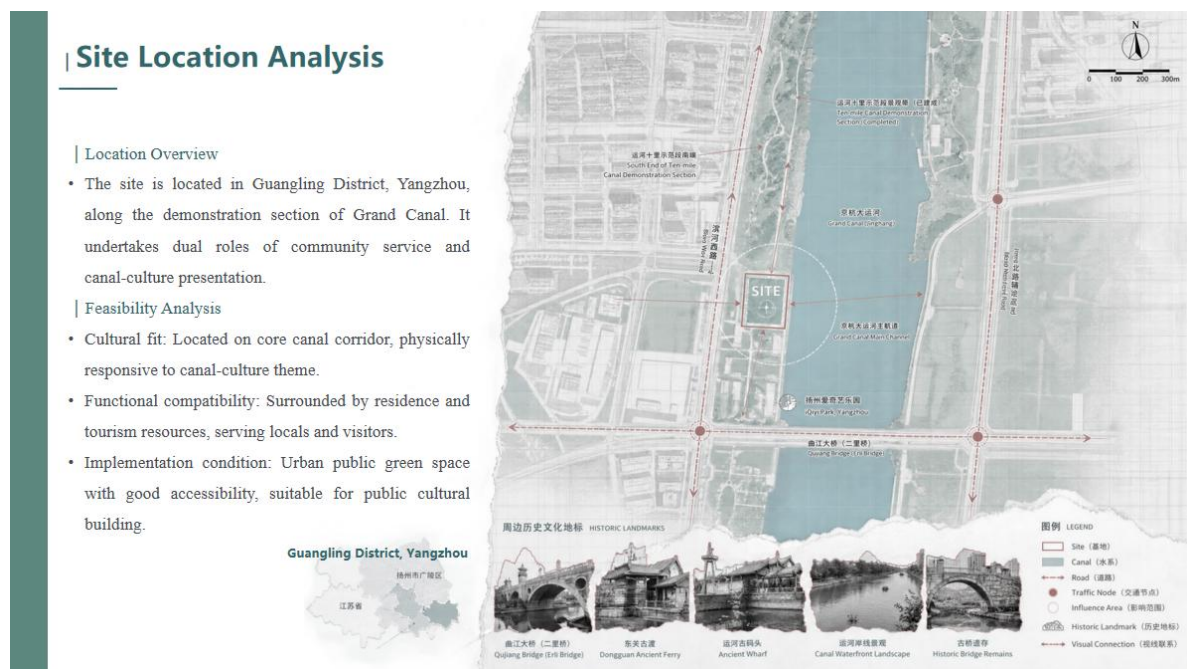
The qualitative field observations reveal the following three interrelated design issues in current study rooms in Yangzhou: the cultural content may be at the level of atmosphere and display; exchange and interpretation opportunities may be limited; themed elements may not provide a continuous spatial experience. These observations have been considered as qualitative evidence to a limited extent. In conjunction with the material of classification, the functional and symbolic memory related to canals provide a set of requirements for a useful and culturally-specific study room.

The proposal is based on the principles of cultural authenticity and local relevance, continuity, functional suitability and contemporary translation. The associated methods transform selected canal references into spatial relationships, places for present-day activity and optional forms of interpretation. The theory of sites of memory helps keep cultural content and its spatial carrier in view, while the requirements of public reading determine whether a design move is appropriate. Section III applies these methods to the Yangzhou city study room scheme.

SECTION III DESIGN DEVELOPMENT OF THE YANGZHOU CITY STUDY ROOM PUBLIC SPACE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CANAL CULTURE

3.1 Project Overview and Concept Design

This project is located on the west bank of the Grand Canal in Guangling District, Yangzhou, adjacent to the ten-mile canal demonstration section. The site bears dual attributes: it functions as a community public space serving surrounding residents, and also acts as a cultural display window of the Grand Canal. Targeting the widespread dilemma of public spaces along the canal — superficial cultural symbol stacking and disconnection from citizens' daily life — this project takes a city study room as the carrier to explore the contemporary translation path of canal culture in public interior spaces.



