Identifiable Restoration of Ancient Chinese Books: Principles, Techniques, and Applications (Post-print Edition)

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] The restoration of ancient Chinese books should adhere to the principle of identifiability to preserve the objective authenticity of the original artifacts and uphold the ethics of ancient book restoration. It is necessary to establish reasonable identifiable techniques for ancient Chinese book restoration.

[Method/Process] Through inductive methods, this study summarizes the identifiable markers of ancient Chinese book restoration techniques and utilizes the identifiable effects provided by restoration case studies to demonstrate that these techniques possess the function of identifiability.

[Results/Conclusion] Ancient Chinese book restoration techniques comply with the principle of restoration identifiability, integrating restoration and identifiability functions in one, and exhibit good identifiability that conforms to the characteristics of ancient Chinese books. The application of identifiable techniques should be determined according to the physical form of the ancient books and the purpose of restoration, requiring case-by-case analysis.

Full Text

On Identifiable Principle, Technology and Application of Ancient Book Conservation in China

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Abstract: [Purpose/significance] Ancient book conservation in China should obey the identifiable principle so as to maintain the objective authenticity of original ancient books and scrupulously abide by conservation ethics.

Ancient book conservation needs to confirm reasonable identifiable technology. [Method/process] This paper proved that Chinese ancient book conservation technology had identifiable function by summarizing identifiable characteristics and using the identifiable effect provided by conservation cases. [Result/conclusion] Chinese ancient book conservation technology complies with identifiable principle, integrates conservation and identifiable functions, and has favorable identifiability and conforms to the characteristics of Chinese ancient books. The application of identifiable technology should depend on the shape of ancient books and the purpose of their conservation, and the specific situation should be analyzed.

Keywords: ancient book conservation; technologies of ancient book conservation; identifiable principle; identifiable technologies; principle of ancient book conservation

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The identifiable principle has been one of the fundamental principles of cultural heritage conservation since the 1960s, representing a major advancement in conservation philosophy. It has been widely applied to various types of cultural heritage conservation internationally, with diverse identifiable technologies [1]. The proposal of the identifiable principle for Chinese ancient book conservation is closely related to the progress in Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy and technology. Building upon the inheritance of traditional Chinese ancient book conservation craftsmanship, drawing on Western ancient book conservation techniques, and innovating conservation technologies, Chinese ancient book conservation has developed a diverse range of safe and effective techniques that have initially formed a systematic framework. The establishment of several conservation technical standards marks that Chinese ancient book conservation has progressed from an empirical technology stage to a stage where empirical and scientific technologies coexist, with the discipline of ancient book conservation emerging [2]. However, Chinese ancient book conservation technology still lacks in scientific rigor, standardization, and systematicity, and its application also lacks clear guidance from established conservation principles. Conservation principles define legitimate and reasonable conservation techniques, determine the development path of conservation technology, and guide the selection and implementation of conservation techniques, gradually attracting the attention of the ancient book conservation academic community.

In 1991, when the National Library of China formulated the conservation plan for Dunhuang manuscripts, it required that the mounting paper be clearly distinguishable from the original scroll [3], which was the earliest explicit expression of applying the identifiable principle in ancient book conservation. Since then, numerous ancient book conservation cases have demonstrated the application of this principle. In 2000, Ma Haipeng proposed several principles for document conservation, which did not include the identifiable principle, but he subsequently emphasized that conservation areas should be both coordinated with and distinguishable from the original, stating they should be “indistin-

guishable at a glance but distinguishable upon close examination" [4]. This was China's first theoretical elaboration on the identifiable principle in ancient book conservation. In 2007, Du Weisheng specifically discussed ancient book conservation principles and began to include the identifiable principle as one of the principles, arguing that conservation materials should coordinate with the color of the ancient book but maintain distinction, and that previous conservation information should be preserved as appropriate [5]. Subsequently, Cao Jin [6], Zhang Meifang [7], and Zhao Xiaozun [8] all endorsed and elaborated on the identifiable principle for ancient book conservation, but none conducted systematic and in-depth discussions. To date, the Chinese ancient book conservation community has not explicitly proposed or designated any specific ancient book conservation identifiable technology as a universal technique for discussion or promotion.

