

The Value of Suqian Water Culture heritage from the Perspective of Cultural Landscape

Ying Yuning

Affiliation: Southeast University

Email: 1030427599@qq.com

Abstract

The perspective of cultural landscape echoes the trend of regionalization, holistic, and dynamic protection of cultural heritage. From this perspective, this study constructs a value cognition framework based on three dimensions, aiming to explore the water culture value of Suqian area. According to history, Suqian formed its unique water network and field patterns under different human-water relationships. Therefore, the value of the water cultural heritage can be distilled into four aspects: the evolutionary history of the coexistence and integration between villages and water, the formation of characteristic water networks and conservancy, the witness of the iteration of modern rural governance and the spirit of water management. Finally, this article proposes strategies providing experience for the protection and revitalization of Suqian area.

Keywords: cultural landscape; Water cultural heritage; Value; Suqian area

1. Introduction

In recent years, the concept of international heritage protection tends to be regionalized, holistic and complex. From the first attention paid to the connection between individual heritage sites and their surrounding environment in the Venice Charter, to the concept of historic towns and urban areas proposed in the Nairobi Recommendation and the Washington charter, and then to concept of cultural landscape, rural landscape and cultural routes proposed in the 1990s, the focus of international heritage protection gradually shifted from individual sites to the whole, and the scope of protection gradually expanded. Meanwhile, the natural and cultural complex heritage has attracted much attention, and the elements of heritage protection are constantly superimposed.

Since the 19th century, the West has carried out extensive investigation and Research on landscape, forming the branch fields as landscape geography and human geography, and laying the foundation for cultural landscape (Xu & Han, 2016). Among them, Ratzel systematically expressed the concept of cultural landscape with the word "historical landscape" for the first time, providing an early framework for the studies of cultural landscape (Tang & Jin, 1998). In the 1920s, American geographer Carl Sauer created the theory of cultural landscape, claiming that cultural landscape is the result of culture acting on nature, and emphasising the systematic interaction between natural and human society, which formed the core theory of cultural landscape (Sauer, 1925). In 1992, the 16th meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee was held in Santa Fe, the United States. The word "cultural landscapes" was proposed for the first time, making it formally different from the cultural and natural heritage, and becoming one of the world cultural heritage types. The word "cultural landscape" was written into the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2019).

Conceptually, cultural landscape is a complex of the natural landscape and human activities attached to it. It encompasses the overall characteristics within the region, such as the site selection, form and distribution of settlement groups, providing a basis for the regionalization and holistic protection of rural heritage. In terms of value cognition, cultural landscapes emphasize the integration of nature and humanity, and pay attention to the comprehensive value of heritage in multiple aspects such as ecology, culture and society, which can provide a framework for the multi-dimensional value identification of rural heritage. Therefore, taking Suqian area as an example and water culture as a clue, this paper studies the exploration of heritage value from the perspective of cultural landscape. It is of great significance for the regional value identification of general village remains (village clusters without characteristic resources), and is conducive to the implementation of contiguous protection and utilization work of villages.

Based on the current research and literature review, although experts and scholars have long proposed the necessity and urgency of the regional holistic protection and utilization of rural heritage, the protection theories

and methods at the regional scale have not yet formed a universal system, especially in terms of value identification. There is a lack of universally applicable and operational guidance. In the research on heritage protection at the rural regional scale, there are a relatively large number of studies conducted with cultural landscapes as the entry point. The research contents mainly involve the formation mechanism and evolution mechanism of village cultural landscapes, gene identification and map construction of village cultural landscapes, and research on the protection and development strategies of cultural landscapes. For example, Hao Naiyi took the tea culture landscape of traditional settlements in Zhejiang as the research object. Through the analysis of its geographical environment characteristics, such as hilly terrain, humid climate, tea culture activities, traditional architecture centered on courtyards, and beautiful environment, she deduced the formation and evolution process of the local tea culture landscape (Hao, 2024). Zheng Wenwu proposed the concept of landscape group genes based on the theory of cultural landscape, identified the common characteristics of traditional villages in Hunan Province through clustering, and constructed a gene map (Zheng, 2021). However, the objects of these studies mainly focus on national and provincial key protected villages, and general villages not included in the protection system are rarely involved. Therefore, the conclusion could be drawn that in the vast rural areas of China, villages that have not been included in the protection and inheritance system are rarely studied. Furthermore, most of these villages have remnants rather than heritage. With no value exploration been carried out, the heritage value has not been identified, and few protection and utilization measures have been taken. This further explains the necessity of conducting research on the general village of Suqian in this paper.