The core design concept *Mooring Boat of Books* is proposed with three interlocked connotations. First, **mooring** responds to the waterside feature of the site, building a spatial and emotional connection between the urban area and the canal heritage. Second, **boat** extracts the hull arc of ancient canal grain-transport boats as the formal motif, which serves as the generative basis of spatial form. Third, **books** anchors the core public reading function of the city study, carrying both daily usage and cultural experience. Guided by the Theory of Sites of Memory, the whole design is developed along three dimensions: materiality, functionality and symbolism.

Concept Interpretation

Mooring Boat of Books

Mooring: Waterside site serves as connection between city and canal heritage.

Boat: Ancient boat-hull arc is formal motif translated by shape-grammar.

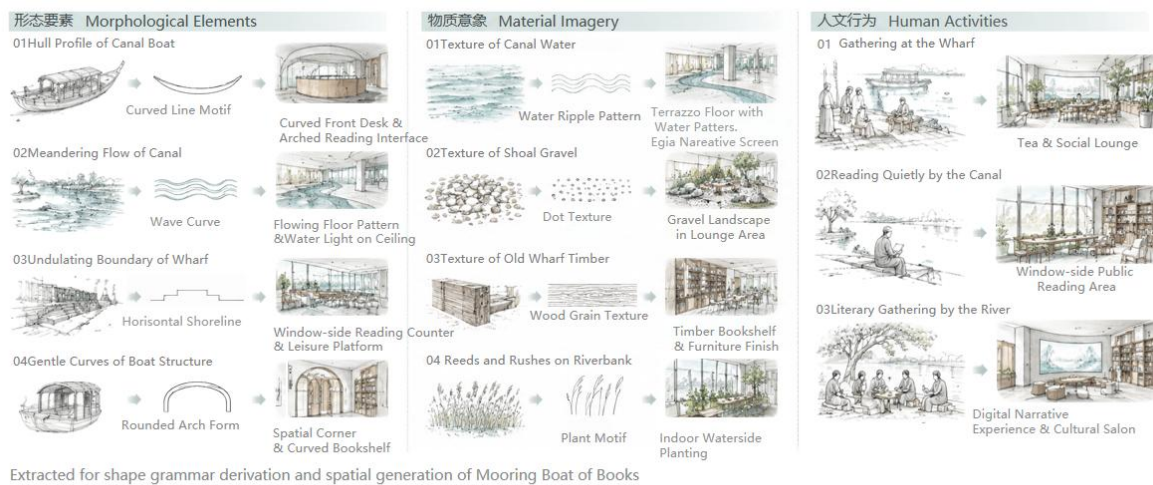
Books: Public-reading-oriented space for daily use and canal-cultural experience.



3.2 Spatial Translation of Canal Culture Guided by the Theory of Sites of Memory

This section establishes the theoretical framework for design derivation, corresponding to the three core attributes of Sites of Memory, to realize systematic spatial translation of canal culture rather than superficial decoration.

Canal Cultural Element Extraction & Spatial Translation



3.2.1 Materiality: Formal Translation of Cultural Elements

Three types of morphological prototypes are extracted from the canal cultural system: the hull profile of canal boats, the meandering flow of canal water, and the undulating boundary of wharves. These concrete prototypes are abstracted and simplified as basic geometric elements such as arcs, curves and shorelines, and then translated to spatial components, such as arch interfaces, curved walls and streamlined floor guides. This approach is an alternative to literally pasting on symbols of culture, and embeds canal culture within the spatial skeleton rather than the surface ornament.

3.2.2 Functionality: Memory Activation Through Daily Use

User group analysis indicates the local residents and students as the core users and the basic function as daily reading. The integration of diversified functions on this basis, such as social communication, leisure rest and cultural experience. The spatial hierarchy enables different scenarios of use, and allows canal memory to be constantly engaged in everyday use, rather than through short-term tourist visits. This logic follows the main thesis of Sites of Memory: memory is not something displayed, it is in use.

