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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Type Classification and Contiguous Protection: Analysis of Traditional Village Cultural Landscape in Tongjiang County, China

Cai Pengcheng[1], Ubong Imang[2*]

[1]Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu 88400, Sabah, Malaysia;
School of Geography and Resource Science, Neijiang Normal University, Neijiang 641100, Sichuan, China
Email: 965772832@qq.com
[2]Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu 88400, Sabah, Malaysia
Email: ubong@ums.edu.my

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR (*):
Ubong Imang
(ubong@ums.edu.my)

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ABSTRACT

Traditional village cultural landscape is a witness to the historical and cultural heritage of the villages and an important part of the protection of rural cultural heritage. This study explores the type classification of 37 traditional villages in Tongjiang County from the perspective of cultural landscape. The data of the traditional village clusters in Tongjiang County were collected by using the observation method and the secondary data method, and the data were analyzed by using the content analysis method to construct a research system for the classification of traditional village types. The research results show that: According to the prominent characteristics of the cultural landscapes of traditional villages in Tongjiang County, they can be classified into five categories: agricultural landscape, traditional architecture, revolutionary relics, humanistic history, and folk customs and religious culture. Based on the characteristic cultural landscape resources of different types of traditional villages, a concentrated and contiguous sustainable development model that conforms to the characteristics of the villages is proposed. This study, by classifying traditional villages into types, provides practical inspirations for the classified protection of traditional village groups in counties, and offers countermeasure references for the concentrated and contiguous protection of traditional village cultural landscape and the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by integrating the theory of cultural landscape into the analysis of regional traditional village groups. The paper's primary contribution is finding that establishing a type classification system for traditional villages and proposing a concentrated and contiguous protection model, providing a reference for the protection of rural cultural heritage.

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1. Introduction

With the rapid development trend of modern civilization characterized by economic globalization and cultural diversity in the international community, traditional culture is facing severe threats and impacts. Historical regions and traditional villages, as historical and cultural heritages, are facing an increasingly declining cultural inheritance crisis. In order to protect and pass on the unique traditional culture, the awareness of the international community regarding the protection of traditional villages has gradually increased. As an important manifestation of cultural diversity, traditional villages have seen an increasing number of countries and international organizations pay attention to and attach importance to the protection of their cultural heritage. Since the beginning of the 20th century, a series of international charters and legal regulations have been issued internationally for the protection of historical regions, historical towns and vernacular architecture, making the protection of traditional villages an important part of international cooperation and exchanges (Jing et al., 2024). For instance, in the "*Law on the Protection of Scenic Spots and Historic Sites*" promulgated by France in 1930, the protection of villages and towns was explicitly included, which can serve as the earliest legal prototype for the protection of historical and cultural villages and towns d heritage (Zhu et al., 2016). The Venice Charter issued by the International Centre for the Protection and Restoration of Cultural Properties in 1964 pointed out that "Cultural relics and historic sites do not only include Individual buildings, also includes Urban or Historic Monuments" (Icomos, 1964). In 1989, UNESCO emphasized the importance of protecting the traditional culture and folk customs of villages (Wu et al., 2020). More and more traditional villages have been included in the World Heritage List.

In the current process of rural revitalization, new urbanization and ecological civilization construction in China, a series of plans and opinions on the protection and development of traditional villages have been formulated (Cai & Imang, 2023). Traditional villages are now facing huge development opportunities and challenges. China is a country with a long history and rich cultural heritage. Traditional villages, as an important part of it, represent the essence of Chinese traditional culture and agricultural civilization, and possess unique cultural landscapes and value characteristics. China is rich in traditional village resources. According to statistics, there are nearly 12,000 existing traditional villages in China. Since 2012, a total of 8,155 villages have been included in the National List of Traditional Villages, which is the largest protection group of agricultural civilization heritage in the world (Liao, 2018; Li et al., 2020; Cao, C. Z., 2021). Traditional villages are precious historical and cultural heritages and an important part of China's fine traditional culture (Cai & Imang, 2024). They have rich village cultural landscape resources. However, they are often poor villages located in remote mountainous areas, with phenomena such as slow village development, backward economic development, extremely inconvenient transportation, and difficult lives for villagers. The survival of traditional villages is facing a critical juncture of emergency protection.

