

MARTIAL ART OR MODERN COFFEE SHOP

Argument of Spirit Preservation in Reusing of Budokuten in Southern Taiwan

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Abstract. Budokuten was a particular building to exercise traditional Japanese martial art and was an important symbol of Samurai spirit in Taiwan during Japanese colonial period. Two of preserving Budokutens in southern Taiwan were repaired. One Budokuten at Chishang is reusing for coffee shop, the other one at Kaohsiung is reusing for martial art exercise by a non-profit organization.

The local government thinks that new Chishang Budokuten with modern function is helpful for tourism. However, some people consider it is not appropriate for a traditional Japanese martial art building. Kaohsiung Budokuten has original activity again and seems to keep historical spirit appropriately. Nevertheless, conservative reusing style often lack tourist attraction.

Diverse function is the specific issue for cultural heritage in Taiwan where has short history and few historical resource. From these two examples we can discuss an appropriate way to balance the historical spirit and tourist attraction.

1. Budokuten in Colonial Taiwan

Budokuten is a particular building to exercise traditional Japanese martial art and an important symbol of Samurai spirit for Japanese. Taiwan was colonized by Japanese between 1895 and 1945. At that time, Budokuten was established in every town, county and city in Taiwan under the promotion of martial art by Japanese since 1899. Such as Taitoung Budokuten, Changhua Budokuten. Figure 1; Figure 2_ Over 60 Budokuten buildings were built in Taiwan during Japanese colonial period (Chen 1996_1-16). The appearance of Budokuten is similar with traditional Japanese temple, and the interior

space is spacious with wood floor to exercise traditional Japanese martial art. Figure 3; Figure 4.



Figure 1. Taitoung Budokuten during Japanese colonial period. (available from the website of National Central Library, Taiwan)



Figure 2. Changhua Budokuten during Japanese colonial period (available from the website of National Central Library, Taiwan)

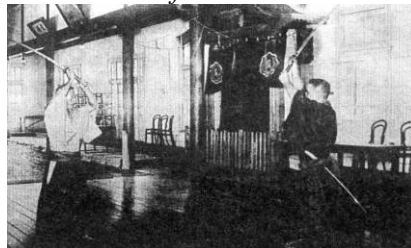


Figure 3. Exercise of Japanese martial art at Taipei Budokuten during Japanese colonial period (available from Chen 1996_3-47)



Figure 4. Exercise of Japanese martial art at Hualien Gang Budokuten during Japanese colonial period (available from Chen 1996_3-49)

2. Conservation and Reuse of Cultural Heritage in Taiwan

The concept of conservation of cultural heritage in present Taiwan was not formed until 1982, the year that the Cultural Heritage Preservation Law was established. After the legislation of this law, conservation of cultural heritage had attracted increasing attention.

Frozen preservation was a popular way of conservation of cultural heritage between 1980 and 2000 in Taiwan. However, professional management and reusing actively for cultural heritage were promoted by some experts. Under this stream, more and more cultural heritage were reused after 2000's. (Lin 2000_41; Kuo 2004_51) Most of these reusing cultural heritages have new functions, which was planed by agency in charge initially. Then agency in charge would find a person or group to manage the reusing plan for the cultural heritage. Some of cultural heritages are charged by city or town government, and some of them are private in Taiwan.

The new functions of reusing cultural heritages are various, including museum, restaurant, coffee shop, theater, and so on. Only some of new functions were operated well. These effects of new functions in these reusing cultural heritages were evaluated by different opinions. Chishang Budokuten and Kaohsiung Budokuten, the cases of this study, are best examples to discuss different opinions for reusing cultural heritage.

3. Conservation and Reuse of Budokuten in Taiwan

There are 16 Budokuten buildings preserved in Taiwan now(Chen 1996_1-16). Some of them are repaired by government and then reused. These Budokuten buildings become important cultural heritage to attest the history of Japanese colonization to Taiwanese. Chishang Budokuten and Kaohsiung Budokuten are the famous cases located in southern Taiwan.

3.1. CHISHANG BUDOKUTEN UNDER CONSERVATION AND REUSE

Chishang Budokuten was established in 1934 at Chishang. The material of wall of Chishang Budokuten was brick with the surface of gray washed granolithic, and the frame of roof was wood. After colonization, Chishang Budokuten was used for many years until destroyed in fire in 1994. This disaster caused serious damage to this building, especially to the wood-frame roof. So Chishang Township

Office decided to repair the construction of Chishang Budokuten and made a new plan to reuse _Figure 5; Figure 6_.



