

# PHILOSOPHICAL VALUES AND LANDSCAPE COGNITION OF ORCHID PAVILION IN ZHEJIANG FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY



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**Abstract:** With the traditional society's continuous development and the change in the water environment, the Orchid Pavilion landscape has changed several times. The cognition of the Orchid Pavilion landscape, by the literati of the past dynasties, has also been continuously sublimated due to a range of natural and societal factors. As an important historical landscape, south of the Yangtze River, Orchid Pavilion contains more historical and cultural significance than the landscape itself. From Wei and Jin Dynasties to Tang Dynasty, the beautiful water environment and cultural landscape of Orchid Pavilion aroused nationwide longing and appreciation for its beauty. However, from the Song Dynasty to the end of the Ming Dynasty, factors, such as warfare, population growth and climate change caused damage to the water environment, and the landscape of the Orchid Pavilion was not spared. Scholars had to recall the Orchid Pavilion landscape in their work due to its destruction. In the Qing Dynasty, imperial power intervened to rebuild Orchid Pavilion landscape. The literati and officials, in the south of the Yangtze River, gradually accepted the rule of the Qing regime, and the image of the Orchid Pavilion landscape was reshaped. Since the Republic of China, the adherents of the late Qing Dynasty have used Orchid Pavilion and its ritual activities to reinforce their sense of identity through new forms of media. The preface to the Orchid Pavilion is a collection of events, articles and calligraphy, which surpasses the general value for viewing. Although calligraphy achieves its ultimate significance, the influence of events and articles is the condition for it to enter the classical world, and the legendary appearance and the support of imperial power are the important aids to its spread.


**Keywords:** Orchid pavilion. Environment. Philosophical values. Landscape cognition.

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**Resumo:** Este artigo mostra que, com o contínuo desenvolvimento da sociedade tradicional e a mudança no ambiente aquático, a paisagem do Pavilhão das Orquídeas mudou diversas vezes. A cognição da paisagem do Pavilhão das Orquídeas, pelos literatos das dinastias passadas, também tem sido continuamente sublimada devido a uma série de fatores naturais e sociais. Como uma importante paisagem histórica, ao sul do rio Yangtze, o Pavilhão das Orquídeas contém mais significado histórico e cultural do que a própria paisagem. Das Dinastias Wei e Jin à Dinastia Tang, o belo ambiente aquático e a paisagem cultural do Pavilhão das Orquídeas despertaram o desejo e a apreciação em todo o país pela sua beleza. No entanto, desde a Dinastia Song até ao final da Dinastia Ming, fatores como a guerra, o crescimento populacional e as alterações climáticas causaram danos ao ambiente aquático, e a paisagem do Pavilhão das Orquídeas não foi poupada. Os estudiosos tiveram que relembrar a paisagem do Pavilhão das Orquídeas em seus trabalhos devido à sua destruição. Na Dinastia Qing, o poder imperial interveio para reconstruir a paisagem do Pavilhão das Orquídeas. Os literatos e funcionários, no sul do rio Yangtze, aceitaram gradualmente o domínio do regime Qing, e a imagem da paisagem do Pavilhão das Orquídeas foi remodelada. Desde a República da China, os adeptos do final da Dinastia Qing têm usado o local e as suas atividades rituais para reforçar o seu sentido de identidade através de novas formas de mídia. O prefácio do Pavilhão das Orquídeas é uma coleção de acontecimentos, artigos e caligrafias, que supera o valor geral de visualização. Embora a caligrafia atinja o seu significado último, a influência de eventos e artigos é a condição para que ela entre no mundo clássico, e a aparência lendária e o apoio do poder imperial são as ajudas importantes para a sua difusão.

**Palavras-chave:** Pavilhão de orquídeas. Ambiente. Valores filosóficos. Cognição da paisagem.

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**Abstract:** With the traditional society's continuous development and the change in the water environment, the Orchid Pavilion landscape has changed several times. The cognition of the Orchid Pavilion landscape, by the literati of the past dynasties, has also been continuously sublimated due to a range of natural and societal factors. As an important historical landscape, south of the Yangtze River, Orchid Pavilion contains more historical and cultural significance than the landscape itself. From Wei and Jin Dynasties to Tang Dynasty, the beautiful water environment and cultural landscape of Orchid Pavilion aroused nationwide longing and appreciation for its beauty. However, from the Song Dynasty to the end of the Ming Dynasty, factors, such as warfare, population growth and climate change caused damage to the water environment, and the landscape of the Orchid Pavilion was not spared. Scholars had to recall the Orchid Pavilion landscape in their work due to its destruction. In the Qing Dynasty, imperial power intervened to rebuild Orchid Pavilion landscape. The literati and officials, in the south of the Yangtze River, gradually accepted the rule of the Qing regime, and the image of the Orchid Pavilion landscape was reshaped. Since the Republic of China, the adherents of the late Qing Dynasty have used Orchid Pavilion and its ritual activities to reinforce their sense of identity through new forms of media. The preface to the Orchid Pavilion is a collection of events, articles and calligraphy, which surpasses the general value for viewing. Although calligraphy achieves its ultimate significance, the influence of events and articles is the condition for it to enter the classical world, and the legendary appearance and the support of imperial power are the important aids to its spread.

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### INTRODUCTION

Geographers consider landscapes natural complexes. Some scholars propose that the landscape is an object composed of various elements, including landforms, atmosphere, water and soil that come together according to certain rules (Wu *et al.*, 2004, p. 3-5). Over time, the concept of landscape has acquired cultural significance. F. Ratzel, a German geographer, first introduced the concept of the cultural landscape, emphasizing the significance of race, language, religion and cultural transmission. Later, Wen Mo proposed a comprehensive

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understanding of the natural and humanistic aspects of the landscape. In 1906, Otto Schlütter, a German geographer, further developed the concept of the cultural landscape, highlighting the social, economic and spiritual forces that shape it. In the 1920s, Carl Saul, an American geographer, inherited and expanded upon the German concept, emphasizing the relationship between human culture and landscape. Wu Bihu asserts that the cultural landscape reflects the culture in space, created through cultural geography on the earth's surface. Cultural landscapes can be divided into the landscape of technology systems and the landscape of value systems, based on the structure of culture. Accordingly, Orchid Pavilion should be considered a landscape of the value system, meaning a non-figurative landscape (Wu *et al.*, 2004, p. 3-5).