Traditional villages, as rural landscapes of "organic evolution", constitute the areas with the closest connection between nature and humanity, and are typical cultural landscape heritages (Wu, 2019). The concept of cultural landscape was officially proposed by UNESCO in 1992 and became a fourth-class World Heritage Site. Since then, scholars at home and abroad have continuously improved their research on the protection methods and theories of cultural landscapes in traditional villages. They believe that the protection of traditional villages requires maintaining the diversity and stability of

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cultural landscapes within traditional villages (Li, 2021). Therefore, this study attempts to explore the construction of a classification system for regional traditional village groups from the perspective of cultural landscapes, providing new ideas and directions for the concentrated and contiguous protection of traditional villages.

1.1. Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to explore the construction of the classification system of traditional villages in Tongjiang County, China, and propose a concentrated and contiguous protection model for regional traditional village groups. The research results aim to provide classified protection suggestions for different types of traditional villages, thereby strengthening the overall protection and sustainable development of traditional village groups in counties.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cultural Landscape

The term "cultural landscape" was first proposed by the American geographer Saul, who defined it as "the form of human activities attached to the natural landscape" (Gu & Chen, 2016). The concept of "Cultural Landscape" was officially proposed at the 16th session of the World Heritage Committee in 1992. It is a heritage object that combines humanity and nature and focuses on various categories such as regional landscapes, historical spaces, and cultural places, further enriching people's understanding of historical heritage (Li & Xiao, 2009). Cultural landscape is the outcome of human activities, the surface traces of the interaction between human beings and nature, and the characteristics bestowed upon a region by culture. It can intuitively reflect the cultural features of a region (Zhou et al., 2004). Cultural landscape is a complex of cultural phenomena on the Earth's surface, a complex of natural and human factors formed during historical periods and constituting a certain regional feature, representing the geographical regional characteristics and their cultural features (Liu et al., 2020).

Table 1 lists the current classification models of cultural landscape types at home and abroad. Cultural landscapes can be classified into different types based on various criteria. Organizations and institutions such as the World Heritage Committee and the National Park Service of the United States have made classifications according to different situations of cultural landscapes. Chinese scholars have systematically analyzed the types of cultural landscapes in China by drawing on foreign research results and combining the regional cultural characteristics of China's historical and cultural heritage.

Cultural landscape is not only a material entity but also contains corresponding humanistic connotations. Its constituent elements can be divided into two parts: material form and cultural connotation, namely the constituent elements of the material system and the constituent elements of the value system. Table 2 presents the classification and specific manifestations of the two constituent elements of the cultural landscape. Material carriers are indispensable in the inheritance of cultural landscapes. According to their characteristics and spatial scale, the constituent elements of the material system of cultural landscapes can be divided into five categories: environment, structure, space, architecture and behavior. These five types of elements, ranging from

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the natural geographical conditions for the generation and development of cultural landscapes to human behaviors that represent social psychology, ways of thinking and customs, summarize the composition of cultural landscapes at different levels. The value system of cultural landscape mainly reflects the intangible human-land relationship and can be divided into human settlement culture, historical culture, spiritual culture and industrial culture (Chen et al., 2014; Zhu et al., 2022).

Table 1: Comparison of cultural landscape types at home and abroad

Organization Structure	World Heritage Committee	United States National Park Service	China
Types of Cultural Landscape	Landscapes intentionally designed and created by human beings, organically evolved landscapes and associated cultural landscapes (Wang, 2012).	Historic design landscape, Historic landscape, Historical place and Ethnographic landscape (Cao, X. X. 2021).	Design landscape, site landscape, place landscape, settlement landscape and regional landscape (Li & Xiao, 2009).