*Figure 5. Chishang Budokuten during Japanese colonial period
(available from <http://www.chi-san-chi.com/8archi/text/wudirden/index.html>)*



*Figure 6. Chishang Budokuten after fire in 1994
(available from <http://www.chi-san-chi.com/8archi/text/wudirden/index.html>)*

Chishang is a small town at Kaohsiung County in southern Taiwan. Recently Chishang Township Office made much effort to develop the tourism for this small town. They thought that the coffee shop would be an attractive place for the tourists, and it could service the local citizens as well. Therefore, the coffee shop seemed to be the best new function for Chishang Budokuten under this consideration.

The reparation of Chishang Budokuten was finished in 2001. The architect who was in charge of this reparation had a controversial design for Chishang Budokuten. He did not adopt the original roof style which was composed of wood-frame roof and traditional Japanese tiles. Instead, the steel-frame and fiberglass were used for new roof of Chishang Budokuten _Figure 7_. The new roof caused very large difference from the original appearance of Chishang Budokuten.

After the reparation, Chishang Budokuten became a coffee shop in 2002. This coffee shop provides multiple functions, not only to be a restaurant, but also to have exhibitions and performances irregularly. These new functions successfully attract some tourists.

However, this new function caused some debate. Some people, particularly the local elder citizens, think that coffee shop is not suited to Budokuten. They prefer Japanese martial art to be performed in this building. Beside the new function, the new roof with steel-frame and fiberglass is also denounced. In tropic Taiwan, this new roof causes high temperature for interior space and wastes much electric power for air conditioners in summer. High expenditure of the electric power often forced the custodian to close the shop in hot summer day. Under this predicament, the custodian and Chishang Township Office came to an agreement that restaurant was only set at the front yard of Chishang Budokuten. The interior space of Chishang Budokuten is for irregular exhibitions _Figure 8; Figure 9; Figure 10_.



Figure 7. Chishang Budokuten after repair



Figure 8. Interior space for exhibition in Chishang Budokuten after repair



Figure 9. Restaurant at the front yard of Chishang Budokuten



Figure 10. Restaurant counter at the front yard of Chishang Budokuten

3.2. KAOHSIUNG BUDOKUTEN UNDER CONSERVATION AND REUSE

Kaohsiung Budokuten was built in 1924 at Kaohsiung City located in southern Taiwan. Kaohsiung City is the second large city in Taiwan, and much larger than Chishang at where Chishang Budokuten located. Because of the important location, Kaohsiung Budokuten was the principal Budokuten in southern Taiwan.

After colonization, Kaohsiung Budokuten was used for a dormitory for many years. Unlike the concrete appearance of Chishang Budokuten, the red brick was the major material of Kaohsiung Budokuten's exterior wall, which had particular appearance from the traditional wood building in Japan. *Figure 11*. Unfortunately, this beautiful Budokuten building fell into disuse in 1990's, and some people suggested that it should be demolished. After Kaohsiung City Government had listed it as the lawful cultural heritage in 1999 and restored it in 2004, the situation had changed. Meanwhile, Kaohsiung City Government called for tender who have appropriate managing plans for Kaohsiung Budokuten.



*Figure 11. Kaohsiung Budokuten during Japanese colonial period
(available from <http://www.butokuten.twmail.org/001.htm>)*

Under this appropriate plan, Kaohsiung Budokuten would be an important site for promotion of the concept of cultural heritage conservation for local community, as well as the site for cultural tourism. Kaohsiung City Government also hoped the Japanese martial art would be displayed in this building to suit with this particular building. Meanwhile, Kaohsiung Budokuten, the lawful cultural heritage in Taiwan, should play an educational role for citizens. For this purpose, Budokuten would be a local Cultural Museum at Kaohsiung City. Some exhibitions and cultural shows would display in this building. Beside the jobs above, the manager should maintain this building (Kaohsiung City Hall 2005).

Finally, the managing plan which was made by a non-profit organization “Kendo Cultural Association” won the highest score. This association managed Kaohsiung Budokuten between 2005 and 2007 in the first contract, and it is continuing in the second contract now.