Academic research on the Orchid Pavilion mainly focuses on culture, calligraphy and historical figures (Liu, 2014 p. 4-5). Scholars have proposed the concept of "Orchid Pavilion Studies." Mao Wanbao believes that research on Orchid Pavilion Studies should include the study of historical figures who participated in Orchid Pavilion Gathering in the year of Yonghe, research on different versions of the "Preface to the Poems Collected from the Orchid Pavilion", and cultural and archaeological research derived from Orchid Pavilion (Mao, 2011). Chen Qiaoyi collected and organized literature and data related to the Orchid Pavilion, and researched Orchid Pavilion site, laying the foundation for further research. Sheng Honglang (1993) researched the original site of Orchid Pavilion and its changes in history. Qiu Zhirong (2008) analyzed and studied the water systems surrounding Orchid Pavilion, based on historical records and maps, and briefly analyzed the style and characteristics of the Shaoxing gardens and landscapes, including Orchid Pavilion. From the perspective of new cultural history, Liu Yanshuo (2014) examined the process by which Shaoxing scholars projected their nationalistic sentiments onto the Orchid Pavilion landscape during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and analyzed the role played by Orchid Pavilion during periods of political change.

The earliest aesthetic is a direct and spiritual expression of the universal human experience of beauty. During this period, the general populace's and scholar-officials' aesthetic tastes were not significantly different. However, with the scholar class's specialization in aesthetics, a class difference in environmental cognition emerged. Environmental factors, such as climate, geography, animals, plants and other variables change over time. Consequently, the aesthetic quality also varies with the times, and the interaction of multiple factors contributes to the rich content of natural aesthetic history. This change has had some influence on the evolution of artistic styles. The nature's aesthetic perception, in the Jiangnan region, is primarily reflected in poetry, landscape painting and gardens. Initially, aesthetic creation focused on poetry, while in the middle stages, works included landscape painting. Later aesthetic appreciation became increasingly associated with private gardens in the south of the Yangtze River.

“Classical World” is a viewpoint to understand classical culture. It focuses on the characters and events in the classical literature and shows a broader picture of historical life. Its carrier takes the Confucian classics as the core, accumulates and contains the classics, the son, the history of literature at three levels and even extends each kind of note and the novel. Wang Jiangge (2016, p. 425) indicated that “[...] people’s cognition of climate, vegetation, and environment in a region is an important content of human civilization. This cognition has both a practical and scientific aspect, as well as a spiritual and aesthetic aspect”. Since the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the ecological environment and cultural landscape of Orchid Pavilion have produced a unique aesthetic cognition. Literati and officials, to appreciate the beauty and honor the sages from the past, have left a large number of literature, which is both an aesthetic appreciation of the environment and a cognitive understanding of the Orchid Pavilion landscape. This kind of landscape cognition will also change due to climate, geography and hydrology, forming an interactive relationship between the environment and the landscape. This interactive relationship also presents different characteristics with the continuous changes of the times. Thus, it constitutes a dynamic interactive process between the Orchid Pavilion landscape and the ecological environment in different historical periods. However, the author believes that, in the process of changes in the Orchid Pavilion landscape, the cognition of literati and officials towards the landscape is also influenced by the social conditions of different periods. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the changes in literati’s cognition of the Orchid Pavilion landscape through different historical periods and to explore the interactive relationship among environment, society and landscape cognition, and its philosophical value, in the classical world, in the literati’s and officials’ cognition.

The Orchid Pavilion landscape provides us with a unique observation case of the classic world’s “objects”, and this case has profound influence and broad significance. In this case, there is an interaction and mutual transformation between people and things, which is complex and subtle. Without people’s activities, events will not occur and have no impact, because the people’s existence and behavior are the key factors for the occurrence and development of events. Similarly, without the correlation between things, the behavior will lack tools or background, and become abstract and uncertain. Because things are the carrier and tool of events, events without things are unimaginable.

Although people have life and death, and things also survive, most things exist longer than people. This is because the existence and value of things are beyond individuals. They can experience multiple times and historical changes, and become the witness of culture and history. Therefore, people often express nostalgia or nostalgic emotional sustenance through reading objects. This is because the existence of things can arouse people’s memories and thinking about the past, and let people feel the weight of history and cultural inheritance.

As the classic world's unique "object", Orchid Pavilion landscape is not only a beautiful natural landscape, but also a witness of culture and history. It has gone through many times and historical changes, and has witnessed the development and progress of human civilization. In the landscape of the Orchid Pavilion, people can feel the nature and humanity's harmony and unity, and can also express their emotional sustenance and cultural identity through seeing the people. Through the analysis of the landscape of the Orchid Pavilion, this paper explores the social culture and national feelings of the Pavilion in the process of the historical changes from the perspective of environmental history. The idea behind it is the philosophical thinking of the unity of man and nature.

This paper will adopt comprehensive research methods, combining the traditional historical research methods and environmental history research methods, to explore the historical image of Orchid Pavilion in the literati group in different historical periods. We will collect and analyze relevant historical materials to explore the philosophical value and landscape cognition of the Orchid Pavilion from the interaction among culture and society, politics, environment, climate and other factors. By using environmental history research methods, we will reveal the close relationship between humans and the natural environment, including climate change, natural disasters and ecological balance. These environmental factors have played an important role in the long history, and have influenced human life and decision-making. By combining these two approaches, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of historical events and phenomena. For example, the occurrence of a historical event may be related to the climate change at the time. Climate change may have affected the local economic and social environment, thus leading to the event. By digging deeper into the interactions among these factors, we can more accurately explain the causes and effects of historical events.

In conclusion, this paper will adopt a comprehensive research approach to reveal the multiple factors and interactive relationships behind the history. This integrated research approach helps us to gain a deeper understanding of the history and to provide valuable references for future research and decision-making.