In addition, the research on the heritage value system from the perspective of cultural landscapes is relatively detailed. Studies tend to be combined with issues such as comparisons among landscape heritages of the same category, heritage protection and sustainable development. The discussions on its heritage value focus on material aspects such as mountain terrain, water systems, farmlands, and residential settlements, as well as intangible resource elements such as production techniques and folk culture. For instance, Wang Lin pointed out that the constituent elements of the Longji Terraced Fields cultural landscape heritage include topography and landforms, air, unique mountain microclimate and characteristic cuisine (Wang, 2009). Shen Xiying conducted the research on Settlement cultural landscape area. By means of disciplinary methods such as geography, biology and anthropology, she identified and extracted elements including topography, climate, ethnic identity, production and lifestyle, religious beliefs, customs and conventions, building materials and aesthetic concepts and establishing the genetic map of cultural landscapes of different regional settlements (Shen, Liu & Deng, 2006). Spencer JE summarized the heritage elements of agricultural cultural landscapes into six aspects, namely the psychological elements of environmental perception, the political elements of land resource allocation, the historical elements of ethnicity, religion and customs, the technical elements of the ability to utilize land, the agronomic elements of varieties and cultivation, and the economic elements such as the law of value (Spencer, 1963). These studies provide a good theoretical and methodological basis for this paper to construct the cognitive framework of heritage value from the perspective of cultural landscape, and help clarify the angles and dimensions of the analysis. This study will construct the framework of value cognition on this basis.

Finally, regarding the research on water cultural heritage, relevant scholars from disciplines such as water conservancy engineering and landscape architecture have respectively explored the value and protection and utilization of water cultural heritage in recent years. Chen Haiying explored the connotation and value of water cultural heritage from the perspective of tourism discipline (Chen et al., 2019). Wang Chengfang explores the value of Guangzhou's waterway cultural heritage from the perspective of spatio-temporal integration and constructs an overall protection system for heritage interpretation (Wang, Wu & Zhang, 2021). Kong Fan'en studies the differences in the quantity and type distribution of water cultural heritage in different regions around the world and analyzes its value from the disciplinary perspective of landscape architecture (Kong & Liu, 2022). These studies have sorted out and analyzed the value of water cultural heritage in terms of form and culture, but their research objects mainly focus on ancient water conservancy projects. There are relatively few studies and protection practices related to modern and contemporary water conservancy projects, and there is still a research gap.

In conclusion, this paper selects Suqian area as the research object. Firstly, through the analysis of historical archives and the translation of historical maps, combined with field investigation, this study sorts out the

historical evolution of the human-water relationship in Suqian area, especially the historical turning point of water management in modern times. Then, it attempts to construct a value cognition framework from the perspective of cultural landscape. Under this framework, the material space, social governance and Spiritual and culture dimension values can be recognized, along with corresponding carriers of water culture heritage in Suqian area. Finally, based on the above results, this paper proposes strategies for the protection and utilization of contiguous areas. On the one hand, this paper expects to take Suqian as a template, providing an empirical analytical framework for the exploration, protection and utilization of the heritage value in general villages. On the other hand, as the research on modern time water cultural heritage in China is still incomplete at present, it is hoped that this research can supplement and expand the systematic understanding of water cultural heritage in China's cultural heritage protection system. This is also of positive significance for regional ecological protection and the healthy development of the human living environment.

2. The Value Cognition Framework from the Perspective of Cultural Landscape

UNESCO has proposed that cultural landscapes represent the “combined works of nature and of man”, and have dynamically evolved along with human activities, witnessing the evolution process of human settlements under the constraints and influence of the natural environment(UNESCO World Heritage Centre,2019).The perspective of cultural landscape emphasises the continuous interaction between human and nature and the regional protection scope. Reflected in the representation of village clusters, it can reflect the common value attributes of villages within the region from three dimensions: material space, social governance and spiritual culture, which enables general villages to be identified, protected and inherited as a cultural landscape as a whole. It constitutes the basic framework of regional value cognition from the perspective of cultural landscape (Fig. 1.).

