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PRESERVING THE AUTHENTICITY OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN IN TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENTS IN MODERN CONDITIONS

FENG Manlu, BULHAKOVA Tetiana

Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Kyiv, Ukraine

850141812@qq.com, bulgakova.tv@knuud.com.ua

Building upon literature review and previous empirical studies, this article examines the current state regarding the overall integrity, authenticity, and erosion of local ethnic identity in the cultural heritage of traditional settlements. Responding to the demands of designing and renovating historical settlements for contemporary living and production, it is imperative to reinforce the inheritance and revitalization of their regional culture. A suitable model should be proposed, one that through design integrates modern landscape space with the preservation and activation of traditional customs, enhancing the ethnic and temporal attributes of settlement spaces while preserving their cultural significance.

Key words: *traditional settlement; landscape design; authenticity; cultural revitalization; cultural diversity.*

INTRODUCTION

Traditional settlements are usually located in regions with favorable natural environments and diverse geographical features. They continuously develop through long-term, spontaneous, and sustainable construction by residents. They exhibit distinctive characteristics in terms of spatial layout, architectural styles, and landscape environments, serving as important carriers of regional culture, historical heritage, and folk customs. The rational and complete preservation of their historical information holds significant theoretical value and practical significance in inheriting the unique features of settlements, understanding their evolutionary patterns, and summarizing their diversity.

Different from most heritage landscapes, traditional settlements not only bear numerous historical and cultural information but also serve as residences for people who live in them, maintaining close connections with contemporary life. Many traditional settlements, located far away from urban and economic centers, have relatively well-preserved cultural landscapes due to limitations in location, transportation, construction materials, and emerging technologies. However, they face challenges in adapting to the comfort and convenience of contemporary living environments. This necessitates new requirements that strike a balance between preserving the traditional landscape character of settlements and meeting the comfort and needs of residents [1].



PURPOSE

Traditional settlement landscapes are characterized by their rich typology and distinct regional features, reflecting the evolutionary patterns of local human history and the composition of natural and social spatial environments. Based on previous investigations, it has been found that, after undergoing stages of new rural construction, agricultural communities, and tourism accommodations, the quality of life for village residents has significantly improved through spontaneous transformations by residents or comprehensive landscape planning and design organized by village leaders. However, with the intensification of rapid construction, there is a tendency towards homogenization in the landscape pattern of settlements, the architectural layout of courtyards, construction techniques, and materials. The integrity and authenticity of historical information in agricultural or small commercial settlements are rapidly eroding, leading to a low recognition of regional culture and a lack of emotional acceptance of newly transformed landscape spaces by local indigenous people [2~3].

Therefore, in response to these issues, while meeting the requirements for adapting to contemporary production and lifestyle, it is necessary to strengthen the continuity and revitalization of regional and ethnic cultures. It is proposed to combine contemporary landscape spaces with the protection and activation of traditional customs, enhance the temporal and ethnic attributes of traditional settlement places, and preserve their cultural significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Common issues faced by traditional settlement landscapes:

Modernization, urbanization, industrialization, and agricultural modernization are important factors that have influenced the landscape layout, architectural characteristics, and traditional production and lifestyle in traditional settlements. There are various cultural factors that need to be protected in traditional settlements, and currently, the protection of landscapes and physical entities is the most basic stage that can be easily carried out. With the development of contemporary production modes, the residents' habits and preferences have also changed, resulting in conflicts between spatial requirements and the continuity of cultural heritage and social environment. Traditional settlements are usually located in areas with good natural ecological environments, guided by agricultural culture, in order to ensure a large amount of advantageous land for production purposes. Fertile land is used for cultivation, while poor-quality land is used for housing, with the goal of achieving a high level of harmony between architectural clusters and the natural environment. As ancient settlements closer to cities experience industrial relocation, rural economic development, and the use of mechanized agricultural equipment, the need for adjustments in the functions and spatial scales of existing settlements increases. Young adults often migrate for work, leaving behind mainly the elderly and children, resulting in the emergence of hollowed-out village settlements. In terms of the architectural environment, the basic structure of living spaces in traditional settlements, such as courtyards, remains relatively intact, but the comfort and convenience of living facilities are not ideal. When young people return home from work, they are influenced by the construction models of more developed areas and engage in spontaneous renovations, causing the original



landscape and architectural characteristics of traditional settlements to deviate and gradually disappear. Traditional courtyard spaces, originally consisting of a gatehouse, main hall, and side rooms, are transformed into residential courtyards following a more urbanized design approach, with a significant portion of the area being cemented for parking cars or agricultural vehicles. There is also a proliferation of standardized designs in terms of functionality, as well as a convergence of external wall and window styles. In some villages that have introduced tourism projects, generic landscape structures or decorative elements such as flags, lanterns, waterwheels, and mills are added. Occasionally, non-local decorative components and elements may appear in the architectural forms.