Table 2: Analysis table of cultural landscape elements

Elements of Composition	Classification	Specific Form of Expression
System of matter	Environment	Landscape, pastoral, vegetation and other natural environmental elements.
	Structure	Spatial structure, regional structure and landscape structure.
	Space	Spatial composition and spatial form.
	Building	Buildings, structures and sites.
	Behaviour	Daily practices, festival rituals and traditional skills.
System of value	Culture of human settlement	Local customs, life culture and life philosophy.
	Culture of history	Historical background, historical evolution, historical events and historical figures.
	Culture of spiritual	Cultural concept, spiritual belief and aesthetic taste.
	Culture of industry	Industrial history, industrial characteristics and industrial development.

Source: Chen et al. (2014)

The cultural landscape referred to in this study is the cultural landscape of traditional villages, namely the material cultural landscape and intangible cultural landscape of traditional villages. It will be discussed from two aspects: the constituent elements of the material system and the constituent elements of the value system. This study holds that the protection of traditional villages is the protection of cultural landscapes, which means that both the material and intangible elements in the cultural landscapes of traditional villages need to be protected simultaneously, thereby enhancing the presentation of the authenticity, regionality, inheritance and integrity of the cultural landscapes. Furthermore, the protection of traditional villages should be sustainable, dynamic and holistic. That is to say, in the process of protecting cultural landscapes, the concept of "people-oriented" should be adhered to and development should be sought in the process of protection, exploring methods for the activation and utilization of cultural landscapes in traditional villages.

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2.2. Classification of Traditional Village Types

Traditional villages are known as "the memory of a nation", an important part of China's fine traditional culture, and a microcosm of China's agricultural civilization and rural culture (Hu et al., 2014). They have the dual overlapping functions of communities and scenic spots and are a kind of living cultural heritage settlement (Liu, 2015). The "*Notice on Conducting a Survey of Traditional Villages*" jointly issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the Ministry of Culture, the National Cultural Heritage Administration and the Ministry of Finance clearly states: Traditional villages refer to those that were formed earlier, possess relatively rich traditional resources, and have certain historical, cultural, scientific, artistic, social and economic values, and should be protected (Chinese Government Website, 2012). The cultural connotation of traditional villages is mainly reflected in three aspects: the integrity of the existing traditional architectural style, the maintenance of traditional characteristics in the site selection and layout of the villages, and the living inheritance of intangible cultural heritage (Chinese Government Website, 2012). The formation, evolution and development process of traditional villages all have their own general and specific trajectories and laws. The characteristic attributes contained therein include factors such as village site selection, defense structure, street and alley layout, public space, and rural architecture (Cui & Wang, 2017).

At present, the classification of traditional villages mainly follows the functional principle of the historical period of the village. That is to say, this settlement form of traditional villages, in addition to its own residential function, also has multiple functions such as economy, commemoration, religion, transportation and military. Thus, traditional villages can be divided into types such as agricultural type, military type, industry and trade type, and memorial type (Zhou, 2009). Some scholars also use the comprehensive characteristic classification method to divide traditional villages into six major categories: architectural heritage type, ethnic characteristic type, revolutionary history type, traditional culture type, environmental landscape type and trade and transportation type (Zhang, 2017).

This study holds that traditional villages are witnesses and living fossils of settlement space in the history of human development, the result of harmonious development between human and nature, and the places where people depend for survival. Traditional villages embody the wisdom and labor achievements of local residents throughout history, and have distinct regional characteristics and cultural memories. The protection of traditional villages is an important topic in the current research on human development.

2.3. Protection of Traditional Villages

Research on the protection and sustainable development of traditional villages abroad mainly focuses on the protection of cultural heritage (such as ancient villages and towns), community participation, and sustainable development. Lepp et al. (2006), through the study of a traditional village in Uganda, proposed that community-led conservation measures have a positive impact on the protection of cultural heritage. Tas et al. (2009), through the study of the city of Bursa in Turkey, proposed that the purpose of the government is not only to protect and restore historical resources, but also to ensure the sustainable and healthy development of traditional villages. Coggins et al. (2012), in their research on the protection history of feng shui forests in rural areas of

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southern China, proposed that self-management in rural areas can not only protect the local garden ecological environment, but also maintain and increase the biodiversity of feng shui forests. Said et al. (2013) hold that the effective ways to protect the cultural heritage of traditional villages are to enhance the protection awareness of the public, stimulate the potential of stakeholders, and innovate financing channels, etc. Based on the research of Wood et al. (2014) on the completion degree of conservation tasks and the maintenance degree of conservation subsidies for traditional villages beside Kerinci Seblat National Park in Indonesia, they believe that the success rate mainly depends on whether the conservation purpose is clearly defined in the conservation agreement. Imang (2020) took Tambatuon Village in Sabah, Malaysia as the research area and discussed the ongoing economic diversification in rural areas. The study holds that the process of expanding economic diversification is conducive to promoting the economic growth and sustainable development of the village.