The issue of identifiability in ancient book conservation involves a series of important theoretical and practical problems concerning the authenticity of ancient books, conservation ethics, identifiable technology, and its application, urgently requiring in-depth academic exploration. However, questions such as whether China should accept and how to implement the identifiable principle for ancient book conservation, whether to apply identifiable technology, whether suitable identifiable technology exists, and the relationship between ancient book conservation technology and identifiability have rarely been discussed. This is not conducive to the establishment and application of the identifiable principle and technology in Chinese ancient book conservation, nor to the development of Chinese ancient book conservation theory. This paper aims to provide some reference for the practical application of Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology by explaining the identifiable principle, proposing that Chinese ancient book conservation technology complies with this principle, and analyzing the value of Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology, its application requirements, and its implications for Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy and technology evaluation standards.

1. The Connotation of the Identifiable Principle and Reasons for Its Application in Ancient Book Conservation

1.1 The Connotation of the Identifiable Principle

Since the mid-20th century, Western cultural heritage conservation has shifted from aesthetic restoration to scientific restoration that preserves material authenticity. In 1963, Italian scholar Cesare Brandi proposed the identifiable principle for cultural heritage restoration: "Any integration must always be easily recognizable, yet without disturbing the unity that we wish to re-establish. Therefore, at the distance from which the work of art is to be viewed, the integration should not be noticeable, but upon approaching slightly closer, it should be immediately recognizable without the need for special tools" [9]. This principle was confirmed in the 1964 Venice Charter: Article 9 states that "any

unavoidable new addition must be distinct from the original architectural appearance and clearly recognizable as contemporary"; Article 12 states that "replacements of missing parts must integrate harmoniously with the whole, while being distinguishable from the original parts, preventing the replacement from compromising the authenticity of the original artistic and historical evidence" [10]. This principle has been accepted by various authoritative cultural heritage conservation documents, including the 2000 Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China [11].

The identifiable principle for restoration means that restoration parts added to cultural heritage should maintain overall harmony with the original while being distinguishable [12]. Specifically, it means appearing consistent from a distance but distinguishable up close. "Appearing consistent from a distance" means that at approximately 6 feet (about 1.8 meters) away, no restoration traces are visible to the naked eye, and the restoration part harmonizes with the original. "Distinguishable up close" means that at about 6 inches (15 cm) away, restoration traces can be seen by the naked eye [13]. Of course, these are approximate distances, and the degree of identifiable markers varies significantly among different types of cultural heritage. The connotation of the identifiable principle is roughly as follows: First, its purpose is to achieve dual requirements of aesthetics and historical authenticity, maximizing the preservation of the original's form, structure, and style. The materials and techniques used in restoration should be similar to the original to ensure overall harmony and unified aesthetic effect, while distinguishing the restoration part from the original to avoid misjudgment [14]. However, identifiability should not compromise the overall viewability and integrity of the original. Second, the original includes both the original itself and restoration legacies on the original. Restoration legacies are part of the historical imprint of cultural heritage, part of the heritage's objective authenticity, and should be respected from a macro-historical perspective. Article 11 of the Venice Charter also requires respect for previous restorations and the diversification of restoration styles [10]. Third, identifiability refers to visual recognition at a certain distance under natural light by the naked eye, not the reliance on scientific instruments or special tools as some Chinese scholars have argued, because the latter violates the original intent of the identifiable principle and cannot fully demonstrate the restorer's integrity. Fourth, the identifiable principle requires certain identifiable technologies to be realized. Fifth, the identifiable principle must be understood within the context of the whole and should not be interpreted in isolation from relevant documents to avoid conflicts with other provisions or conservation principles [15].

1.2 Reasons for Applying the Identifiable Principle in Ancient Book Conservation

Ancient books are part of cultural heritage, and the universally applicable identifiable principle for cultural heritage conservation also applies to ancient books. The application of the identifiable principle in ancient book conservation is nec-

essary for two main reasons: First, to maintain the objective authenticity of ancient book originals. Ancient book conservation concerns and respects the authenticity of ancient books, emphasizing the maintenance of their objective reality by displaying the form of both the restoration part and the original, rather than turning ancient books into their own forgeries. Second, to scrupulously abide by ancient book conservation ethics. The identifiable principle emphasizes displaying restoration areas to avoid causing erroneous judgments about the value of ancient books; otherwise, it would be an act of forgery. Brandi pointed out that the falseness of an object is not judged by whether it is identical to the genuine article, but by whether the producer has the intention to forge. Even without intentional deception, if it creates the illusion of being equivalent to the genuine article in terms of era, material, manufacturer, or creator, it is forgery [9]. Official documents on cultural heritage conservation and restoration emphasize that restorers should be honest and trustworthy, eliminating forgery. Ancient books are no exception.

2. Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Technology Complies with the Identifiable Principle

The Chinese ancient book conservation community has not proposed specific identifiable technologies, but China possesses identifiable technologies for ancient book conservation and has applied them in practice—namely, Chinese ancient book conservation technology itself.

2.1 Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Technology Possesses Identifiable Markers

The identifiable markers that Chinese ancient book conservation technology possesses, in compliance with the identifiable principle, demonstrate that this technology complies with the principle. Chinese ancient book conservation technology is divided into two categories: “restoring the old as old” and “restoring the old as new.” “Restoring the old as old” uses mounting paper with color, thickness, and texture similar to the original, without drawing lines or filling in missing characters, making the conservation materials both harmonious with and distinguishable from the original. “Restoring the old as new” (jinxiangyu mounting) first uses “restoring the old as old” techniques to repair damaged leaves, then adds white backing paper to the back of the leaves. The color contrast between the white backing paper and the yellow original leaves is significant, with clear identifiable markers, yet the overall effect remains harmonious. Chinese ancient book conservation technology provides various identifiable markers, such as color differences (slightly lighter mounting paper), thickness differences (slightly thinner mounting paper), newness differences (new conservation materials), and mounting paper adhesion marks, all of which are harmonious with yet distinct from the original. Commonly used ancient book conservation technologies with higher degrees of identifiable markers are shown in Table 1 .

Technologies with medium or lower degrees of identifiable markers are shown in Table 2 .

2.2 Conservation Results of Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Technology Have Identifiable Effects

Most conservation results achieved using Chinese ancient book conservation technology, which have identifiable effects, comply with the identifiable principle, proving that Chinese ancient book conservation technology complies with this principle. Ancient book conservation requires multiple uses of certain techniques or simultaneous use of various techniques, resulting in numerous identifiable markers that are generally obvious. The National Library of China was the first to explicitly use identifiable technology in ancient book conservation, emphasizing the difference between mounting paper and the original in the conservation of Dunhuang manuscripts [3], the Yongle Encyclopedia [5], and the Tianlu Linlang collection [16]. The Tianlu Linlang conservation explicitly required that "it should be indistinguishable from afar but distinguishable up close" [16]. Tianyige proposed the same identifiable requirements for ancient book conservation, requiring the use of Chinese ancient book conservation technology with materials similar to the original in quality and color—preferably lighter rather than darker, thinner rather than thicker [17], and its conservation cases demonstrated good identifiable effects [18]. When Ma Yirong conserved a Qing dynasty edition of Tang Poetry Collection at the National Library of Italy, she used Chinese ancient book conservation technology as the foundation, employing Japanese mulberry paper dyed with oak gall with color and thickness similar to the original as mounting paper, without drawing lines or filling characters. The mounting paper was both coordinated and unified with the original in tone and texture while maintaining certain distinctions, without creating excessive contrast that would harm the historical sense and aesthetic beauty of the original, nor attempting forgery [19]. The vast majority of ancient books conserved using Chinese ancient book conservation technology did not explicitly indicate the application of identifiable technology but possessed identifiable effects.

However, some conserved ancient books with identifiable effects may lack overall harmony and do not comply with the identifiable principle. This is because Chinese ancient book conservation technology has certain historical limitations or has not been correctly applied. Absolute non-identifiable restoration does not exist [20]. Some scholars believe that Chinese cultural heritage conservation technology "can be included within the scope of identifiability" [21]. Others have pointed out that "if the mounting paper is appropriate, the repaired leaf will not easily show signs of damage; conversely, if the mounting paper is inappropriate, even with superb skills and meticulous work, it will be difficult to achieve coordination" [22]. This shows that the Chinese ancient book conservation community also recognizes that Chinese ancient book conservation technology can objectively achieve overall harmony while showing conservation traces,

but conservators are more willing to pursue the elusive ideal of "indistinguishable conservation" rather than the identifiable philosophy, and are reluctant to endorse the identifiable principle. The Chinese ancient book conservation community has long applied identifiable principle-compliant ancient book conservation technology but has not connected it with the identifiable principle or technology, nor proposed that Chinese ancient book conservation technology complies with the identifiable principle or that it is identifiable technology. Proposing this viewpoint should clarify Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology.