Italian architect Aldo Rossi pointed out in typology that "although the specific shapes of buildings may differ, specific types are derived from forms of life or habits". Currently, the landscape transformation of traditional settlements can generally demonstrate distinct regional symbolic characteristics in form. However, when it comes to the continuity of local daily cultural customs and lifestyles in design, there are few instances where this is addressed. Instead, third-party perspectives often dominate the introduction of urban models for design and construction, using materials and techniques different from the traditional local building methods. Indigenous people also feel that while there may be visual similarities, the sense of place is significantly different from before. In traditional settlements, traditional activities rooted in the historical and geographical environment and the cultural elements of built living have gradually declined in contemporary times. The original practice of the whole village coming together to build a house and the solemn topping-out ceremony have been replaced by direct involvement of construction teams. The public spaces that used to gather villagers for communication have gradually lost their specific functions, and some restored buildings by designers are used for showcasing or leisure entertainment for tourists.

Recommendations for the landscape design of traditional settlements:

It is recommended to focus on the residents' real-life conditions of food, shelter, transportation, etc. in the design and strengthen the inheritance and continuity of intangible cultural heritage such as traditional production, lifestyle, and folk customs within the space. For the traditional public spaces of villagers in ancient villages, such as stages, ancestral halls, ancient well areas, and old tree areas, the landscape planning and activity creation of these public areas should be emphasized in the planning, combined with the exploration of the original living habits and the interpretation of traditional customs. For traditional intangible crafts such as paper cutting, wood carving, and stone carving that have been passed down, environmental ambiance should be created through contemporary landscape design techniques. In terms of the protection hierarchy of traditional settlement culture, in addition to the protection and renewal of existing architectural environments and other physical aspects, the influence of cultural activities that are not commonly seen in contemporary times but have strong community participation and clear regional characteristics should be appropriately amplified. New business formats suitable for contemporary young people should be integrated, combining the reuse of intangible culture in landscape spaces and the specific activation projects of scene reproduction, thereby bridging the gap in cultural exchanges in



contemporary living and enhancing the continuity of regional culture and traditional landscape spaces.

CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of traditional settlement landscapes is a long and gradual process, in which daily activities such as production and living will inevitably undergo new adaptations and changes with economic development. Based on the protection of the material carriers of traditional settlement landscapes, the contemporary adaptability of traditional construction experience and techniques is explored, and through the excavation and enhancement of intangible cultural habits from a cultural perspective, the unique production and living habits of the region are inherited. The participation of local indigenous people in the landscape layout and use of architectural spaces is strengthened, enhancing their emotional recognition of the newly transformed landscape environment. This approach aims to reduce excessive intervention in traditional settlement landscapes from the perspective of others using urban construction models as templates. It effectively combines the specific spatial use of contemporary local life for revitalization and reuse, and protects and enhances the overall and authentic design in cultural continuity and development.

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ФЕН М., БУЛГАКОВА Т.

ЗБЕРЕЖЕННЯ АВТЕНТИЧНОСТІ ЛАНДШАФТНОГО ДИЗАЙНУ ТРАДИЦІЙНИХ ПОСЕЛЕНЬ У СУЧАСНИХ УМОВАХ

Базуючись на розгляді літератури та попередніх емпіричних дослідженнях, ця стаття аналізує поточну ситуацію щодо загальної цілісності, автентичності та розмивання місцевої етнічної ідентичності в культурній спадщині традиційного поселення. Реагуючи на вимоги дизайну та реновації історичних поселень для сучасного життя та виробництва, необхідно посилити спадкоємність та відродження їх регіональної культури. Слід запропонувати відповідну модель, яка засобами дизайну поєднає сучасний ландшафтний простір із захистом і активізацією традиційних звичаїв, посилюючи етнічні та часові атрибути просторів поселень, зберігаючи їхнє культурне значення.

Ключові слова: традиційне поселення; ландшафтний дизайн; автентичність; культурне відродження; культурне розмаїття.