Different scholars in China have conducted systematic research on the protection principles and strategies of traditional villages from multiple perspectives. Based on the different problems and current situations of traditional villages, different protection principles have been proposed. For instance, Wei (2019), through research, summarized the problems currently encountered by traditional villages in Shaanxi Province during the protection process, such as the decline of physical space, unbalanced development of urban and rural economies, and lagging protection technologies. In response to these problems, he proposed that the principles of authenticity, integrity, vitality, and sustainable development should be followed, providing suggestions for the protection of traditional villages. Qu (2020) pointed out that in the face of the impact of the urbanization process on the protection of traditional villages, the protection principles of authenticity and integrity should be adhered to, and the protection of traditional villages should be incorporated into the overall development plan of new urbanization. Chen and Wang (2020) hold that traditional villages are essentially characterized by "agriculture, rural areas and farmers", and the concept of overall protection should be implemented to build an overall revitalization system centered on villagers.

Regarding the strategies for the protection of traditional villages, many scholars have conducted discussions from aspects such as research perspectives and protection models. For instance, Chu and Zhu (2018) deconstructed and explained traditional villages from the perspective of spatial analysis, and constructed an overall protection system. Taking Chengkan Village in Huangshan City, Anhui Province as an example, the constructed protection system was applied, providing a reference for the overall protection of traditional villages. Ni (2019) applied the concept of ecological museums to the protection of traditional villages in Huizhou, striving to achieve the construction idea from heritage to resources under the protection model of ecological museums and seeking the balance point for the original ecological protection of traditional villages in Huizhou. Chen and Xu (2019) proposed to take the rural revitalization strategy as the background, explore new measures for the protection of traditional villages with Shandong-style, accelerate the comprehensive revitalization of traditional villages, and create a Qilu model.

In conclusion, the protection of traditional villages has increasingly drawn the attention of the international community. Scholars at home and abroad have conducted multi-angle studies on the classification of traditional villages, as well as their protection principles and countermeasures. The trend of diversity in research directions is obvious, providing a strong reference basis for the sustainable development of traditional villages

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worldwide. However, there are still some gaps in the research from the perspective of cultural landscape. This study takes the traditional village cluster in Tongjiang County as an example and regards it as a regional typical case in the northeastern part of Sichuan Province to conduct a systematic study on the overall protection and sustainable development of the cultural landscape of traditional villages. This will take a larger regional scope as the research object and explore the protection of regional traditional villages from the perspective of cultural landscapes, so as to fill the current research gap.