3.2.3 Symbolicity: Construction of Collective Narrative

This dimension is a combination of physical spatial transfer and digital media of narration, creating an immersive canal cultural narrative. It establishes an emotional relationship between the users and the memory of the canal, and makes the spiritual essence of Sites of Memory visible, not just in physical form and technical function.

3.3 Overall Design

The overall design is based on the spatial logic of "mooring at the shore, carrying books with boat" and the vertical functions and horizontal circulation are arranged in relation to the site conditions.

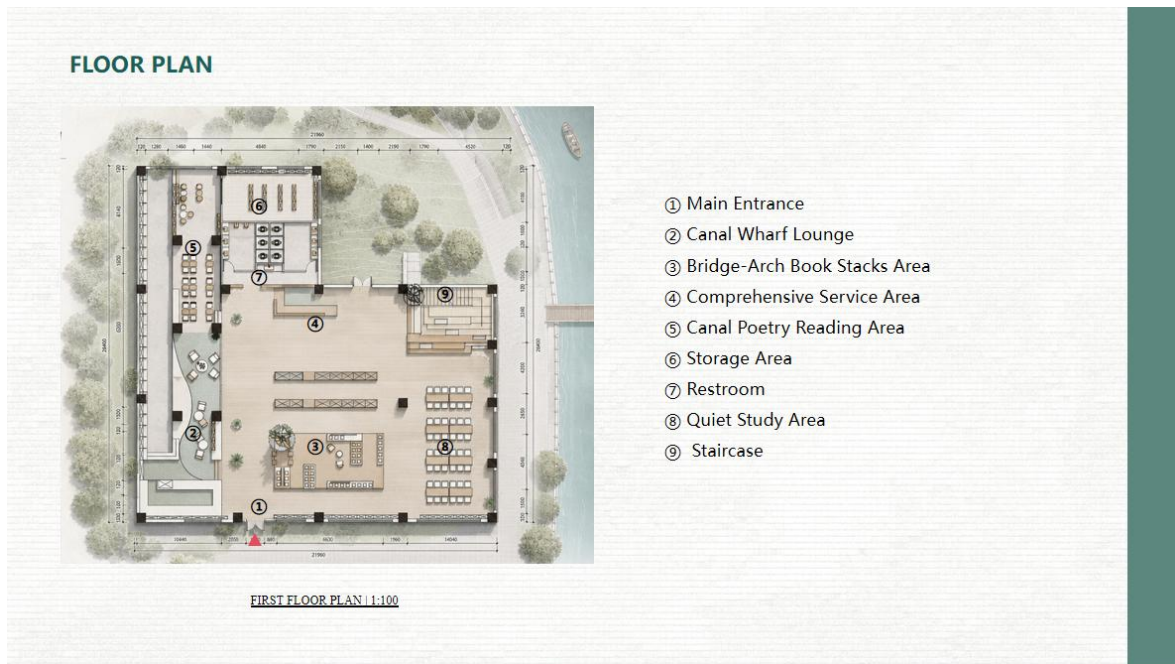
The building has 5 layers from the lower level to the higher level: site base layer, underground equipment floor, public service area of the ground floor, reading experience area of the 2nd floor, roof layer. The shape of the roof adds to the idea of a canal boat resting on the shore.

Movement is well orchestrated horizontally, with the ground floor dedicated to public functions such as reception, leisure and shared reading spaces on the dockside for visiting guests on a daily basis, and with distinct dynamic/static zoning. Public experience spaces are located on the waterside facade that has the best landscape view. The second floor is dedicated to quiet reading and cultural experience with increased privacy for book collection, self-study and digital narrative. The waterside area with the most optimum landscape resources is designated for the digital narrative experience area.

From the point of view of circulation, the main entrance is connected with urban road and the secondary entrance is connected with the waterfront trail, forming a spatial sequence of city – study room – canal, responding the connotation of connection of the word mooring.