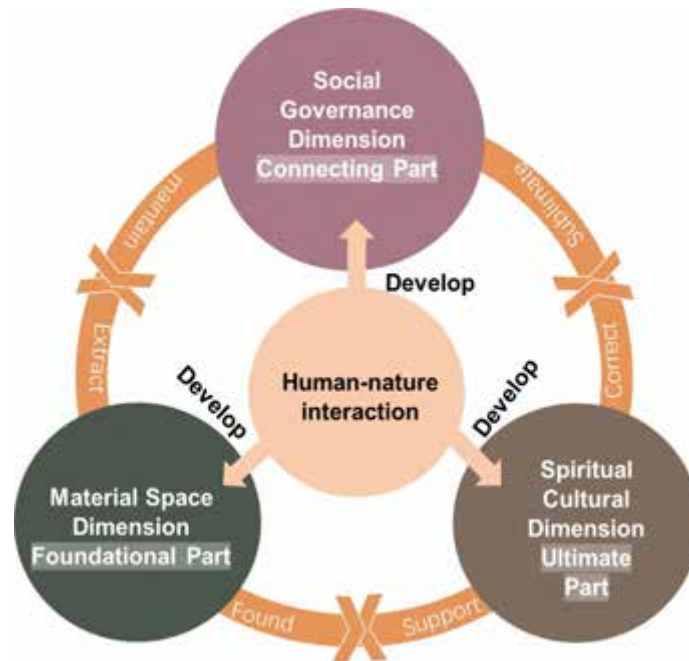


Fig. 1. The Value Cognition Framework from the Perspective of Cultural Landscape. Using a circle to explain the interrelationships among the three dimensions. The value of each dimension is generated due to the interaction between human beings and nature. On the surface, it is the development of material value into social governance value and then into spiritual value. In fact, both social governance value and spiritual value will have a feedback effect on material value.

2.1 Material Space Dimension

The material space dimension is the surface value of the villages. The carriers are usually various material

elements of the village. On the one hand, it includes the characteristics and evolution of the natural environment and settlement forms. On the other hand, it also includes the material interaction between human beings and nature. Such as water network systems, land use patterns, technologies and measures for life, production and ecology which adapted to local conditions (ANTROP,2005). These two aspects above constitute the value of material space dimension.

Furthermore, when constructing the value cognitive framework of general village clusters, in addition to emphasising the value of the human-land relationship, attention should also be paid to the collaborative value of general village clusters from a regional perspective, which focuses on regions with roughly the same cultural characteristics (Wu,1999). On the one hand, the regional perspective identifies the consistency or integrity of the spatial structure, resource environment, and even the cultural structure of villages. On the other hand, it can also grasp the structural relationship of "village-unit-region" in the village cluster. Through the spatial scale division of regions, units and specific villages, it recognizes the consistency or integrity at the regional scale level and the differentiation of the village structure at the unit scale level(Zhang,2015).The value in the material space dimension is the most foundational. On this basis, the value of social governance, as well as spiritual and cultural dimension can be further explored.

2.2 Social Governance Dimension

Based on the material space, with the development of society and the conduct of social activities, people carries out the spatial governance on nature and villages, which has formed the second level of value—the value in the dimension of social governance. The value of this dimension is generally reflected in carriers such as the social governance system, economic and social policies, production models, and social organizational relations. The spatial governance of rural areas is not only the key to maintaining the material interaction between human and nature, but also an important component of the local knowledge system. The human-land interaction in this dimension not only can maintain or correct the value of the material space, but also serve as the basis for extracting spiritual and cultural values.

2.3 Spiritual and Cultural Dimension

The spiritual and cultural value of a village is the cultural and spiritual significance bestowed upon nature and society by human beings in their interaction with nature. Village clusters take cultural commonalities as the main line, by integrating resources, they connect scattered cultural carriers and clarify the ambiguous cultural context. From the perspective of cultural landscape, the value cognition of the spiritual and cultural dimension of ordinary villages carries the regional place identity, cultural identity and ethnic identity. It is a significant part of maintaining community cohesion and pride, and also the basis for community support for the protection of rural landscape(Walker&Ryan,2008).