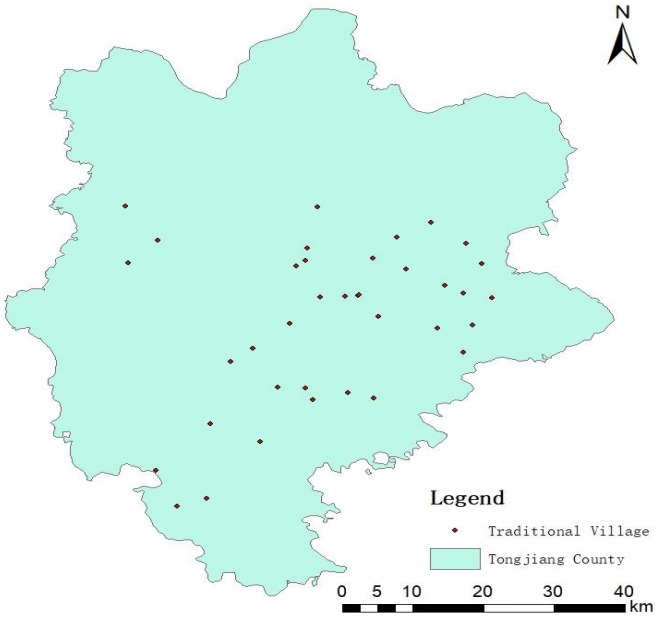
3. Research Methods

This study adopts a qualitative research design to conduct a detailed investigation of the cultural landscapes of traditional villages in Tongjiang County and construct a classification system for traditional villages in Tongjiang County. The qualitative data such as the constituent elements of the cultural landscape of traditional villages in Tongjiang County were collected by using the observation method and the secondary data method. The results of data collection are classified and organized, tabular recorded and visualized by using the content analysis method to ensure that the data analysis process is clearer and more accurate.

3.1. Research Scope

Figure 1 shows the scope of this study, covering 37 traditional villages in Tongjiang County, China.

Figure 1: Distribution map of traditional villages in Tongjiang County



Source: Researcher

The subjects are a group of traditional villages that are relatively well-preserved and represent typical Ba-Shu culture in the northeastern part of Sichuan Province. Since the launch of national and provincial traditional village surveys and the application for the list of traditional villages, a total of 37 traditional villages in Tongjiang County, Sichuan Province, have been selected, ranking among the top in the county rankings of Sichuan Province. They possess high cultural, historical, artistic, scientific, social and economic

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value. Through systematic research on the traditional village clusters in Tongjiang County, detailed and in-depth analyses can be conducted to understand the protection process under specific historical, social and geographical backgrounds. This will provide a certain basis for further research on other regional traditional village clusters.

3.2. Data Collection

The observation method is an important approach in anthropological and ethnological research. It is a way for observers to conduct a complete record and study of the cultural characteristics of a certain region through on-site participation in observation and living experience (Cai et al., 2015). For the research on the cultural landscape elements of traditional villages, it is necessary to adopt the observation method to conduct field investigations on the cultural characteristics of the villages in order to obtain true and reliable data and materials. This study conducted a comprehensive field investigation of some villages. According to the designed "*Research Record Form of Traditional Village*", the constituent elements of the cultural landscape heritage of the villages were collected by the observation method. The "*Research Record Form of Traditional Village*" of this study was designed based on the "*Notice on Conducting Investigations of Traditional Village*" issued by the Chinese government and referring to the research of scholars such as Cao (2017), Liang (2019), and Liu (2019). Through on-site research, the cultural landscape elements of the sample villages were collected in the form of pictures, video shooting, and written records, and the folk festival activities of the villages were participated in to obtain first-hand original materials.

Secondary data refers to quantitative or qualitative data collected by people other than researchers for different purposes (Ellram & Tate, 2016). Therefore, secondary data mainly come from public or open channels and have characteristics such as objectivity, authenticity and replicability, which helps to increase the reliability and influence of research (Liu et al., 2022). This study adopted the secondary data method to collect relevant national policy documents, development plans, data related to traditional villages and other materials. The secondary data of this study mainly come from library research, references of official websites and wechat public accounts, and statistical data of village committees of various traditional villages in Tongjiang County, etc. This provides detailed theoretical literature, policy documents and elements of village cultural landscapes and other materials for the systematic study of traditional villages in Tongjiang County, China.

3.2. Data Analysis

Content analysis method is one of the commonly used qualitative research methods in the humanities and social sciences. It refers to a method of interpreting various forms of data information such as written documents or documents, pictures and film and television materials (Krippendorff, 2022). It is a research method for systematically, objectively and quantitatively describing specific communication content (He & Yang, 2012), and is also suitable for converting all qualitative data that can be recorded, preserved and valuable into quantitative research (Xu et al., 2006). This study conducted a detailed interpretation and analysis of the collected qualitative data through the content analysis method.

