Preservation of the Active Fault that Caused the 921 Earthquake in Chichi, Taiwan and its Process

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While it is important to preserve disaster ruins for disaster-prevention education, it is currently difficult to preserve an earthquake fault having caused an earthquake. However, there are many earthquake memorial parks preserving the earthquake fault along the Chelungpu fault from the 921 Earthquake in Chichi that hit Taiwan in 1999. With this in mind, we checked the pattern and process of the preservation based on field observation and archives to consider why the active fault was preserved in terms of space and time.

The result revealed that in the northern area, the majority of areas in which the fault is preserved are monuments with the fault lines covered with tiles, while in central and southern areas, the faults are retained unchanged. This result correlates with the distribution of casualties, and it was thought that leaving the faults too realistically in areas with many casualties was avoided. This supported the theory that the preservation of active faults was not always something easy to accept.

For the construction project of memorial parks, the objectives vary over time; hence the motives for preservation were classified based on six elements (requiem, reconstruction memorials, transmission of memories, education, tourism, and local community symbols) for the purposes of the study. It became clear that at the beginning of the earthquake, elements of education and records took precedence, but over time, elements of reconstruction and tourism became predominant.

As a characteristic of Taiwan, the earthquake ruins preservation planning contains many descriptions of a heightened sense of unity in Taiwan and local communities due to the earthquake. This means that the earthquake changed social awareness and the structure of Taiwanese society (Taiwan and local communities), which led to the concept of the 921 Earthquake in Chichi (and the earthquake fault having that caused the earthquake) being given the status a symbol of local communities, representing one of the most significant events in the history of Taiwan.

Based on the case of Taiwan, it was thought that to preserve a negative legacy such as disaster ruins, the latter should be handled based on the area and elapsed time, and it would also be effective to ensure they were given meaning as a symbol of local communities.

Key words: the 921 Earthquake in Chichi, the earthquake ruins preservation, earthquake museum, the earthquake fault along the Chelungpu fault, Taiwan