



Research Article

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## Research on cultural landscape protection in Dapishan Scenic Spot in Xun County Henan Province China

Liu Yi

Zhengzhou University of Light Industry, Zhengzhou, Henan, China

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### ABSTRACT

*The cultural landscape in Dapishan Scenic Spot in Xun County, Henan Province, which is the soul and spirit of the area, determines its features and attributes. In this paper, specific cultural landscape resources in Dapishan Scenic Spot represented by religious culture and ancient temple fair folk culture are elaborated, the problems in cultural landscape resource protection are analyzed, and corresponding improving strategies are put forward as formulating policies and regulations, optimizing management model and mechanism, applying scientific protection methods and improving overall environmental quality.*

**Key words:** China; Dapishan Scenic Spot; Cultural Landscape; Protection

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### INTRODUCTION

Cultural landscape is a district or area linking with historical events, cultural relics and activities or representing traditional aesthetic or cultural values and including cultural and natural resources [1]. In 1992, the 16<sup>th</sup> general assembly of World Heritage Committee incorporated cultural landscape into the range of world heritage. And by June, 2013, 4 cultural landscapes in China have been included in World Heritage List, and they are Mount Lushan, Mount Wutai, Hangzhou West Lake Cultural Landscape and Honghe Hani Rice Terraces. In China, with the development of tourist industry, cultural landscapes, as distinctive resources, have been paid more attention to.

Located in central China, Henan Province has a long history and abundant cultural landscape resources. At present, 8 cities in Henan have been listed as State Historical and Cultural City. Among them, Xun County is the only one at the county-level. And Dapishan Scenic Spot, located in Xun County, is a State-level 4A Tourist Area whose major functions are religious culture, folk culture and science popularization and education. Since Dapishan Scenic Spot plays an important role in eco-environment construction and economic development, the research on protecting the Scenic Spot is of great significance.

### 1. ANALYSIS OF FEATURES OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESOURCES IN DAPISHAN SCENIC SPOT

Dapishan has been regarded as a famous mountain recorded in Yu Gong for generations. Legend has it that when taming flood, King Yu climbed on the mountain, and it was recorded in Yu Gong from Shang Shu. Therefore, it became one of the famous mountains earliest recorded with written words in China. Dapishan Scenic Spot includes two green rocky mountains, Mount Dapi and Mount Fuqiu. The two mountains tower aloft on the plain of over a thousand miles, and the landscape there is very beautiful with steep cliffs, peaks towering into clouds, cypresses standing along roads and winding paths. Since ancient times, Emperor Guangwu in Han Dynasty, Wang Wei in Tang Dynasty, Wang Yangming in Ming Dynasty and other emperors, kings and refined scholars climbed the mountains, visited the scenic wonders and indited and inscribed poems and prose. The Scenic Spot boasts not only beautiful natural landscapes but also abundant cultural relics and historic sites. Ancient architectural complex scatters all over like stars and inscriptions on cliffs are full of the eyes. There is 1 state-level cultural relics, 8 provincial-level ones,

more than 460 inscriptions on cliffs and more than 400 cypresses from Han and Tang dynasties ( Table). Besides ample tangible cultural landscapes, the intangible cultural landscapes are more impressive. Xun County Temple Fair, known as the largest ancient temple fair in North China, is held in the Scenic Spot through the whole Lunar January, attracting thousands of tourists home and abroad coming in a continuous stream.

**Table : Analysis of Cultural Landscape Resources Protection in Dapishan Scenic Area**

Type	Name of Cultural Landscape	Type of Religion	Protection Level
Tangible Cultural Landscapes	Tianning Temple (Grand Stone Buddha and Stone Tablets)	Buddhism	State Level
	Grotto in Thousand-Buddha Temple	Buddhism	Provincial Level
	Guanyin Cliff	Buddhism	
	Enrong Memorial Archway		
	Tianqi Temple	Taoism	
	Bixia Palace	Taoism	
	Lv's Ancestral Temple	Taoism	
	King of Yu Temple		
	Tianhu Monastery	Taoism	County Level
	Xingguo Temple	Buddhism	
	Zhangxian Cave	Taoism	
	Dragon Cave		
Intangible Cultural Landscape	Temple Fair in Lunar January		Extension Item List of State-level Intangible Cultural Heritage

### 2.1 Co-prosperity of Buddhism and Taoism with a Long History and Rich Cultural Deposits

There are numerous historical sites and rich religious cultural landscapes in Dapishan Scenic Spot, which mainly focus on Buddhism and Taoism.