The first is to sort out and analyze the observation data such as texts, pictures, audio and video collected during the field research. By sorting out the collected village research

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record forms and cultural landscape pictures, the constituent elements of the cultural landscape of traditional villages in Tongjiang County, a series of cultural landscape pictures and the "*Brief Table of Classification and Typical Characteristics of Traditional Villages in Tongjiang County*" were formed. Second, sort out and summarize the collected text data such as village Chronicles, genealogies, and traditional village application forms, and draw corresponding research contents such as the development history of the village and the database of traditional village cultural landscape. By summarizing the data of the 37 traditional villages collected, an analysis was conducted from three aspects: the overview and environment of the villages, the main cultural landscapes of the villages, and the categories of the villages. Eventually, the "*Database of Cultural Landscapes of Traditional Villages in Tongjiang County*" was formed. The main cultural landscapes of the village have been analyzed in detail from aspects such as traditional architecture, historical environmental elements, folk culture, historical and cultural celebrities, natural landscapes and industrial development.

4. Results

Tongjiang County boasts a rich variety of traditional villages, complete agricultural symbols, red revolutionary sites scattered throughout the area, and numerous historical and cultural relics. Through research methods such as field investigation and review of secondary data, the basic profiles and main cultural landscapes of 37 traditional villages in Tongjiang County were collected and sorted out, forming a database of cultural landscapes of traditional villages in Tongjiang County. According to the prominent features of the cultural landscapes of each traditional village, Table 3 classifies the types of traditional villages in Tongjiang County and sorts out typical village representatives, which are mainly classified into five categories: agricultural landscape, traditional architecture, revolutionary relics, humanistic history, and folk customs and religious culture. This will provide a reliable basis for the classified protection, industrial development model and cultural tourism loop construction of traditional villages in Tongjiang County, thereby achieving the overall conservation and sustainable development of the traditional village cultural landscape.

Table 3: Classification and typical characteristics of traditional villages in Tongjiang County

Village Type	Typical Village Representative	Prominent Feature
Agricultural landscape category (9)	Fangshanping Village	Planting, aquaculture, rural tourism
	Qiziding Village	Grain, fruits and vegetables, animal husbandry
	Caomao Village, Xiajia Village	Planting and breeding
	Xianglu Village	The pear garden
	Yujiawan Village, Gaoan Village, Longwangmiao Viilage, Dujiaping Village	Pastoral landscape
Traditional architecture category (10)	Shibanxi Village, Huanshan Village, Yinchun Village, Liyuanba Village, Xuetangshan Village, Dajingba Village, Daying Village, Diping Village, Goujiawan Village, Luming Village	Ancient building group of Ming and Qing dynasties

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Revolutionary relics category (5)	Yonganba Village, Wangping Village, Dehancheng Village, Jiuxianping Village, Luoping Village	Red culture
Humanities and history category (4)	Guningzhai Village	Ancient villages, ancient temples and ancient tombs
	Pusiping Village	Ancient roads and ancient ruins
	Daliangcheng Village	Ancient city ancient bridge ancient library
	Hanlin Village	The former residence of "Three Li"
Folk and religious culture category (7)	Huangcunping Village	Folk culture, religious culture
	Gouhuaping Village, Majiayan Village	Grotto culture
	Longjiabian Village, Naxiba Village, Hongyunya Village	Folk culture
	Baishisi Village	Religious culture, grotto culture

4.1. Agricultural Landscape Category

As Tongjiang County is located in a mountainous and hilly terrain, with distinct four seasons and abundant sunlight, it is very suitable for agricultural production. The traditional villages in Tongjiang County have beautiful natural environments and rich agricultural cultural symbols. They feature various characteristic agricultural landscapes, mainly including traditional agriculture, animal husbandry, and economic crop industrial parks. Take Qiziding Village in Chunzai Town as an example. The village is characterized by traditional agricultural landscapes, natural landscapes of mountains, waters and fields, and ecological fruit and vegetable industries. It has been awarded titles such as "The Third Batch of National Demonstration Villages for Rural Governance", "Provincial Demonstration Village for Rural Governance", and "Provincial Four Good Villages". It is only 3.5 kilometers away from Tongjiang County. It has created a rural tourism project integrating traditional farming culture experience and ecological leisure sightseeing, which is a typical representative of the mountain-water and idyllic villages. Figure 2 shows the kiwi fruit industrial park and wheat planting area of the village, which have formed a large-scale agricultural production landscape.