## 1 POETRY MEMORY: ORCHID PAVILION IN TEXTS

During the Wei-Jin period, which was a relatively cold period in the process of climate change in Chinese history, Zhu Kezhen (1972, p. 22) used the example of ice houses, operated by the Southern Dynasty, to discuss the possibility of ice-making in the capital city of the Southern Dynasty (present-day Nanjing), and concluded that "[...] if the ice house on Fushou Mountain in Nanjing during the Southern Dynasty was a fact, then Nanjing in that winter was about 2°C colder on average, with an annual temperature of 1°C lower than now". Based on further analysis of historical materials and evidence, Ge Quansheng (2011,

p. 222) argued that “[...] the climate in eastern and central China during the Wei-Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties was slightly cold, slightly warm, cold, and slightly warm, with four stages of change”. According to research by Kong Xuexiang, Chen Hongmei *et al.*, the climate in Shaoxing, during the Wei-Jin period, became colder, and there was a noticeable increase in cold weather records, such as heavy snow and severe cold in historical materials. In the late 5th century AD, heavy snow was blocking transportation and causing merchants to be unable to travel. When using 30 years as a temperature record, they pointed out that two periods, during the Wei-Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties (210s-560s), were as warm as the period from 1951 to 1980, and the temperatures, during the other periods, were colder than the period from 1951 to 1980 (Kong, 2012, p. 18). Many studies in China have suggested that “[...] there is a significant correlation between the cold climate in the north at that time and the migration of grassland tribes to the south” (Ge, 2011, p. 221). Many refugees followed the aristocratic families and big clans to migrate southward to various places in Jiangnan. Despite the chaotic situation, the southern economy maintained a relatively good development trend. A prosperous scene emerged, as described in the following quote: “Jingzhou spans the wealth of southern Chu, while Yangzhou boasts the fertility of the entire Wu region, as well as the benefits of fish, salt, *qizi* (a type of tree), and *zizhi* (a type of wood), which fill the eight corners of the world. The abundance of silk, cotton, and cloth covers the entire nation” (Shen, 1974, p. 1540).

During this time, agricultural development, in the Shaoxing region, also experienced significant growth. Research by Chen Qiaoyi (1984a, p. 36) pointed out that

[...] although the population increased from Han to Tang, the population base was still relatively small compared to the water resources at that time. However, during the feudal era, when the social system still had considerable vitality, people may have adjusted the water-to-land ratio in their local area and on a larger scale to meet the needs of agricultural production, achieving balance. In this sense, the Han and Tang periods were the golden age of agricultural production on the Ning-Shao plain throughout history, where everyone had their own fields and water supply.

The prosperous life and beautiful environment attracted many wealthy families to settle here. The contrast between the ruins of the north and the landscapes of the south was striking. Wang Zijing, a calligrapher of the Eastern Jin period, praised the beautiful scenery of Orchid Pavilion, saying, “As one travels up the Shanyin Road, the mountains and rivers reflect each other, overwhelming the senses. It is especially unforgettable in autumn and winter” (Liu, 2011, p. 145). Painter Gu Kaizhi had a more direct impression of the beauty of Shaoxing at the time: “Thousands of rocks compete in beauty, and ten thousand ravines vie for streams. Grass and trees cover them as if clouds and mist were gathering” (Liu, 2011, p. 142-143). At the time, the wealthy families’ gardens, in Shaoxing, mainly featured natural landscapes with beautiful scenery. During the Wei and Jin periods, the water environment



in the Shaoxing region was moderately intact, providing an excellent natural landscape foundation for literary creation by scholars and officials.

As a historical and cultural landscape, the cultural connotations, carried by the Orchid Pavilion, have been refined and elevated through a long period of accumulation. Its influence has continued to increase in the dissemination process. The cultural influence of the landscape is closely related to its literary and artistic value, especially with the literati and officials who create or support these cultural values (Craig, 1996, p. 37). In analyzing the cultural value of the Orchid Pavilion landscape, the Tang dynasty writer, Liu Zongyuan (1979, p. 730), expressed a more direct perspective, stating that “[...] beauty is not beautiful on its own, but rather is made evident by people. Without the army passing through the Orchid Pavilion, the pure and auspicious bamboo would have disappeared into the barren mountains”. The unique significance of the Orchid Pavilion, in the Jiangnan region, cannot be separated from the purification ceremony, held by Wang Xizhi, in the ninth year of the Yonghe period (353) of the Eastern Jin Dynasty, and the transmission of the “Preface to the Poems Collected from the Orchid Pavilion” to later generations. After being embellished and praised by literati of various dynasties, the Orchid Pavilion has gradually transformed from its initial post station into a historical and cultural landscape containing multiple images.

According to the Song dynasty scholar’s research, Sang Shichang, “Preface to the Poems Collected from the Orchid Pavilion” has different titles in different dynasties.

People in the Jin Dynasty called it “Riverfront Preface,” Tang dynasty people called it “Orchid Pavilion Poetry Preface” or “Orchid Pavilion Record.” Ouyang Xiu called it “Ritual Preface,” Cai Junmo called it “Winding River Preface,” Su Dongpo called it “Orchid Pavilion Document”... it has been known by various names throughout history” (Song, 1985, p. 1). In terms of its content, there are also two different versions (2007, p. 2099).

The version of “Preface to the Poems Collected from the Orchid Pavilion”, in the *Book of Jin*, is richer in content. It describes the natural scenery around the Orchid Pavilion and expresses many of Wang Xizhi’s inner thoughts. Japanese scholar Koichi Obi (1989, p. 98-99) points out that the poets, who participated in the Orchid Pavilion Gathering, “[...] often regarded the heart of Laozi as their own and aimed to achieve the state of Laozi... This state is a world of naturalness and emptiness that aims for Laozi, and it is also a world that people commonly longed for and pursued at that time”. The reality of isolation of the Eastern Jin Dynasty made the literati gradually lose their confidence in recovering the unification of China’s central plains. Instead, they began contemplating the cycle of life and death, and the appreciation of the landscape. The poets believed that, by appreciating the landscape, they would internalize themselves into it, becoming one with it, and be far away from the mundane troubles, contemplating the life’s true meaning in a peaceful and natural state.

“Preface to the Poems Collected from the Orchid Pavilion” focuses on the words “life and death” throughout the text. It was only because the literati, at that time, focused on the idle conversation, without concrete results, that they were short of economic strategy. Therefore, they felt sorrowful when contemplating the beauty of the landscape. However, some people still possessed extraordinary wit and talent, so they had endless leisure and pleasure, even amid their lamentations (Wu, 2008, p. 150).

In the ninth year of Yonghe (353), the Orchid Pavilion Gathering attracted aristocratic families’ numerous descendants and literati who were allured by the breathtaking scenery. They infused the contradiction between reality and ideal into their spiritual world, and the surrounding mountains and rivers, thereby generating a profound contemplation of life, death and the human condition. Orchid Pavilion, as the embodiment of this spiritual wealth, has gradually evolved into a must-see destination for individuals to honor the sages’ wisdom and explore historical sites over time. While the ancient Orchid Pavilion has long vanished, later generations of literati continue to imbue the site with cultural significance, perpetuating its enduring legacy.