Western use of identifiable principle-compliant ancient book conservation technology provides circumstantial evidence that Chinese ancient book conservation technology complies with the identifiable principle. Western ancient book conservation follows the identifiable principle, where even small fragments used to replace originals or fill missing parts are not confused with the original and can be distinguished by the naked eye [23]. Western applications of ancient book conservation technology maintain overall harmony with certain distinctions from the original without using other special identifiable technologies. Western ancient book conservation identifiability is mainly manifested in two aspects: First, the color and texture of mounting paper differ from the original paper. Western ancient book conservation uses Japanese tissue paper with color similar to but slightly lighter than the original, and thinner thickness, creating obvious differences [24]. Second, there are faint conservation traces that are identifiable to the naked eye but without obvious visual differences [25].

3. The Value of Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Identifiable Technology

3.1 Integrating Conservation and Identifiable Functions

The identifiable effects of Chinese ancient book conservation technology in terms of conservation materials, methods, and areas are achieved through the conservation technology itself during the conservation process. It neither adds or changes conservation materials, methods, or procedures to deliberately highlight conservation areas, nor adds special materials or procedures for identifiability, thereby increasing conservation costs. It avoids identification for identification's sake, complies with the identifiable principle, and represents the most economical identifiable technology, adhering to the principles of minimal intervention and reversibility. Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology is a technology with Chinese characteristics that integrates ancient book conservation and identifiable functions, achieving identifiability while completing conservation work.

3.2 Having Good Identifiability

Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology has several technical advantages: First, the degree of identifiable markers is relatively high. Each

conservation technique has certain identifiable markers that remain in the conserved ancient book through conservation materials and methods. The specific location of these markers is not important. Second, identification is convenient. Conservation traces can be seen with the naked eye without special equipment. The Chinese ancient book conservation "micro-integration" method (where mounting paper edge fibers slightly overlap with damaged leaf edges) creates minimal traces, but under light, they remain visible to the naked eye [26]. Third, identification materials are durable. Conservation mounting paper is low-acidity handmade paper with a lifespan of hundreds of years. Fourth, identification effects are long-lasting. Ancient book materials and conservation materials change under external influences, increasing or decreasing the degree of identifiable markers. Old paper, dyed paper, and custom imitation paper used for conservation have relatively stable colors but gradually deepen over time. Original paper colors also further deepen, but not synchronously with mounting paper. However, the texture of mounting paper and original paper does not change, so the identifiable effect is long-term.

3.3 Adapting to the Characteristics of Chinese Ancient Books

Identifiable conservation technology needs to adapt to the characteristics of cultural heritage, especially its form and volume. Compared with other cultural heritage, ancient books are two-dimensional planes at the physical level, small in size, with uniform and single colors, and their paper surfaces and content will fade and fragment. Chinese ancient books are characterized by lightweight and soft paper, single-sided writing, diverse yet simple binding forms, and after years of history, the paper turns yellow with an ancient charm. This requires corresponding identifiable conservation technology. Chinese ancient book conservation technology can achieve effects where mounting paper is similar to original paper in material, texture, thickness, and color without overly harsh contrast or strong 反差, with each conservation area forming a harmonious yet distinguishable whole with the original ancient book, thus adapting to the characteristics of Chinese ancient books.

3.4 Promoting the Culture of Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Technology

China has created a rich and diverse culture of ancient book conservation technology. Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology can promote this culture in three ways: First, it can preserve the connotation of Chinese ancient book conservation technology culture. Chinese ancient book conservation technology grew from Chinese culture, developed to adapt to the characteristics of ancient books, and is part of ancient book culture with profound cultural connotations that can only be maintained and continued through constant inheritance and development. Second, it can inherit Chinese ancient book conservation technology. Ancient book conservation technology embodies the efforts of generations of craftsmen, scientists, and scholars, with strong national and re-

gional characteristics. Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology can ensure the use of Chinese ancient book conservation technology, protecting and inheriting it and preventing its abandonment and degradation. Third, it can maintain the unique effects and styles of Chinese conserved ancient books. Chinese ancient book conservation technology pursues overall harmony and aesthetic beauty of ancient books, conforming to Chinese aesthetic concepts.