Figure 2: Traditional village of Qiziding Village, Chunzai Town

a. Kiwi Fruit Industrial Park b. Wheat growing area

Source: Tongjiang County People's Government Website (2021)

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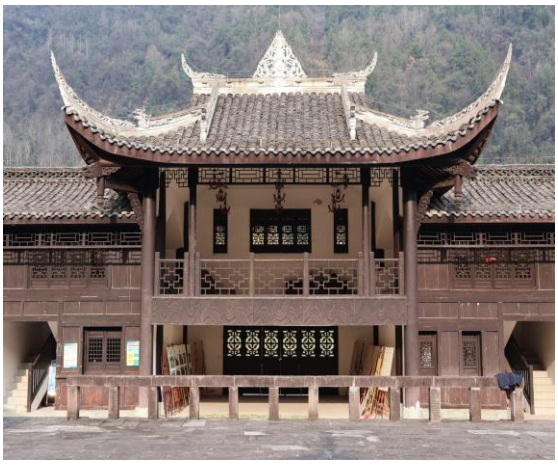
4.2. Traditional Architecture Category

There are many traditional architectural villages in Tongjiang County, most of which belong to the courtyards of ancient buildings from the Ming and Qing Dynasties (Cai & Imang, 2024). They have typical characteristics of the northeastern part of Sichuan Province. Due to the relatively closed geographical environment, they are well-preserved and mainly consist of residences, temples, ancestral halls and opera stages. The architectural decoration and carvings are exquisite and profound in meaning. Take Liyuanba Village in Nixi Town as an example. The village's residential buildings are concentrated and contiguous. There are still 58 sets of *Chuandou* wooden structure courtyards, including 28 sets of Ming and Qing Dynasty buildings and 30 sets of residential buildings from the Republic of China period and the People's Republic of China period. The village follows a gentle slope terrain. Most of the courtyard houses and back rooms are stilt house series, which is rare in the form of large-scale settlements in northeastern Sichuan. Figure 3 shows the well-preserved residential courtyards and theatrical buildings of the village, whose appearance forms and detailed decorations reflect the architectural wisdom of local residents.

Figure 3: Traditional village of Liyuanba Village, Nixi Town

a. Ma Taifu Courtyard



b. Drama Hall

Source: Researcher

4.3. Revolutionary Relics Category

Tongjiang County, as the capital of the Sichuan-Shaanxi Soviet Area, is rich in red cultural resources. Red cultural sites and relics are scattered throughout the county and can be found in most traditional villages, making it a special calling card of traditional villages with revolutionary relics. Take Wangping Village in Shaxi Town as an example. It is a national 4A-level tourist attraction, consisting of the Red Army Martyrs' Cemetery of the Sichuan-Shaanxi Revolutionary Base, the former site cluster of the General Hospital of the Fourth Front Army of the Red Army, Dachengzhai, Wangping New Village and other scenic spots. In 2021, it was selected as one of the first batch of "Tianfu Tourist Famous Villages" and the second batch of national demonstration villages for rural governance. There is one key national cultural relic protection unit in the village. There are two provincial-level cultural relics protection units and one national key memorial building for martyrs. The former site complex of the General Hospital of the Fourth Front Army of the Red Army is distributed among the 17 residential buildings of the late Ming and early Qing dynasties around the cemetery, all of which are three-sided

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courtyards of earth and wood structure. Wangping New Village is known as "the First Village in China's Red Zone". It was initiated in 2011 and a total of 125 sets of residential buildings of the northeastern Sichuan style were completed. It is a model of how red culture contributes to rural revitalization. Figure 4 shows some revolutionary relics of the Red Army Martyrs' Cemetery and the former site of the General Hospital of the Fourth Front Army of the Red Army, which are distributed in the village. The unique red culture has become the spiritual belief of the village.