The masterpiece preface to the Orchid Pavilion was born in a spiritual event. This event is not only the cause of the work, but also its content. The birth of preface to the Orchid Pavilion has left a seed with rich connotation and vigorous vitality for culture. But it takes the right soil or luck to grow, and seeds are only the beginning of a long story.

## **2 TRAGEDY OF THE HOMELAND: ORCHID PAVILION SOUGHT BY THE LITERATI**

Based on the documentary records, Zhu Kezhen (1972, p. 22) pointed out that the climate in China, during the Sui and Tang Dynasties, was generally warmer. In the eastern and central regions, the climate underwent three cycles of changes during the Five Dynasties and Northern Song periods. The early Five Dynasties were cold, followed by warming until the late Northern Song, and then another cooling period at the end of the dynasty (Ge, 2011, p. 384). The relationship among people, land and water on the Ningbo-Shaoxing Plain was balanced during the Sui and Tang Dynasties. Since the Song Dynasty, with the outbreak of northern wars and the central government’s migration southward, a large number of immigrants have migrated southward, completely changing the relationship among people, land and water on the Ningbo-Shaoxing Plain, with more people than land and more land than water, making Shaoxing a densely populated area (Chen, 1984b, p. 37).

The strategic shift of water bodies on the Ningbo-Shaoxing Plain exchanged a small amount of mountainous land with lower agricultural value for a large area of plain with higher agricultural value, maximizing the use of the region’s land resources. Therefore, shrinking lake groups in the plain area is reasonable and inevitable (Chen, 1984b, p. 38).



Consequently, literati in the Song Dynasty could only occupy a different amount of space than those in the Six Dynasties. Thus, they paid more attention to small habitats, gradually tending towards gardenization (Wang, 2016, p. 496). The warm climate, abundant labor force and continuous improvement of agricultural technology provided favorable conditions for the development of agriculture in Shaoxing. At the same time, extensive agricultural development caused a shift in the water environment from macrohabitats to microhabitats, and the Orchid Pavilion landscape lost its water environment foundation.

The Song Dynasty, as a whole, was a period of Chinese decline. After the late Tang Dynasty and Five Dynasties, the climate of the Northern Song Dynasty was in a warm and dry period. From 930 to 1100 AD, the climate warming period, from the end of the Northern Song Dynasty to the Southern Song Dynasty, turned to cold. There was a “medieval warm period” in Europe. The climate before 1000 AD, in China, was also relatively humid, and the climate, after this node, was relatively dry. For the maturity period of the traditional culture of the Song Dynasty, the agriculture and culture of Jiangnan all represent this maturity. Poets have experienced mature agricultural landscapes and a wide variety of idyllic scenery, and they can be sensitive to the difference between rain and snow in recent years, which brings the Jiangnan idyllic poetry to its peak. Human aesthetic experience of environmental cycle is an important part of ecological civilization. In the early years of the Northern Song Dynasty, the scholars’ experience of the habitat had been very elegant, and the landscape also had a landscape tendency. During the warm and dry climate period of the Northern Song Dynasty, the plum blossom in winter was often opened in the twelfth lunar month. Plum blossom, accompanied by the snow in winter, plum and snow also appear in large number. As a poet in the early Song Dynasty, Lin Bu had a unique discovery of niche aesthetics. His plum-singing poems, by the West Lake, not only influenced the plum blossom fever in the Song Dynasty, but also had an important influence on the transformation of the humanistic style of the Song Dynasty. From the late Northern Song Dynasty to the early Southern Song Dynasty, the climate entered a cold cycle. The Jiangnan orange tree is the landmark plant for the identification of the cold period. In the 12th century, Lin Bu mentioned the cold protection technology of the orange trees in Dongting Mountain, and also explained the details that are difficult to grow elsewhere. In the 13th century, there was a relatively short warm period. After 1260, the climate entered a continuous cold period, and the northern Mongolian steppe saw the nomadic people’s great expansion. Jiangnan is often frozen in winter. The city’s busy and single habitat loses some sensitivity to climate change. After the Southern Song Dynasty, the literati settled in the cities on a large scale, and lacked aesthetic space. They could only appreciate the gardens to complement it, which was difficult to compare with Tang and Song writers’ aesthetic space. Some poets realized this problem and began to seek habitat aesthetics in a wider geographical space during the middle and late period of the Southern Song Dynasty.

## 2.1 VISITING HISTORICAL SITES TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE SAGES

After the Eastern Jin dynasty, visiting the beautiful scenery of Yuezhong, admiring the Orchid Pavilion historical site and pursuing the Wei and Jin literati style became one of the main activities for literati and officials to visit the landscape of Orchid Pavilion.

Wang Youjun served as the Interior Minister of Yue and was a frequent guest at Orchid Pavilion, where he enjoyed wine and composed poetry by the winding streams. Generations have revered his graceful brushstrokes and literary achievements. His works moved and inspired many, earning him a reputation as a refined and cultured gentleman. As a result, many literati and scholars began to flock to his circle (Song, 2003, p. 42).

The beautiful landscape of Yuezhong attracted many poets to come and enjoy it. Meng Jiao, in his “Yue Zhong Shan Shui”, wrote about the beautiful water environment of Shaoxing at that time: “The sun awakens my eyes and ears, and I arrive in the land of mountains and waters. It is like a beautiful dream, with fields floating like boats. Admiring the wonders, suddenly, it’s far away. But exploring the mysteries is truly lingering. I will forever speak of the colors of Zhongnan Mountain and leave behind any worries” (Peng, 1960, p. 4213). Meng Jiao’s “Yue Landscape” is a picturesque masterpiece, which depicts the beautiful scenery of the landscape with exquisite brush strokes. In this poem, Meng Jiao, with its unique perspective and vivid language, shows the beauty and agility of the Chinese mountains and rivers. The artistic conception in the poem is like a beautiful landscape painting, with green mountains, like Dai, green water, like a mirror, undulating mountains and babbling streams. Every detail seems to be carefully described by the poet, presenting a quiet and harmonious aesthetic feeling. In such beautiful scenery, people seem to forget the earthly troubles, and the mind is purified and cultivated. At the same time, Meng Jiao used many vivid descriptions in this poem to make the scenery, in the poem, more lifelike. He used the “cool moon” to describe the moon’s beauty, which not only shows the fresh and pleasant moonlight, but also expresses the poet’s praise for the natural beauty. This description makes the reader as if able to see the beautiful moon hanging on the Liuwan, and feel the tranquility and beauty. In addition, the poem also expresses the poet’s love for the natural environment and his value of the good time. In the poem, Meng Jiao conveys the reverence for nature and the yearning for life through the description of the beauty of the Lanxi landscape. At the same time, he also reminds people to cherish the present good time, feel the nature’s gift, the pursuit of inner peace and harmony. Meng Jiao’s “Yue Landscape” is a poem with beautiful artistic conception, vivid language and sincere emotion. By describing the beauty of Vietnam’s and China’s landscape, it shows the poet’s praise of the natural landscape and the value of the good time. This poem not only has high artistic value, but also gives readers profound inspiration and perception. Bai Juyi (1999, p. 340) praised the beauty of Orchid Pavilion in his “In