Tianning Temple, located at the east mountainside of Mount Dapi, is a representative of Buddhist cultural landscape. Constructed in the Northern Wei Dynasty, Tianning Temple was firstly named as Dapishan Temple. Before the Yuan Dynasty, the temple sat toward the east and in Ming Dynasty, it was changed into sitting toward the south and its name was changed into Tianning Temple. In the reign of Daoguang in Qing Dynasty, it was return to the original orientation. Now, Tianning Temple has east-west and north-south two axis, forming a cross layout. Tianning Temple has grand scale and plenty of buildings. The most famous is the stone statue of Maitreya Buddha in the Grand Buddha Pavilion, and it is the national key protected cultural relics. The Grand Buddha Pavilion has three rooms with the height of seven zhang (about 23 meters), it is located besides the cliff and its height is almost as high as the cliff. The pavilion was renovated for several times and the existing building was constructed in Ming Dynasty. A seated stone Buddha statue was chiseled leaning at the cliff. The stone Buddha is 21.33 meters high and 10 meters wide. Folklore has it that the Buddha is 80 feet high and the pavilion 70 feet. The grand stone Buddha statue in Xun Country was carved in Northern Qi Dynasty, much earlier than existing statues in Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen, so it is a grand statue on precipice which is the earliest in China and largest in North China. In addition, in the Scenic Spot, there scatters Xingguo Temple, Tianqi Temple, King of Yu Temple, Guanyin Cliff, Thousand-Buddha Temple and other temple buildings, stone statues of Buddha, inscriptions on cliffs and other cultural landscape heritages.

Taoism cultural landscapes are also shining like stars in Dapishan Scenic Spot. On the two mountains, there are Bixia Palace, Lv's Ancestral Temple, Taichi Palace, Xiayin Mountain Villa, Tianhu Monastery, Zhangxian Cave and other Taoist Temples. Among them, Bixia Palace is an ancient architectural complex with grand scale and sound protection. Also named Goddess Temple, Bixia Palace was called Granny Temple, located at the southern peak on Mount Fuqiu, was built during the reign of Jiaqing in Ming Dynasty. Then it was expanded in later years to take the current scale. Sitting toward the south, the halls and pavilions stand along both sides of the north-south axis symmetrically, forming a three-layer courtyard. Within the temple, the cypresses are verdant, stone tablets stand in great numbers and buildings are delicate.

For hundreds of years, Buddhism and Taoism have been developing together in Dapishan Scenic Spot, which not only represents the booming of Chinese civilization but also leaves many precious cultural landscape heritages.

### 2.2 Folk Culture Represented by Xun County Temple Fair in Lunar January with a Long History and Colorful Contents

Temple fair stems from religious fete activities. Based on Mount Dapi and Mount Fuqiu, Xun County Temple Fair in Lunar January in the Scenic Spot is a folk activity unifying mystery, collectivity, entertainment, succession and

variation[2]. It germinated during the period of the chiseling of the Grand Stone Buddha Statue in Northern Qi Dynasty. At that time, local villagers offered incense to Buddha to pray for safety, thus, the temple fair came into being. With generations of construction of temples and Taoist abbeys, Mount Dapi and Mount Fuqiu gradually gained reputation, and then the ancient temple fair boomed. The construction of Bixia Palace during the reign of Jiajing in the Ming Dynasty made the scale of the ancient temple fair larger.

Xun County Ancient Temple Fair starts from Lunar January 1st and lasts until Lunar February 2nd and in the course there are three highlight activities on Lunar New Year's Day, Lunar January 9th and 16th respectively. The Ancient Temple Fair is most famous for the social fire, which is of entertainment, so it is also called "playing in the fair". In Xun County, social fire has rich contents and distinctive features and the performing routine has been passed on from one generation to another. On the day with highlight activities, social fire clubs in various villages gather together in Dapishan Scenic Spot to worship the mountain, revealing, in the most intuitive way, the traditional, divine and sacred aspect of the Ancient Temple Fair. With local government's protection and development, in 2007, the Ancient Temple Fair was included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Henan Province and was regarded as Henan Folk-custom Classic. In addition, based on the Ancient Temple Fair, the Xun County Social Fire and folk handicraft Clay Co were listed among the first into the State-level Intangible Cultural Heritage List. With rich cultural connotation, intense folk custom and deep-rooted foundation, the Xun County Ancient Temple Fair is favored by pilgrims and tourists in and out of the province.