4. Application Requirements for Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Identifiable Technology

4.1 Identifiable Technology Varies with the Form of Ancient Books

Different types of cultural heritage conservation use different identifiable technologies. The Venice Charter and other documents do not provide specific standards for identifiable technology, leaving uncertainty in its application. Due to differences in production materials, techniques, age, and circulation environment, each ancient book has a different form. Even within the same volume, the front, back, and middle sections differ, and even on the same leaf, the edges and center differ. This determines that ancient book identifiable technology has no fixed formulas or rules and should vary with the form of the ancient book—that is, according to the actual condition of each volume—so that conservation traces coordinate with the original as a whole and comply with the identifiable principle. Conservators should exercise ingenuity and flexibility in handling details. For example, ancient book leaf colors are primarily uniform and single, but colors around wormholes have random and complex variations, and leaf colors gradually lighten from edges to center. When dyeing paper, there is no need to deliberately pursue uniform color [27]; it is sufficient to maintain overall harmony between the conserved part and the original while maintaining distinction.

4.2 The Degree of Identifiable Markers Depends on the Purpose of Ancient Book Conservation

The degree of identifiable markers—that is, the extent of difference between the conserved part and the original—is expressed differently in various documents without clear and consistent quantitative indicators. For example, the Venice Charter requires obvious distinction [10], while Canada requires that it "need not be overly obvious in appearance" [28]. Due to the integration of ancient book conservation technology and identifiable technology, the degree of identifiable markers is related to the amount of conservation materials and the size of conservation areas. Different ancient books require different degrees of identifiable markers, which can be determined based on conservation purposes and applied flexibly. For archaeologically conserved ancient books where minimal intervention and authenticity are paramount, a higher degree of identifiable markers is required. For aesthetically conserved ancient books where aesthetic value is the main goal, requiring greater attention to overall harmony, the low-

est degree of identifiable markers is needed. For exhibition-conserved ancient books, factors such as exhibition environment, placement location, lighting, and distance from viewers must be considered. For areas visible to viewers, the degree of identifiable markers can be slightly lower; for invisible areas, it can be slightly higher.

4.3 Identifiable Technology Does Not Interfere with the Overall Harmony of the Original Ancient Book

Some cultural heritage conservation identifiable technologies, such as leaving blanks in ancient building restoration (without oil decoration or only applying clear varnish) or using materials with very different textures and colors from the original, cause the conserved part to stand out excessively and isolate itself from the whole. This is identification for identification's sake and demonstrates a lack of accurate understanding of the identifiable principle. The identifiable principle requires that the conserved part not interfere with the overall harmony of the original. Ancient books have small areas and volumes, with uniform and single colors, and are viewed and appreciated at close range, making conservation areas relatively easy to identify. The degree of identifiable markers should be appropriate, and the texture and color of materials should not contrast too sharply with the original. Conservation traces should not be too obvious or intense, avoiding the deliberate exaggeration of contrast between the conserved part and the original for the sake of identifiability, which would conflict with the overall materials and colors of the ancient book and damage its harmonious beauty, thereby "disturbing the unity that we wish to re-establish" [9].

4.4 Combining with Other Identifiable Technologies

In addition to using Chinese ancient book conservation technology as direct identifiable technology, auxiliary identifiable technologies can also be used, such as lightly penciling outlines at mounting paper edges to show conservation areas, serving as an aid for technologies with excessively low identifiable markers.

4.4.1 Conservation Colophons Are Also Identifiable Technology

Conservation colophons can be inscribed in ancient books, such as Daozhen's colophon in Dunhuang scrolls [29], or written on paper strips and pasted in ancient books, such as the strip pasted in the middle bottom of the protective leaf of Song dynasty printed Collection of Pan Shi Lao Ren at Nanjing Library, inscribed by Zhao Wanli with "Mounted by Zhang Shida, January 1959" [30]. This method is suitable for works by outstanding conservators. A classic conservation colophon is the one written by Huang Pilie in the Qing dynasty in Re-carved Complete Edition of Jian Jie Lu: "This book was formerly mounted by Tianlai Pavilion, with all supplementary paper being impure white paper, hence Xiang's seal and Mr. Ruan Ting's vermilion corrections are all on white paper. I have now remounted it, replacing all with Song paper for its pure color. Regarding the seal and vermilion corrections, I have retained the white

paper traces to transmit credibility to posterity" [31]. This colophon leaves substantial conservation information: the book was previously conserved by Xiang Yuanbian of the Ming dynasty using white paper, and Huang conserved it again using Song paper instead of white paper.