Response to Wei's Praise of the Zhejiang Governor's Mansion": "Upon receiving a letter from a friend, He Shangren, he greatly praised the beauty of the state residence, calling it a fairyland. He had grown tired of the windy and sandy conditions in Fengxiang but was delighted by the sight of Orchid Pavilion's smoke and scenery". The poem expresses Bai Juyi's praise for the house and his yearning for the scenery of the Lanting. This is a very beautiful poem, with concise, beautiful, vivid language, expressed Bai Juyi's joy of the friends' return and the yearning and praise for the Yue state house. This poem not only makes people feel Bai Juyi's profound literary foundation and unique artistic charm, but also makes people indulge in the beautiful scenery described by the poem. Cui Dong of the Tang Dynasty also wrote in his "Seeing Off Xue Liangshi on His Visit to the Zhejiang Governor": "Leaving home for years, our friendship has grown deep. Easy to shed tears for missing, hard to part with the heart. Lonely clouds followed the mouth of the river, and after a few days, I arrived in Shanyin. Remotely thinking of Orchid Pavilion, the clear wind fills the bamboo grove" (Zhou, 1999, p. 2203). The beautiful landscapes of the Yue region left a deep impression on poets, who expressed a sense of reluctance to leave and separation anxiety in their writings. When thinking of Orchid Pavilion, they would also be reminded of paying respects to their virtuous predecessors.

The Orchid Pavilion Gathering became an object of emulation for later literati. Bai Juyi (1999, p. 555) once compared the Pingquan banquet to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering, saying,

Wang Xizhi gathered literati at Orchid Pavilion, Ji Lun held a banquet at Jingu. Jingu is too luxurious, and Orchid Pavilion lacks silk and bamboo. How about meeting today, in the songs of the mountain stream and the melodies of the flat springs? With wine and music, we'll be content with our lot in poverty.

The literati officials' journey to the ancient times is a spiritual dialogue across time and space. They set foot on the historical sites, trace the saints' footprints and describe the treasures of the ancient culture in poetic language. These poems, like the bright stars, light up the night sky of history, and also reflect the inner waves and the literati's and officials' pursuit.

In their works, historical relics are no longer cold stones, but cultural marks full of vitality. Every piece of inscription, every ancient building, all tells the life's glory and vicissitudes. Literati officials listen to the echo of history and feel the pulse of culture with awe. At the same time, they also expressed their reverence and nostalgia for the saints through poetry. A saint's life is a model of morality and a beacon of wisdom. Literati officials praise the sages' character and wisdom in their poems, and follow the sages' footprints, in order to get enlightenment and promotion in moral cultivation. These poems are the literati's and officials' spiritual sustenance, and the catharsis of their emotions. In the process of visiting the historical sites, they not only felt the historical massiness and cultural heritage, but also

found the life's value and meaning in their thinking. They express their feelings of life, love and friendship in poetry, and make poetry a refuge for their hearts. In addition, these poems also carry the society's profound thinking and the one of the politics, the moral and the other aspects. They look at the present from a historical perspective, reflect on the society's development and progress, and seek for moral balance and harmony. These poems are not only the carrier of their thinking, but also the witness of their pursuit of truth and wisdom.

In short, the literati officials' visit to the ancient times is a spiritual awakening and sublimation. They describe the treasures of history and culture through poetry, express their reverence and nostalgia for the saints, and express their inner perception and pursuit. These poems, like bright stars, light up the night sky of history, and also reflect the literati's and officials' inner waves and pursuit.

## 2.2 FLEETING DREAMS AND HOMELAND REGRETS

In the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, the political environment, encountered by literati and officials, was similar to that in the late Song and early Yuan dynasties. Therefore, the stories in the literati's notes were used by the literati, in the early Qing Dynasty, as the adherents' model of the previous dynasty, who were loyal to the emperor and served the country. Zhang Dai's (p. 88) poetry records contain profound homeland regrets. In the 41st year of Wanli (1613), the seventeen-year-old Zhang Dai went to Orchid Pavilion with great joy. He had great expectations for the beautiful scenery of Orchid Pavilion. But when he saw Orchid Pavilion, he was disappointed by what he saw. It is recorded in "Ancient Orchid Pavilion Discrimination":

In the year of Wàn Lì Guǐ Chǒu, when I was seventeen years old, it was the year of the Wang Youjun's waterside ritual, and I went to visit with my companions. When we arrived at the Tianzhang Temple on the left, we found a ruined and overgrown site, said to be the old site of Orchid Pavilion. I stood there and looked around, but the bamboo, rocks, and mountains were not worth taking, and the scene was far from the illustrations in the book. I was greatly disappointed and choked up for a long time. Therefore, outsiders wishing to visit Orchid Pavilion are often hindered in various ways, as people think Orchid Pavilion is a place of mediocrity.

Even so, it does not affect Zhang Dai's (p. 88) admiration for Wang Xizhi, "Do not judge Wang's abilities based on his romantic interests in enjoying landscapes. Those criticizing his literary works without understanding are like a bow without strings. One can float like a cloud and be as agile as a dragon". Zhang Dai (p. 91) spent the first half of his life, like Wang Xizhi. However, when the dynasty changed, Zhang Dai's life also changed. In the twelfth year of Kangxi (1673), after sixty years, Zhang Dai revisited Orchid Pavilion. At this time, Zhang Dai is no longer the chasing young man he once was and is no longer disappointed by

the ruins before him. “Weeds bury orchids and narcissus. The green mountains weep for the azaleas. The ink flowers no longer bloom. The winding waters twist and turn in vain”. After experiencing the throes of dynastic change, Zhang Dai (p. 201) gradually felt relieved. Just facing the ancient Orchid Pavilion ruins, as a survivor of the former dynasty, he still felt a bit emotional. “But I fear that time flies swiftly, just as mountains and rivers rise and fall. As eras shift and change, my words and writings only serve to express my regrets”. For Zhang Dai, Orchid Pavilion seems to have nostalgia and regrets for his homeland.