Kendo Cultural Association is a local community organization which promotes the Japanese martial art “Kendo”. In their managing plan for Kaohsiung Budokuten, they hope this Budokuten can keep Samurai spirit by exercising Kendo activities, which is thought the original spirit of Budokuten. So they teach Kendo for community and have Kendo competition regularly in this building. The similar activities were held during 2006 to 2007. This also the first time to have Kendo activity in Budokuten among the reusing cases of Budokuten in Taiwan_Figure 12; Figure 13_.



Figure 12. Kendo activity in Kaohsiung Budokuten



*Figure 13. Kendo activity in Kaohsiung Budokuten
(available from <http://www.butokuten.twmail.org/001.htm>)*

In order to be the role of a local Cultural Museum which this building should play at Kaohsiung City under the managing contract for Kaohsiung City Government, Kendo Cultural Association held some educational activities in the first year in their management of Kaohsiung Budokuten. For example, “Through the History of Kaohsiung Budokuten” was held by the association in 2005. Many citizens joined this activity to know the history about this building (Lu 2006_100). In the same year, this association also held an international activity “Chrysanthemum and Sword---Meeting for the Issue of Budokuten Reuse in Taiwan and Japan”. Taiwanese and Japanese both provided some advice for how to use the traditional Japanese space “Budokuten” in the present. Participants could know more about the character of Budokuten, especially participants from Taiwan. This activity was considered one of important educational and cultural function of reuse of Kaohsiung Budokuten (Lu 2006_102-103).

However, how to be an attractive site for tourist is a task for Kendo Cultural Association when they manage Kaohsiung Budokuten. The Kendo teaching shows or the other activities relating to Kendo are not

always held in the building, and this association does not have any resource to support interpretation system for this building. The tourist who visits Kaohsiung Budokuten sometimes sees nothing in this building. Therefore, Kaohsiung Budokuten is not a famous tour site for tourists at Kaohsiung. Many citizens complain that they do not know such a good building which fills with the cultural and historic atmosphere. Even they go into this building; they can not gain good interpretation about the culture and history about this building. The tourists do nothing but just take look around the building when they visit this building in most of time_ Figure 14; Figure 15_.



Figure 14. The situation of space which has no activity outside

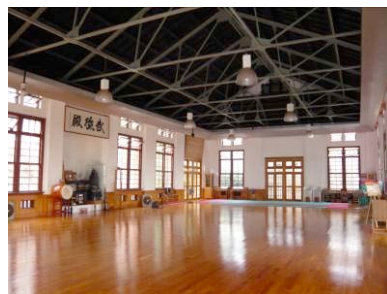


Figure 15. The situation of space which has no activity inside

5. Economic Benefit or Historical Memory

Chishang Budokuten and Kaohsiung Budokuten are the same type cultural heritages which have the same historical meaning for Taiwanese. However, we can see very different reuses in these two buildings. This situation reveals some arguments for reuse of cultural heritage in Taiwan.

Taiwan is a small island and has short history. Taiwan government pays much attention on economics development because of the limit of geography and natural resource. As a result, reuse of cultural

heritage is considered as economic benefit for a city or town. The reusing plans of cultural heritage combining with commerce are popular. Restaurant and coffee shop are easier reusing commercial types to operate in a reusing cultural heritage. These types, like the reuse of Chishang Budokuten introduced above, are related to economic activity and presumed to attract the tourists to earn the money for town or city.

However, some people concern about historical memory of cultural heritage. They expect to enjoy historical atmosphere and obtain the knowledge about the cultural heritage at where they visit. Consequently, Kaohsiung Budokuten reappears original activity and keeps historical spirit appropriately. Nevertheless, conservative reusing style often lacks tourist attraction and economic benefit for a city.

From these two examples we know that diverse function is the specific issue for the reuse of cultural heritage in Taiwan where has limited natural and historical resource. We must to find an appropriate way to balance the historical spirit and tourist attraction. In my opinion, even a cultural heritage in a small site, which is like Budokuten, mixed functions should be considered in a reusing plan of cultural heritage. Economic reuse is immediately beneficial to the city, but it is not a sustainable attitude of reuse for cultural heritage. This means that economic reuse should have spirit preservation in reusing plan. Good multiple functions should be the combination of conservation of historical spirit and economic activity to make more tourist attraction and benefit of city.

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