3. The History of Water Culture in Suqian

3.1 Before the Ming and Qing Dynasties: thrived and declined due to water

In ancient times, with dense water network and numerous rivers and lakes, Suqian was a fertile place suitable for farming, fishing and hunting and living. Ancient cities such as Sizhou City were born due to the Sishui waterway and the Southern Canal.

In 1194, the Yellow River burst its banks in Yanghwu, Henan Province, and changed its course to the southeast, divert the way towards the Huai River.Later, the Yi River flowed into the Yellow River and accumulated to form the Luoma Lake, which was almost unable to discharge floodwaters normally. Therefore, the bottom of the lake gradually silted up and overflowed to the downstream areas, causing disasters. The "Yellow River's diversion of the Huai River" has completely changed the original pattern of the water systems in the Huai and Si River basins, causing the siltation of rivers and the rise and fall of lakes. This has led to soil desertification and alkalization, along with significant changes in the structure of rice crop cultivation. Frequent floods and drought occurred, making the once fertile land turning into a flood-stricken-area. The folk sayings such as "Afraid of both flood and drought, nine out of ten years without harvest" and "If there is rain, there will be flood; if there is no rain, there will

be drought” have become the true portrayal of Suqian.

3.2 From the Ming and Qing Dynasties to the founding of the People’s Republic of China(1949): The predicament of water control

During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the rulers were constantly striving to construct water conservancy projects, hoping to solve the long-standing flood drainage problem. In 1644, the Ma Ling Mountain Ridge was excavated to the north of Suqian County, allowing the water of Luoma Lake to be discharged. It was thus named the Lanma River. In 1680, the general governor of the river, Jin Fu, presided over the construction of six dams on the Lanma River. It was thus named the “Liutang River”, which serves as the main flood discharge outlet for the Luoma Lake. During the reigns of Emperor Kangxi and Emperor Qianlong, they paid particular attention to the water-control projects in Suqian and both made six Tours of investigation. Emperor Kangxi inspected the projects of the Yellow River, Huai River, Grand Canal, Luoma Lake and Hongze Lake for several times. He went to the sites to measure the water levels in person and discussed water-control strategies with his ministers. Emperor Qianlong issued hundreds of river engineering orders and conducted many projects. It can be seen that during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the rulers played an important role in water-control projects. These deeds also became the poetry of Suqian and formed a part of the local water culture.

In conclusion, From the Ming and Qing Dynasties to 1949, although the Chinese government had initiated some water conservancy projects, due to the limitations of social technology and scientific levels, it was unable to fundamentally solve the problems of floods, waterlogging and droughts. During this period, there were 32 major floods in Suqian, averaging once every four years. Moreover, due to the inability to store and utilize rainfall, only drought-resistant crops could be grown, which was with low and unstable yields. In the event of floods or droughts, the government is powerless, and the common people can only resign themselves to fate and fight against water.

3.3 After the founding of the People’s Republic of China(1949): Two peaks of water control laid the foundation for the water network and farmland pattern

After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, a wave of water-control campaign has swept across the country. In April 1951, under the leadership of the county committee, the heroic people of Suqian launched the vigorous “Guiding Yi river and regulating Shu river” project. Centering on flood problem, they opened up the New Yi River, a channel for the flood of Luoma Lake to flow into the sea, and built the south embankment of Luoma Lake and the Zaohe Control Gate, Zaohe Small Boat Gate, Yanghetan Gate, forming the first-line flood-control barrier of Luoma Lake (Zaohe Control Line). It became the first large-scale water-control battle of the country after the founding of the People’s Republic of China. Since 1957, the government has led the construction of water-control projects of the Middle Canal and the Liutang River, and extended the south embankment of Luoma Lake to the west and north, basically completing the large-scale control project in Suqian. This was the first water-control campaign under the leadership of the government initiated by Suqian people after 1949. Centering on flood-control and security, a water-control engineering system was established to solve the flood problem of Luoma Lake. The five major engineering systems and layouts of flood control, drainage, irrigation, waterlogging reduction and water supply in Suqian were basically formed. The human-water relationship also shifted from defense to governance. In addition, the people of Suqian have renovated the old river channels, excavated new rivers for flood drainage, and carried out supporting projects for branch rivers as well as large, medium and small ditches. They have built a cascade river network that is interconnected and coordinated with the ditch network, laying the foundation for the water network system in the Suqian area.