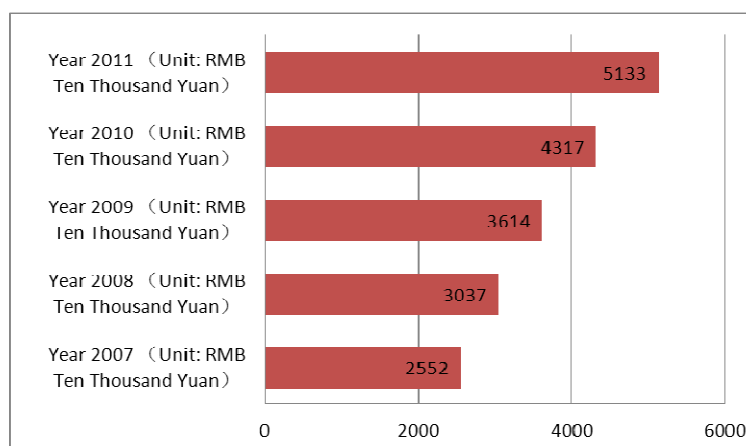
## 2. PROBLEMS IN DAPISHAN SCENIC SPOT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESOURCE PROTECTION

### 3.1 Defect Laws and Regulations and Imperfect Management Mechanism

Laws and regulations are important basis for landscape protection and management. In protecting Dapishan Scenic Spot cultural landscapes, the basis are laws and regulations stipulated from the perspectives of the state, province or county, for instance, Cultural Relics Protection Law of People's Republic of China, Scenic Spot Management Regulations, Measures for Implementing Henan Provincial Cultural Relics Protection Law and Xun Country Historical and Cultural City Protective Measures. Lack of specific and targeted enforcement basis, the protection and management of cultural landscapes in Dapishan Landscape Scenic Spot has not been clicked into place.

With respect to management mechanism, the present situation is also not satisfactory. Firstly, local government unified Cultural Relics Bureau and Tourist Administration into one, thus the Xun County Cultural Relics and Tourist Bureau was established, which undertakes the duty of protecting cultural relics on one hand and is responsible for developing tourism on the other hand. Therefore, it is easily attends to one aspect and lose another. Secondly, though the management of Dapishan Scenic Spot is carried out by the county Cultural Relics and Tourist Bureau, the spots of Lv's Ancestral Temple and Xingguo Temple within the Scenic Spot are under the jurisdiction of Religion Department. Two different management systems will certainly affect the efficiency the cultural landscape protection.

Fig.: 2007-2009 Economic Income from Cultural Tourism in Xun County



(Source of Data: Xun County Statistical Bureau)

### 3.2 Lacking in Professionals and Insufficient Financial Input

Professionals and financial input are the keys determining whether cultural landscape protection can be implemented or not. In Da pishan Scenic Spot, most staffs are not equipped with professional background of cultural landscape protection, have no related trainings or advanced studies and lack of professional knowledge and skills of cultural landscape protection. Thus, the cultural landscapes destructed by nature or human can not be effectively protected.

In recent years, relying on advantages of cultural landscape resources in Dapishan Scenic Area, economic income directly brought about by cultural landscape tourism in Xun County increased sharply at an annual average rate of 19% ( Fig.).In financial input, although local government raised fund through fiscal allocation and public donation to enhance the protection and construction in the Scenic Spot and renovated several cultural relic sites, such as the Tiannin Temple, Thousand-Buddha Temple, Tianqi Temple and King of Yu Temple, the protection of cultural landscape resources in Dapishan Scenic Spot is far from enough.

### *3.3 Overall Landscape Environment Needing Further Improvement*

Since Dapishan Scenic Spot was regarded as State-level 4A Tourist Area, main scenic paths have been repaired and facilities for rest and sanitation added. The overall environment in the Scenic Spot have been improved considerably, however, there is room for further improvement. Firstly, the development in the Scenic Spot is unbalanced. Compared with Dapishan Scenic Spot, Fuqiushan Scenic Spot is poor in infrastructure, vegetation coverage and overall environment. Secondly, the problem of arbitrarily constructing buildings to sham for religious buildings is serious in the area, which not only affects the overall environment in the landscape area, but also ruins the values of cultural landscape in the area.