During the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, literati and scholars, especially those from Shaoxing, were influenced by the elegance of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering. They were influenced by the Wei and Jin literary styles and felt the pain brought about by the dynastic changes. At this time, they all made their own choices, but no matter their choices, when they faced the Orchid Pavilion again and recalled the stories of the past dynasties, they could not help, but feel a sense of sadness. With the end of the unification war of the late Jin regime, social order gradually returned to normal, and the Qing government began to transform the ideological and cultural field, actively integrating into Han culture. Among them, restoring and reconstructing historical sites became an important means for the Qing government to win over Han intellectuals.

The story of classical content, and the storage of early knowledge, application and dissemination are related to the basic way of word-of-mouth. The destiny of the preface to the Orchid Pavilion and its author can also be observed from the perspective of the “Classical World”. “Orchid Pavilion” post, which was from birth to secret biography, after seven generations, can not be put into history. Only when the Tibetan masters of the post were from hidden to visible, the story began to spread and, eventually, into Shi Cheng, it entered the classical world. Once in the world, information is passed down along with the literature. At the same time, the story will go beyond the archetype of events and have their own vitality. The preface to the Orchid Pavilion was originally a seed of spirit, which grew into a towering tree in the soil of culture. Tradition is not a single line of connection, but the expansion of the pedigree. Talking through elegant words, beautiful ones and beautiful calligraphy shows that this trinity of works can be called the classical literary life’s outstanding embodiment. When the classical status of the preface to the Orchid Pavilion is formed, any criticism or query to it will strengthen its sense of existence. In relation to this thousand-year-old ink, whether it is understood as lost or remains, its spiritual life will become more and more prosperous.

### 3 REBUILDING ORCHID PAVILION: IDENTITY RECOGNITION IN MONUMENT RESTORATION

China experienced a 500-year-long Little Ice Age during the Ming and Qing periods. The first half of the Little Ice Age was generally dry and cold, with occasional warm periods. The early Qing Dynasty experienced a brief period of cold weather, followed by

relatively warmer weather in the middle and early later periods, before a long period of cold weather. (Ge, p. 494) According to research of Zhu Kezhen's (1972, p. 28-29) research, "Warm winters occurred between 1550-1600 and 1720-1730, while cold winters occurred between 1470-1520, 1620-1720, and 1840-1890. By century, the 17th century was the coldest, with 14 severe winters, followed by the 19th century, with 10 severe winters". In terms of the climate in Shaoxing, during the approximately 600 years from the end of the Yuan dynasty to the end of the Qing Dynasty (the 1320s-1910s), there were two periods with temperatures similar to those from 1951-1980, 15 relatively cold periods and three relatively warm periods, each measured in thirty-year increments (Kong, p. 20). "Although agricultural water conservancy construction developed during the Ming and Qing dynasties, due to the continued degradation of the forest landscape in the Kuaiji Mountains, agricultural production faced serious threats from drought and flood, which is a problem worthy of attention" (Chen, 1965, p. 139).

After the Qing Dynasty took power, they launched large-scale restoration projects of cultural relics during the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong periods. According to statistics by Lin Wei (2016, p. 12), Seventy-two restored cultural relics were recorded in local Shaoxing chronicles during the Qing dynasty, totaling 112 restorations. These restored cultural relics can be divided into four categories. The first type is that the officials of the imperial court restored the historic sites with the symbol of ruling power to promote the legitimacy of the rule of the Qing Dynasty and the rulers' ruling achievements, so as to prove the rationality of its rule and show its ruling authority through the restoration behavior. The second type is to restore or rebuild the historical sites with Confucian cultural connotation or symbols of Confucian culture, so as to show the social or the worship of Confucian culture or the promotion of Confucian cultural values. The third category is to repair or rebuild the historic sites associated with a certain historical and cultural celebrity, and this is to construct the cross-time and space connection between the restorer and this historical celebrity, or to express the respect for this historical figure, or to express the identity of the culture or values represented by this historical figure. The fourth type of monuments is special. It is a number of repair behaviors of Buddha's temple. This kind of monuments also belongs to the category of cultural sites. This kind of site restoration host is in the religious sites, where monks or Taoist practice. They are for religion, as they once had a glorious history of temples and glorious history behind the religious significance, by raising money or kissing for way to repair or rebuild the temple sites.

The restoration of the Orchid Pavilion relic belongs to the third category (Lin, 2016, p. 31-33). The Qing government "[...] restored or rebuilt cultural relics related to historical, cultural figures to establish a cross-time-space connection between the restorers and these figures, or to express their respect for these figures or their cultural values" (Lin, 2016, p. 32). In 1673, the Shaoxing governor, Xu Hongxun, visited Orchid Pavilion and was



saddened by its dilapidated state, recalling its past glory. He believed restoring cultural relics was an important responsibility to defend the land (Yu, 1983, p. 838). After Orchid Pavilion was restored, Jiang Xize, a provincial graduate of the Ming Dynasty, recorded the entire restoration process in the “Reconstruction of the Orchid Pavilion Inscription” (Yu, 1983, p. 839-840). Xu Hongxun participated in the reconstruction and composed a poem expressing his feelings.

After years of war and chaos, Orchid Pavilion stands tall and new. Regretful of the past’s prosperity and decline, who can I express my feelings too? The scenery belongs to us, and the poetry continues the legacy of the Jin Dynasty. Let us sing and drink until dusk, forgetting the world’s struggles. Despite the world’s competition for glory, the wise enjoy authenticity. Those who visit here will once again experience the eternal spring of Yonghe (Yu, 1983, p. 840).