After the flood problem was solved, aiming to address the food issue, government of Suqian made the decision of “ Conversion of dry fields to paddy fields ”projects, developing irrigation agriculture to increase agricultural output and the living standards of farmers. From the winter of 1958 to the spring of 1959, Suqian gathered more than 100,000 farmers to dig the Second main Canal, the Third main Canal, as well as the first and second branch canals in the Lailong Irrigation District. They carried out meticulous and dense river network construction to transform farmland water conservancy and used lake water for gravity irrigation. Since then, the area of paddy

fields in the region has expanded rapidly, the basic construction of farmland has been improved rapidly, and the number of major agricultural producers has increased. The dry fields in rural areas have been transformed into high-yield and stable fields that guarantee harvests in both drought and flood. This is the second peak of water-control campaign in Suqian. Centering on the transformation from dry land to paddy fields and the construction of irrigation and drainage areas, it developed irrigation agriculture, and laid the foundation for the water system and field pattern in the rural areas of Suqian. Through unremitting efforts to transform nature, the human-water relationship have shifted from people struggling with water to people coexisting with it, from managing water to utilizing it.

Based on the utilization of water, Suqian people have further adjusted their industrial structure around agriculture and industry through the renewal of governance measures. They drew on outstanding cases across the country and attempted the "all-round contract" program in agriculture, starting to grow economic crops mainly including mulberry, and using the silk industry to drive the adjustment of the agricultural planting structure. In industry, the "Gengche Model" was created, where township enterprises led communities and family workshops to develop together, promoting social and economic progress (Fig. 3.).



Fig. 3. The different stages of water history in Suqian area. In Figure a, Suqian has experienced the Yellow River's diversion of the Huai River and the accumulation of Luoma Lake. In Figure b, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the general managers of the Yellow River dug the Middle Canal and the Liutang River under the emperor's order, attempting to divert the floodwaters. Figure c shows that after the founding of the People's Republic of China, Suqian area experienced two peaks of water control campaigns. Therefore, Suqian gradually formed a tiered water network, laying the foundation for the current water network pattern and farmland layout.

4. The Value and Carriers of Water Cultural Heritage in Suqian

From the perspective of cultural landscape, the human-water relationship in Suqian area is a dynamic process from defense to governance and then to utilization. In this interactive relationship, they jointly constitute the value and carrier system of the village cluster in Suqian area (Fig. 2.).