4.4.2 Identifiable Technology Outside the Ancient Book Itself This refers to establishing ancient book conservation archives. Conservation archives can provide comprehensive and specific conservation information, such as basic information about the ancient book, its current condition, historical conservation information, damage assessment, selection of conservation techniques, and conservation technical routes [32]. Some information cannot be provided by physical identifiability of the ancient book itself and is applicable to all conserved ancient books, as stipulated in Article 16 of the Venice Charter [10]. First, conservation archives can permanently preserve conservation evidence. Second, conservation archives can supplement information beyond physical conservation of the ancient book itself and can appropriately reduce identifiable technology on the ancient book itself.

5. Implications of Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Technology Complying with the Identifiable Principle

Chinese ancient book conservation technology's compliance with the identifiable principle provides food for thought regarding Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy and evaluation standards for conservation technology effects.

5.1 Appropriately Adjusting Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Philosophy

Philosophy continuously evolves with changing concepts and technology. We should draw on the Western ancient book conservation philosophy of "consistent from afar, distinguishable up close" and adjust the Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy from "indistinguishable conservation" to "overall harmony with distinguishable parts"—that is, the conserved part maintains overall harmony with the original while being distinguishable. The reasons are threefold: First, the philosophy of "indistinguishable conservation" violates the identifiable principle and conservation ethics. Requiring that conserved ancient books show no conservation areas violates the identifiable principle and conservation ethics. Second, the philosophy of "indistinguishable conservation" is unattainable. Identifiability is a relative concept; Chinese ancient book conservation technology cannot achieve complete non-identifiability, and there is always a gap between technology and this ideal. Third, the philosophy of "indistinguishable conservation" increases the difficulty and cost of Chinese ancient book conservation. "Overall harmony with distinguishable parts" combines Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy with the identifiable principle, inheriting the core content of Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy while complying with conservation technology reality and the identifiable principle.

5.2 Moderately Relaxing Evaluation Standards for Chinese Ancient Book Conservation Technology Effects

In evaluating the effects of Chinese ancient book conservation technology, we have emphasized consistency between the conserved part and the original according to Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy, using the degree of achieved consistency as the main criterion for evaluating conservation quality. Applying Chinese ancient book conservation identifiable technology with the philosophy of "overall harmony with distinguishable parts" means we should no longer rigidly adhere to consistency between the conserved part and the original, nor regard moderate differences between conservation areas and the original as evidence of poor conservation quality. Instead, we should emphasize similarity and identifiability, the coexistence of overall harmony and distinction, moderately relax evaluation standards for Chinese ancient book conservation technology effects, moderately increase identifiable markers for some techniques, and moderately relax requirements for some techniques to reduce aging treatment procedures. For example, when dyeing paper, it is sufficient to dye it to be similar to the original; there is no need to spend excessive effort deliberately pursuing excessive similarity. This is merely a conceptual adjustment, not a reduction in conservation quality, allowing the conservation community to focus more on the goal of prolonging the life of ancient books, saving conservation costs, and conserving more ancient books in urgent need of repair.

Chinese ancient book conservation technology not only has conservation functions but also identifiable functions. Chinese ancient book conservation technology all has certain identifiable markers, and ancient book conservation practice has also proven the identifiable functions of Chinese ancient book conservation technology. Chinese ancient book conservation technology complies with the identifiable principle, adapts to the characteristics of ancient books, and has favorable identifiable features. Chinese ancient book conservation has actually employed identifiable methods and objectively followed the identifiable principle. The degree of identifiable markers should be flexibly applied according to specific ancient books and their conservation purposes. Applying identifiable conservation technology can appropriately adjust Chinese ancient book conservation philosophy and evaluation standards for conservation technology effects, improving ancient book conservation efficiency.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.