Jiang Xize, a provincial graduate of the previous dynasty, did not choose suicide or live in seclusion, but instead cooperated with the new regime and took official positions. As time passed, more and more Shaoxing scholars participated in imperial examinations and took official positions. The relationship between these new officials and the remnants of previous dynasty was unclear (Tobie, 2004, p. 36). They all participated in cultural activities in the region, communicating with one other and discussing academic matters, which indirectly strengthened the connection between the government and intellectuals. As time passed, more and more people gradually accepted the Qing government’s rule, and their nostalgia for the previous dynasty gradually faded when they went to Orchid Pavilion to pay their respects and reminisce. This is reflected in the content of Jiang Xizhe’s “Reconstruction of the Orchid Pavilion Inscription”.

Orchid Pavilion was favored by local officials and received attention from the highest rulers of the Qing dynasty. In the 34th year of Kangxi’s reign (1695), Song Junye, the prefect of Shaoxing, restored Orchid Pavilion. Mao Qiling recorded this event:

In the year of Bingzi in the Kangxi reign, during the Emperor’s rare leisure moments, he wrote two pieces: *Preface to the Poems Composed at Orchid Pavilion* and *Rhapsody on Dancing Cranes*. Court officials requested that he present them, saying that Preface to the Poems Composed at Orchid Pavilion was recorded by Wang Youjun at the waterside ritual and should be inscribed on a stone tablet at Orchid Pavilion in Shaoxing Mountains shade and presented to the imperial court (Mao, 1988, p. 750).

Three years later, Emperor Kangxi personally wrote the character “Orchid Pavilion” as a gift. In the sixteenth year of Emperor Qianlong’s reign (1751), he made a southern inspection tour, and Shaoxing was one of the places he visited. During his stay in Shaoxing, Emperor Qianlong visited the landscapes of Dayu Mausoleum and Lanying, and left six poems and writings about Orchid Pavilion. Liu Yanshuo’s research indicates that the highest

ruler's attention and visit helped Orchid Pavilion return to public attention. However, under the background of the authoritarian rule of the Qing dynasty, Orchid Pavilion (2014, p. 43-44) gradually lost its original charm and status, and became a companion to flatter the emperor by local officials. In the face of the strong imperial power, the Wei and Jin literati also had to pale. As a social platform, the waterside ritual of Orchid Pavilion (2014, p. 45) has become a social activity platform among Qing government officials, local scholars and the gentry, forming a network of close relationships between scholars and officials. Due to the influence of the ecological environment and the trend of late Ming garden construction, Orchid Pavilion declined and later regained its past glory due to the highest ruler's attention. However, in this process, Orchid Pavilion had already lost its beautiful environment of flowing water and the elegant temperament of the Wei and Jin literati, becoming a symbol for literati and officials to accept the Qing government's rule after the change of dynasty.

The historical life's identity is determined by spiritual comprehension. The maintenance of cultural sites needs to be carried out on the basis of the original, while the reconstruction is generally required to be carried out on the original site. In addition, the form must be close, at least, not to the bridge paved roads, building a tower. Otherwise, it does not have the legitimacy of the original incarnation. Moreover, the avatar is exclusive, that is, there cannot be multiple doubles at the same time. The relationship between the original works and Lin Ben is more similar to that between parents and children. The child is both the witness of the parent's existence and the continuation of the parent's life. This continuation is not the individual life's extension, but the reproduction of the race. Once the original copy does not exist in the physical sense, the rubbings and all kinds of copy are the classical meaning of the show. On the one hand, future generations of readers, according to the original rubbings or near this image of the original face, as from their children's appearance, imagine their parents' appearance. On the other hand, Lin Ben reflects the original model. A classic is explained and, without explanation, there is no classic. Similarly, the name card is copied out. There is no copy of the name card. Tradition is the product of the initiator's and the inheritor's co-creation.

#### **4 CONDOLENCES TO ORCHID PAVILION: WATERSIDE RITUAL IN THE YEAR OF GUICHOU**

Since the Republic of China period, the survivors of the late Qing Dynasty seem to have faced the same confusion and choice as Zhang Dai did during the dynastic transition at the end of the Ming dynasty. They faced the collapse of Qing dynasty and the breakdown of feudal system. However, although the Xinhai Revolution overthrew the Qing government and ended more than two thousand years of a feudal autocratic system, the subsequent establishment of the Republic of China's government did not thoroughly reform the state power, resulting in warlord chaos and people's suffering. Sun Yat-sen (1962, p. 104-105) (1866-1925) also lamented,

By getting rid of the autocracy of Manchu, we have given birth to countless autocracies of bandits, and the intensity of the poison is even worse than before... Looking back at the original intention of our revolutionary party, it was to save the country and the people, to take the people out of the fire and water, and put them on the throne. But now we have caused them to sink deeper into the water and burn hotter in the fire, which goes completely against our initial revolutionary aspirations.

Even revolutionary leaders had such feelings, let alone the survivors' inner suffering of the late Qing Dynasty. Chen Sanli (1859-1937), the Hunan Governor's son, Chen Baozhen (1831-1900), who lived in Shanghai for several years after the Xinhai Revolution, spoke of his impressions of the Republic of China:

I used to think that the Xinhai Revolution was like the breaking of the silken cords of the Han and Tang Dynasties, the boiling of the Yudian River, the heaven and earth turned upside down, gradually falling into ruin, with soldiers fighting year after year, killing and burning like wild beasts. The farmers were abandoned in the fields, the merchants were left idle in the markets, the bones piled up in the mountains, the blood flowed into rivers, and the cries of the widows and orphans were heard from thousands of miles away. (Sun Yat-sen, 1962, p. 104).

The chaos in the Republic of China was beyond words. For the survivors of the Qing Dynasty, the chaos, in reality, made them extremely disappointed with the Republic of China's government and, then, generated a sense of mourning for their homeland. "The downfall of the Qing Dynasty did not lead to the disappearance of traditional society, but rather to its increasing chaos" (Fei, 2006, p. 666).

In the Republic of China's (1913) second year, also the year of Guichou, on the third day of the third month of the lunar calendar of the Shangsi festival, the adherents of the Qing Dynasty organized literary gatherings, imitating Wang Xizhi's Orchid Pavilion Gathering. Among them, the gatherings held in Wanshengyuan, in Beijing, and Fanyuan, in Shanghai, gained popularity and were promoted in the *Yongyan* magazine, sponsored by Liang Qichao. On that day, the survivors, living in Shanghai, met in Fanyuan, while the socialites, in Beijing, gathered in Wanshouyuan under the Liang Qichao's leadership. They imitated the story of Wang Xizhi's waterside ritual in Orchid Pavilion, drinking and composing poems to miss their homeland.