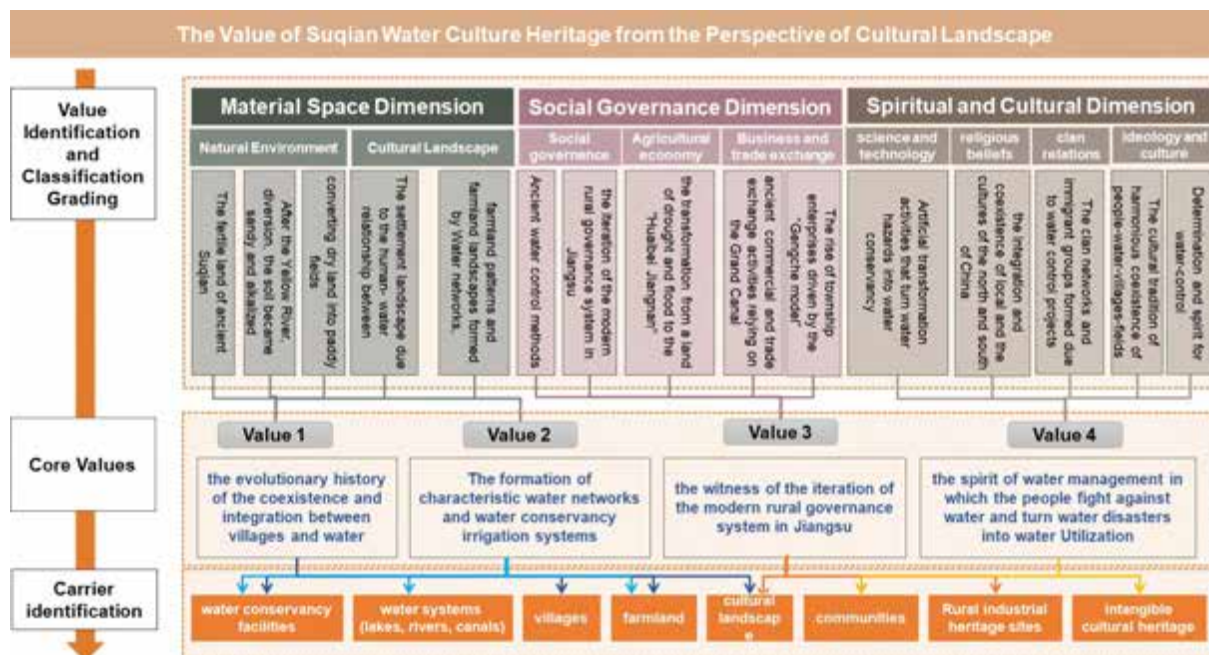


Fig. 2. The Value of Suqian Water Culture Heritage from the Perspective of Cultural Landscape. By classifying and grading the three dimensions, the value of Suqian area in each dimension is comprehensively expounded, and through refinement, the three core values are ultimately determined

4.1 Material Space Dimension: The evolution history of the coexistence and integration between villages and water

In ancient Suqian area, the natural background with its dense water network and fertile land, gave Suqian an thrive in agricultural. At this time, the relationship between people and water in Suqian area was harmonious. The settlements were built along the water and gradually developed into ancient cities. After the Yellow River's diversion, the soil in Suqian rapidly became sandy and alkaline. Coupled with frequent floods and droughts, the people began to fight against water, mainly by excavating the river course to promote the diversion of water from the river. For instance, the Lanma River and the Middle Canal was dug to divert water from the Yellow River system. At this time, due to the tense relationship between people and water, most settlements were distributed in farmlands and forests, maintaining a certain distance from rivers to reduce the losses caused by floods.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the relationship of struggle between humans and water continued. However, due to the increasingly improved scientific level, it gradually shifted from defense to governance. Not only did the people continue to excavate for flood diversion, but they also constructed a flood control engineering system with new technologies. In addition, converting dry land into paddy fields and developing irrigation agriculture around Luoma Lake have significantly increased agricultural output, and the relationship between humans and water has further evolved towards utilization and symbiosis. At this time, the newly established settlements showed a trend of distribution along water, which is banded distributed and divided by water systems, forming a settlement landscape where water and villages blend, demonstrating the harmonious coexistence of human and water relations.

Therefore, in the material form dimension, the changes in river systems and the evolution of villages connect different historical periods, witnessing the human-nature interaction and the changes in the human-water relationship, as well as the evolutionary history of the coexistence and integration of villages and water. The carriers of this part of the value mainly fall into two categories. One is the water system in Suqian area, including lakes, rivers and canals. Another category is aquatic cultural landscapes, that is, farmlands and villages that emerged and changed because of water.

4.2 Material Space Dimension: the formation of characteristic water network and water conservancy irrigation system

In this regard, the heritage value of Suqian area mainly lies in the formation of a distinctive water network and water conservancy irrigation system, whose carriers are mainly the water conservancy facilities, artificial water network systems and drainage and irrigation areas after the founding of the People's Republic of China. In Suqian area, a water network system composed of large and small rivers, canals and reservoirs has been artificially excavated, and branch rivers, branch canals and large, medium and small ditches have been artificially divided in the farmland. The water from Luoma Lake is drawn through a tiered water network to serve as Irrigation water source, which was transformed by regular and dense farmland water conservancy in the field. Thus, the water network system and farmland complement each other in the process of human transformation of nature. They not only form a regular grid-like pattern of water system, field pattern and farmland landscapes, but also demonstrate the material interactive value in terms of production technology in the process of human transformation of nature.

For instance, in the Lai Long Irrigation District, before its construction, the land within the district was compacted and alkalinized, allowing only drought-resistant crops to be grown, and the people's lives were extremely poor. In 1958, under the leadership of the county government, the broad masses of the people built channels, constructed culverts and sluices, leveled fields and prepared land, and began to switch to growing rice. And through the engineering support, the Yanghetan Gate draws water from Luoma Lake for gravity irrigation. One year later, the rice and crops in the irrigation area gradually increased, and the average annual agricultural output value reached 35 million yuan.