3.4 Functional Space Design

Seven functional spaces are elaborated here, all of which aim to portray function, form and cultural connotation in a three-dimensional perspective through the Sites of Memory.





3.4.1 Reception Area

The reception area, as the first impression node of the space, adopts the hull line style of canal boat, and establishes the entrance memory point by extending the front desk in a curve. Bookshelves have been arranged in arch style on both sides, which not only continues the formal motif but also relaxes the stiffness of building beams and columns. The light wood color palette features cyan green accents for a soft entrance setting. This space carries out flow guidance, book-borrowing, and from the beginning sets up the morphological perception of canal culture.



3.4.2 Dockside Leisure Area

Using the spatial image of “wharf mooring”, this space is paved in a courtyard type enclosed space, simulating a wharf gathering space. The canal theme has been repeated through the use of details, like boat-shaped pendant lamps and curved water-pattern floor strips. It has social seating and some light catering and is used daily by locals and for short rests by tourists. As an important carrier of the functionality attribute, this space carries daily leisure and social activities.



3.4.3 Canal Poetry Shared Reading Area

It is the main reading area with continuous arch interfaces to form a spatial rhythm, forming a "boat cabin" reading atmosphere. The floor is characterised by a linear design with streamlined cyan terrazzo strips, which are metaphoric representations of the vein of the canal water and which implicitly indicate the movements of the pedestrian flow. The use of large size floor to ceiling windows brings the canal landscape in, to achieve the concept of an indoor outside visual linkage. The space is based on the concept of shared reading, and can also be used for small book-sharing activities, combining reading into daily activities with canal landscape and image of culture.



3.4.4 Bridge-Arch Book Collection Area

The design motif of canal stone bridges was abstracted as the arch form of a bookshelf, which is continuous in this area. The book wall extends to full height, further emphasizing the spatial quality of ritual with books installed in a tidy manner following the arches, mirroring the form of the canal bridges. It is primarily a book collecting and browsing area, which conveys the continuity of material and function in the form of the classic bridge symbol.



3.4.5 Digital Narrative Experience Area

It is the main part of cultural symbol space, implements the virtual-real integration mode of "physical space + digital large screen". The historical evolution and the cultural stories of Yangzhou Canal are presented by an immersive digital scroll. A water-ripple lighting system on the ceiling creates lights and shadows on the canal surface, adding to the sense of being immersed in the water. The space can serve canal culture exhibitions and themed salons, creating a narrative scene of a collective memory of the canal and corresponding to the symbolic dimension of Sites of Memory.



3.4.6 Window-side Reading Lounge

This space along the waterside facade, is the first to present the canal landscape with large viewing windows. Low bookshelves and flexible seating and small reading tables are located along the windows to facilitate reading, resting and informal conversation. Flowing ceiling lines and canal-inspired floor patterns bring the spatial language of water in the interior and give the space an open and relaxed transition between the reading space and the canal landscape.



3.4.7 Self-study Area

This is one of the less busy areas and is set-up with standard study tables to facilitate quiet reading and one-on-one study. A full height book wall has been incorporated in the adjacent space to the staircase, which can be accessed easily with a movable ladder. There are translucent blue-green wave panels and flowing floor lines that create an abstract reference to the water of the canal, and large windows that add natural light and views of the waterside. These elements collectively contribute to a serene and structured educational setting, yet also evoke a touch of the design language of the canal.



3.5 Design Innovations

This project forms three targeted design innovations addressing common pain points of canal-themed public spaces.

First, **theoretical translation innovation**. The Theory of Sites of Memory is introduced to guide canal cultural public space design, constructing a three-dimensional translation framework of "materiality – functionality – symbolicity". It breaks through the traditional symbol-stacking mode and provides a referable theoretical path for the contemporary expression of canal culture.

Second, **functional mode innovation**. The design establishes the logic of "daily public function as the foundation, canal cultural narrative as the superposition". Taking local residents' reading and social needs as the core, it moderately implants cultural experience functions, preventing the space from being reduced to a mere tourism check-in spot and balancing cultural inheritance with daily use.