On this day, Mr. Fan of Fanshan attended the waterside ritual at the Fanshan Garden in Shanghai, while Mr. Liang of Rengong attended the waterside ritual at the Wansheng Garden in the western suburbs of Beijing. I went to Shanghai and had the opportunity to appreciate Mr. Fan's poetry. Upon returning home, I received poems from Mr. Zhongyi and Mr. Yinggong and wrote in response to Mr. Liang's verse (Chen, 1999, p. 1055).

The two cities, in the north and south, echoed each other from afar. Participants dressed up, imitating ancient people and expressing their grief for their lost country or their melancholy for the Republic of China. Although some might find it inappropriate for the times, for the leftover subjects of the Qing dynasty, it could be a kind of spiritual comfort.

During the republican era, literary works, such as poems and songs produced around the Orchid Pavilion, and waterside rituals had meanings beyond the interpretation and analysis of the landscapes themselves.

As a form of literary art, poetry, songs, and articles have unique, expressive methods and infectious power, regardless of their purposes of recording events, expressing thoughts, emotions, or depicting scenery. They could be created arbitrarily, but if they were to be organized within the context of garden art, they need to fulfill the unique role of reflecting the essence of the garden scenery and being in harmony with the environment. Usually, the naming and praising of scenery are linked to the present landscapes (Yang, 1994, p. 268).

For people like Fan Zengxiang, who were left behind by the Qing dynasty, imitating the Orchid Pavilion Gathering expressed their nostalgia for their homeland. It reflected their various disappointments with the republican society. Immersing themselves in poetry was not only the old-style literati's lifestyle, but, in the republican era, it was also a label that made them incompatible with the outside society. The combination of this lifestyle and the new media of dissemination also reflected the complexity of that era.

## CONCLUSION

Since the construction of the Jianhu water conservancy project by Ma Zhen, in the Eastern Han Dynasty, agricultural development in the Shaoxing region has gradually matured. Under the human beings' transformation, the primitive natural environment has gradually formed a relatively complete agricultural ecosystem. Based on this, the hydrological landscape quality of Shaoxing has been greatly improved, and it has also given birth to a developed regional ecological civilization. From the Wei and Jin Dynasties onwards, the wars, in the north, and the development of agriculture, in the south, prompted many aristocratic families to migrate southward in large numbers and settle together. As northern literati, migrating southward, progressed, aristocratic families occupied many mountain and water landscapes, and more primitive ecological beauty, based on the natural environment, was discovered. In Orchid Pavilion,

[...] towering mountains and steep ridges, lush forests, well-tended bamboo groves, and clear streams and rushing rapids flow along the banks on either side. It is a perfect setting for drinking and composing poetry, with guests sitting in order along the water's edge. Although there is no grand ensemble of stringed and woodwind instruments,

combining a cup of wine and a poem recited is enough to express profound emotions (Fang, 1974, p. 2099).

The unique natural landscape of mountains and waters promoted the transformation of literati's and scholars' poetic and literary styles. Many mountain and water poets, such as Xie Lingyun and Tao Yuanming, characterized by depicting pastoral scenery, appeared. This style of poetry and prose that praises nature continued to mature until the Sui and Tang Dynasties. The Yonghe story of the Orchid Pavilion and the rich and beautiful water environment attracted many later literati and scholars to pay their respects to the past and commemorate their predecessors. During this period, the landscape of Orchid Pavilion still mainly consisted of natural landscapes. While enjoying the beautiful scenery, literati and scholars did not forget to imitate Wang Xizhi's and others' waterside ritual activities. After many years, this activity gradually transformed from a religious ritual with a prayer for blessings to a literati's and scholars' social gathering for pleasure.

Since the Song and Yuan Dynasties, the population of the Shaoxing region has rapidly increased, breaking the balance among people, land and water. The intensive development of agriculture has led to changes in the water landscape. Especially after the reclamation of Jianhu, the entire water environment of Shaoxing has become fragmented, and the disappearance of macrohabitats has caused the decline and even disappearance of the natural landscape of Orchid Pavilion. In particular, when facing the ruins of Orchid Pavilion, in the context of the northern minority groups' migration southward, the fragmentation of mountains and rivers, and the looming prospect of the country's collapse, literati and scholars felt a strong sense of grief and helplessness, as the beauty of Orchid Pavilion, in the past, contrasted sharply with the current situation. This style of mourning the past and lamenting the present continued until the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty. Zhang Dai's two visits, sixty years apart, reflected the literati's and scholars' disappointment towards the Orchid Pavilion landscape after the changes in the water environment and the melancholic feeling that arose from the intertwining of the tragic national sentiments and the ruin of the Orchid Pavilion landscape during the dynastic changes that followed.

After entering the Qing Dynasty, the Orchid Pavilion landscape received attention from the supreme rulers and regained its former glory. However, upon closer examination, it is clear that Orchid Pavilion had lost the elegance of the Wei and Jin periods. Under the Qing government's pressure, some literati and officials gradually lost their original noble character and became bookworms under the Qing government's cultural dictatorship. When the Qing government restored the monuments with such great fanfare, it intended to attract the knowledge elites of the previous dynasty. In the process, they marked these monuments with the stamp of the Qing Empire, demonstrating that the Manchu Qing government not

only ruled the country, but also wanted intellectuals to feel the power of this rule in the intellectual and cultural sphere. Finally, Emperor Qianlong's poetry about Orchid Pavilion seems to be nothing more than a display of his poetic talent to Han intellectuals. As a ruler of a foreign ethnicity, he also possessed abundant knowledge and learning, and this feeling was increasingly evident in the numerous official praises and flattery. As the rule of the Qing dynasty became more stable, its authority, legitimacy and orthodoxy were deeply imprinted in the literati's and scholar-officials' minds. After the Republic of China's establishment, late Qing loyalists were more inclined to use Orchid Pavilion and its cultural significance to express their existence and spread their message through new media. At this time, Orchid Pavilion had already been elevated from a physical landscape to a medium of remembrance for the past dynasty in the loyalists' minds.

The preface to the Orchid Pavilion provides us with a unique case to observe the "Things" in the classical world. People and things interact and transform one another. Without human activity, there would be no occurrence and influence of events, and without the relation between things, behavior would lack tools or background, and so-called activities would be very abstract. To call antiques of cultural relics is the expression of culture. The original of the preface to the Orchid Pavilion can be destroyed, but the stone tablet of the spirit will never die.

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