

Preservation and Reuse of Traditional Rammed-Earth Houses, Floating Cloud Township Villa in Qinglongwu, China



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ABSTRACT

Historical buildings serve as historical documents that reflect the urban and architectural style of their own period, built upon the social, cultural, and economic accumulations of the society, to which they belong. Today, the method of choice in the preservation of historical buildings, which as a cultural and historical heritage represent the societies' bond with both the past and the future, is to furnish such buildings with a new function.

The rammed-earth construction technique is one of the systems of construction that found effective use throughout the human history. Today, the rammed-earth technique has come to the fore in the midst of increased concerns about the environment as an alternative construction technique due to the fact that it is easy-to-apply, relies on abundant natural resources, and meets both structural comfort and sustainability and aesthetic concerns. The extant examples from different regions of the world and different time periods are indicative of the fact that the rammed-earth construction technique can adapt to different geographies and conditions, and furthermore, the structures built upon the said construction technique also provide a great potential for the re-functionalization practices.

The present study aimed to draw attention to the reuse potentials of the rammed-earth construction technique and rammed-earth buildings and to increase awareness thereof. In this context, first, the rammed-earth construction technique was discussed based on a review of relevant printed and digital literature. Subsequently, the process of re-functioning of the Floating Cloud Township Villa, i.e., the subject of the present study, and the interventions carried out in the context thereof were examined based on visual sources. A general assessment of the present study and the inferences were included in the conclusion section.

Keywords: Rammed-earth technique, Preservation, Reuse, Historical buildings, China.