Third, **formal technique innovation**. Shape Grammar is applied to abstract and translate canal prototypes — boat hulls, water ripples and arch bridges — into spatial languages such as interfaces, circulation routes and lighting atmosphere, realizing implicit expression and spatial perception of canal culture.

3.6 Material Selection and Application

The choice of material is based on the atmosphere strategy of "wood base + canal cyan tone", reflecting on the environment of the waterside, and also meeting the use intensity of the public space.

Light wood is the main complementing material for base materials, and it is used to make bookshelves and furniture/reception desks with warm spatial texture, reproducing the spatial texture of ancient canal wharves. It is used for floor surfaces as terrazzo because of its hardness for frequent use in public areas.

Low-saturation canal cyan-green is theme accent material, appearing as accent color on theme floor inlays, upholstery and in part on walls, to abstractly reflect the image of the canal water. Color areas are carefully controlled; there is no over-expression of color to create excessive visual impact and the cultural ambience is restrained.

Soft light films and linear lamps are placed on the ceiling together for lighting and auxiliary materials, so as to simulate the diffuse light of canal water. The digital narrative area is made of glass and metal to increase technological sense and the contrast between the virtual and the real. The natural imagery of river banks and tidal flats is reflected in local gravel and aquatic plant landscaping.

Conclusions to Section III

The whole design process is displayed in detail: concept proposal, theoretical derivation, overall layout, functional spaces and material application of the Yangzhou canal city study Mooring Boat of Books. The design is based on the Theory of Sites of Memory, which involves three dimensions: formal translation, functional compounding and narrative construction; in order to make canal culture visible and accessible and to develop a sense of empathy for public space.

The design not only satisfies the basic needs of the local people to socialize and read daily, it also fulfills the modern form of collective memory of the canal. It validates the design logic of "daily use activates cultural memory" and offers practical reference and guidance for micro-renewal and cultural translation of similar public spaces along the Grand Canal.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Taking the city study room along the Grand Canal in Yangzhou as the research object, this thesis focuses on the common dilemma that canal-themed public spaces often reduce cultural expression to superficial symbol stacking and detach from residents' daily life. Guided by the Theory of Sites of Memory, this study explores how public interior spaces can carry and activate the collective memory of the canal while balancing cultural inheritance and daily usage.

Through site investigation and user demand analysis, this research clarifies the core user structure of the canal-side city study: local residents and students are the main user groups, while tourists account for a smaller proportion as secondary visitors. Accordingly, the design prioritizes daily reading and social interaction demands, rather than taking tourism-oriented cultural exhibition as the core goal. This judgment corrects the design tendency of similar canal public space projects that overemphasize tourist display functions while ignoring the needs of local residents.

On this basis, this study sorts out the internal logical connection between the Theory of Sites of Memory and the design of canal cultural spaces. Relying on the three core attributes of the theory — materiality, functionality and symbolicity — a complete spatial translation framework is constructed. Instead of directly copying canal cultural elements such as grain transport boats, stone arch bridges and wharves as decorative patterns, this study abstracts and transforms them into spatial interfaces, circulation organization and atmospheric features through shape grammar, realizing the implicit expression of canal culture embedded in the spatial skeleton.

The complete design practice of *Mooring Boat of Books* verifies the feasibility of the above theoretical framework. The scheme meets the differentiated needs of different user groups through composite functional zoning, and jointly constructs the atmosphere of memory site through material selection, light environment creation and digital narrative design. The design realizes the unification of daily public service functions and canal cultural inheritance, and effectively avoids the space being reduced to a simple tourism check-in spot.

Overall, this research aims to provide a referable thinking path for the interior design of public cultural spaces along the Grand Canal. It is expected to draw attention to the value of daily usage in heritage-related public spaces: the cultural memory of the canal is not preserved only by static exhibitions, but is continuously regenerated in the daily behaviors of citizens.

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