4.3 Social Governance Dimension: Witness to the Iteration of the modern governance System in rural area of Jiangsu

After water control, the material utilization of nature gradually stabilise. People of Suqian established social interaction and began to update and innovate the governance system, pursuing development. This is the value of Suqian's water culture history and its remnants in the dimension of social governance, witnessing the iterative process of the modern governance system in Jiangsu's rural areas.

On the one hand, as for agriculture, Suqian has implemented an "all-round contract" program based on the existing paddy fields, carried out agricultural structure adjustment, by planting economic crops like mulberry. In the industrial field, Suqian has created the "Gengche Model", which has driven the development of township industries through a group and serialized operation mode at the township, village and household levels, witnessing the history of exploring modernization in Jiangsu's rural areas. The main carriers are the industrial sites of the "Gengche model", such as Xiaodian Winery, Daxingchao Silk Factory, Suqian Glass Factory, as well as the related Caoji People's Commune and Xin Zhuang People's Commune.

On the other hand, Suqian has merged scattered natural villages and administrative villages based on the renovated water network, and transformed them into new rural communities. Based on the common memory of water control, these natural villages and administrative villages have similar farmland cultivation history and folk cultures. By utilising the cohesion generated by water culture, villagers can well adapt the transformation from different villages to the common rural community shared together. Furthermore, through the joint management of village cadres and community social organizations, combined with the innovative grid-based management approach, the community guaranteed the collaborative governance of multiple subjects. This transformation has facilitated the transformation from traditional villages into new rural communities, highlighting the social governance value of updated models and system based on Suqian's water culture. The main carriers are emerging rural communities such as Liyuanwan Community and Shuangheli Community. This also the important manifestation of Suqian's implementation of the national rural revitalization strategy

4.4 Spiritual and Cultural Dimension: The water-control spirit of Suqian people during their struggle against water and their efforts of turning water disasters into water conservancy

In terms of the cultural and spiritual dimension, the water culture history of Suqian demonstrates values in various aspects such as science and technology, religious beliefs, clan relations, and ideological and cultural categories.

In terms of science and technology, in the face of the floods caused by the Yellow River's diversion of the Huai River, Suqian people have reshaped the water network through projects such as "Guiding Yi river and regulating Shu river" and "Conversion of dry fields to paddy fields", transforming the threat of floods into irrigation resources, demonstrating the spirit of transformation and the wisdom of technology.

In terms of religious beliefs, since ancient times, the Grand Canal and the well-developed north-south canal transportation have not only generated the circulation of goods and materials, but also facilitated the integration of dialects, folk customs and skills, giving birth to an open and inclusive cultural mindset and cultural genes. In the belief system of Suqian people, they not only Revere the Mazu belief introduced from Fujian, but also worship the canal god of wealth, Guandi, which was brought from Shanxi. All these belief are closely related to water culture. In addition, waterfront customs such as the Zaohe Temple Fair, Dingzui Donkey Running, and Daxing Boat, are also the intangible cultural heritage created in the integration of local cultures and cultures from northern and southern regions of China. They embody the unique personality and character of Suqian region, demonstrate the cultural identity and common beliefs that the people have gathered because of water.

In terms of clan relations, early Suqian predominantly consisted of traditional Chinese villages organized along kinship ties. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, due to the large-scale water control project, the Luoma Lake Mass Migration Incident occurred. The migrants around Luoma Lake settled in communes such as Lailong community, Caoji community and Xinzhuang community, which prompted the collaboration between the clan organizations and the immigrant groups. People build collective identity within water management and establish a new social collaboration network with water as the bond. This not only enhanced the cohesion and sense of belonging of the village clusters in Suqian area, but also enriched the local clan network in Suqian, which was reflected in the names of the roads, factories built at that time.