## **3. STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESOURCES IN DAPISHAN SCENIC SPOT**

### *4.1 Formulating Relevant Policies and Regulations*

As any creatures have genes, culture also has genes, which determine the cultural feature and attribute of a state, a nation and even a region [3] . The feature and attribute of Dapishan Scenic Spot is determined by the cultural landscape in Mount Dapi and Mount Fuqiu, and it is the soul of the Scenic Spot. Therefore, no matter it is tangible or intangible landscapes, single cultural relic site or the overall environment in the Scenic Spot, they should be paid enough attention to in the process of protection.

For the protection of cultural landscape resources in Dapishan Scenic Spot, it is not enough by only improving the protection awareness of the administrators and tourists. Dapishan Scenic Spot Protection and Development Plan and Dapishan Scenic Spot Protection Regulations shall be instituted and the laws and regulations shall be vigorously publicized and implemented. Only with specific policies and regulations can the work of the administrators be guided and behaviors of tourists be regulated, thus, the cultural landscapes in the Scenic Spot can obtain long-term and sound development.

### *4.2 Optimizing Management Model and Mechanism*

Establishing united and coordinated management department is the first issue Dapishan Scenic Spot needs to resolve. For a long time, Dapishan Scenic Spot conducts management under the leadership of Xun County Cultural Relics and Tourist Bureau, which is a typical government-led management model suitable to the initial stage of market economy. However, with the further development of economic reform in China and cultural landscape tourism, the traditional management model must be replaced by new one. Therefore, Dapishan Scenic Spot should study and learn management experience from such famous Scenic Spots as West Lake, Mount Taishan and Mount Putuo, seek for management model applicable to its own cultural landscape resources and gradually establish Dapishan Scenic Spot Management Committee to undertake various functions as Scenic Spot protection, construction and management.

Establishing scientific and high-efficient management mechanism is the fundamental assurance for sustainable development of cultural landscape resources in Dapishan Scenic Spot. Dapishan Scenic Spot should optimize professionals management mechanism in the first place, attracting highly component talents to stay here so as to improve the level of protecting cultural landscape resources; besides, the Scenic Spot should take initiative to explore and innovate cultural landscape operation mechanism and make use of various channels to raise fund so as to scale input to the protection of cultural landscape resources.

### *4.3 Adopting Scientific Protection Methods*

Dapishan Scenic Spot boasts various types of cultural landscape resources in various places, therefore, these resources should be protected according to different types and districts. Firstly, landscape resources in the Scenic Spot should be assessed and classified according to the Scenic Spot Planning Regulation. Secondly, the Scenic Spot should be divided into strictly reserved districts and limited utilizing districts. And lastly, in different reserving districts, protection measures will be taken according to different types. For example, religious buildings, stone statues, inscriptions on cliffs and other tangible cultural landscape resources shall be renovated and maintained to obtain their original styles under the prerequisite of sticking to authenticity and completeness. While for such intangible cultural landscape resources as social fire, social arts and religious ceremony, local government shall take initiative to promote the participation of experts and scholars, publicity of the media and the mobilization of the

masses to cultivate “soil” for the inheritance of these intangible cultural landscapes, thus, expanding space for long-term development.

#### *4.4 Improving Overall Environmental Quality*

Cultural landscape resources can never exist alone, they should rely on certain environment. To protect Dapishan Scenic Spot, the cultural landscape resources should be protected, meanwhile, the cultural and eco-environment shall also be paid attention to. Within the strictly reserved districts, any activities destructing or affecting cultural landscape or environment shall be prohibited. Within the limited utilizing districts, newly added scenic spots or architectures shall be congruent with the overall environment in the Scenic Spot. What’s more, the regional vegetation in the Scenic Spot shall be restored and the infrastructure shall be improved to promote the overall environmental quality in the area.

### CONCLUSION

The Cultural landscapes in Dapishan Scenic Spot convey the spirit and soul of the Scenic Spot. Only with effective protection can the historic cultural memory in Dapishan Scenic Spot be sustained.

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