In terms of ideology and culture, with the continuous changes in the human-water relationship, Suqian area has gradually formed a layout of "ponds-canals-fields-villages", achieving a sustainable cycle between water, fields and people, and solidifying the ecological concept of respecting nature and harmonious coexistence that has been passed down from generation to generation. In addition, throughout the long history of water control, from the 180,000 voluntary labor in the "Guiding Yi river and regulating Shu river" Project in 1951, to the migrants of Luoma Lake who Abandoning their own house to build a reservoir in 1958, not to mention the ten years of continuous efforts in the "Conversion of dry fields to paddy fields" project. Suqian people have never stopped their efforts to transform nature in the struggle against water, showing their determination of making sacrifices and contributions. This indomitable spirit of resistance has become a spiritual symbol of collective resistance against nature, as well as the cornerstone of the spiritual culture of Suqian people.

These spiritual and cultural values are not only the survival wisdom of Suqian people in dealing with natural challenges, but also the core driving force for uniting the community and carrying forward traditions.

5. Strategies of Concentrated and Contiguous Protection

Based on the analysis of the value of Suqian area and its carriers, the strategies are proposed from the perspectives of human-water relationship and village governance, aiming for the concentrated and contiguous protection and utilization of Suqian area

5.1 Reorganizing the water-control cultural routes in the river basin

Taking the history of water control as the clue, a cultural route with the theme of “Transforming water hazards into water utilization” could be constructed in the Lailong Irrigation District. Relying on the water network system of “Lake (Luoma Lake Reservoir)-River (Zhongyun Canal Liutang River)-Canal (Ergan Canal)”, the historical story of the development and evolution of the relationship between humans and water will be told in sections. Along the Liutang River to the Second Main Canal, from the starting point of water-control, to the water-control predicament of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and finally to the two peaks of water-control campaign. Water-control cultural landscape nodes could be set up based on the remaining relics and the main line of historical narrative.

At the micro-scale level, in combination with cultural routes, water-control theme activities can be set up. For instance, water management cultural parks can be created by integrating the remains of water conservancy facilities such as water conservancy heritage parks. River-digging experience activities can be carried out in conjunction with the farmland water conservancy in villages, and related science popularization and education can be conducted. Moreover, water management history exhibition halls can be set up based on new agricultural communities built along water. Showcase and explain the history of water-control in Suqian District and the fighting spirit during the years. In addition, as for villagers, through water pollution control and ecological transformation of ditches and rivers, the original hard revetments can be classified and softened to create various types of waterfront platforms and riverside walkways, recreating the harmonious interaction scene between humans and water, and also providing activity venues for waterfront folk customs during special festivals.

5.2. Jointly building a governance system

Continue to optimize the governance system of the community. From the flexible governance dimensions such as behavioral norms and cultural inheritance, guiding farmers to transform from the traditional geographically oriented village identity and familiar society action model to the modern community citizen behavior model. In this process, the improvement of villagers' self-governance ability and identity empowerment should be guided. It is also necessary to Lay a psychological foundation and provide flexible guarantees for the reconstruction of governance order in new rural communities. Furthermore, through the integration of clan etiquette and legal norms, the governance system of the new rural community has become more practical. While conforming to the humanistic traditions of the settlement, it can also operate in a coordinated and efficient manner.

6. Conclusion

Based on the trend of the regionalization, holistic and complexity of international heritage protection, this paper introduces the perspective of cultural landscape to construct a value cognition framework based on three dimensions: material space dimension, social governance dimension, as well as spiritual and cultural dimension, hoping to expand the focus of heritage protection from individual and typical villages to general village clusters in the region.

Under this framework, this article takes water culture as the clue, sorting out the history of the Suqian area along with the evolution of human-water relationship, and identifies the common values and their carriers in four aspects of the Suqian area, which can be distilled into four aspects: firstly, the evolutionary history of the coexistence and integration between villages and water; secondly, The formation of characteristic water networks and water conservancy irrigation systems; thirdly, the witness of the iteration of the modern rural governance system in Jiangsu; fourthly, the spirit of water management in which the people fight against water and turn water disasters into water Utilization. On this basis, this paper proposes concentrated and contiguous protection strategies such as reorganizing the water-control cultural routes in the river basin and Jointly building a governance system.

The value cognition system constructed in this paper provides a universal method for the value identification of general villages from a regional perspective, and has enlightenment for the protection and revitalization of vast rural areas. Based on this study, more specific regional protection planning methods and technical paths still need to be discussed on a thematic basis in subsequent studies, such as the demarcation of protection areas and so on.

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