Figure 4: Traditional village of Wangping Village, Shaxi Town

a. Red Army Martyrs Cemetery

b. Red Army Hospital Former Site

Source: Researcher

4.4. Humanistic and History Category

Tongjiang County has a long history and rich culture. Since the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, it has been culturally advanced and produced many famous people. In the traditional villages, there are numerous cultural and historical relics such as the former residences of famous people, ancient villages, ancient cities, ancient roads, ancient Bridges, ancient libraries and ancient tomb clusters. Take Hanlin Village in Xinglong Town as an example. The "Jinshi Mansion" and "Juren Residence" in this village are rare in Sichuan Province. The "Three Li" culture has been passed down from generation to generation. The "Three Li" former residence (the “Three Li” respectively refer to the three fathers and sons Li Fan, Li Zhongbi and Li Zhong 'e) was first built during the reign of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty and has a history of more than 300 years. It is a three-courtyard quadrangle courtyard covering a total area of 1,564 square meters. With a construction area of 1,210 square meters, Tongjiang County carried out a rescue and renovation project in 2017. It is currently the only relatively well-preserved residence of a historical and cultural figure in Tongjiang County. In 2020, it was announced as a municipal-level cultural relic protection unit (Bazhong City People's Government Website, 2018). The "Three Li" were honest and upright officials, deeply loved by the people, and were also highly talented. The "*Xuehongtang Anthology*" written by the father and son trio is a highly influential masterpiece in Chinese history, leaving behind excellent academic, family, political and literary styles for future generations (Zhao, 2012). Figure 5 shows the main entrance of the former residences of the "Three Li" distributed in the village and the newly-built "Three Li" cultural exhibition hall, which have become the cultural calling card of the village.

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Figure 5: The Former Residence of "Three Li" in Hanlin Village, Xinglong Town

a. Main Entrance b. "Three Li" Cultural Exhibition Hall
Source: Tongjiang County People's Government Website (2021)

4.5. Folk and Religious Culture Category

There are numerous traditional village folk activities in Tongjiang County, which are a fusion of Ba-Shu culture and Central Plains culture. They mainly include folk music such as singing mountain songs, love songs, labor chants, and red ballads, traditional skills like Tongjiang wood carving, stone carving, bamboo weaving, paper-cutting. As well as production customs such as welcoming spring ploughing, protecting young crops, emphasizing horticulture, and praying for a bountiful harvest. Customs of celebrating festivals such as the Spring Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, the Qingming Festival and the Chongyang Festival. The traditional villages of folk culture are represented by Hongyunya Folk Village in Shaxi Town. In 2019, the village transformed the Yan Family Ancestral Hall into the Hongyunya Cultural Courtyard, building a Confucianism museum, a folk custom museum, a village history museum, and Hongyunya Opera. On both sides of the main hall, there are exhibition rooms for Tongjiang bamboo weaving and Tongjiang paper-cutting respectively. It is also a base for the transmission and learning of Sichuan Opera in Tongjiang County. Figure 6 shows the folk style elements of the village entrance and the cultural courtyard of the village. It is a relatively well-preserved folk culture village in Tongjiang County.

Figure 6: Hongyunya Folk Village of Shaxi Town

a. Village Entrance b. Cultural Compound
Source: Researcher

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The traditional villages in Tongjiang County are rich in religious and cultural relics, including various types such as ancient temples, ancient monastic temples, and grottoes. The Bai Ruxi Grottoes in Gouhuaping Village, Guangna Town, are representative. These grottoes were built in the Tang Dynasty and cover an area of 33.23 square meters. They consist of 23 niches and grottoes, 151 statues, 3 inscriptions, 1 pagoda, and 4 inscriptions (Deng et al., 2017), the overall style is a simple and ancient wood-like structure cave shape, which has high cultural relic value. It was listed as a key national cultural relic protection unit of the seventh batch in 2013. Figure 7 shows the niche statues of the Bairuxi Grottoes in Gouhuaping Village. The grotto art is exquisite, and it is an important relic for studying the development of religious culture in Tongjiang County.

Figure 7: Bairuxi Grottoes of Gouhuaping Village, Guangna Town

Source: Bazhong City People's Government Website (2018)

5. Discussion

The ultimate goal of traditional village protection is to achieve sustainable development of village culture, environment and economy (Lu, 2023). The traditional villages in Tongjiang County are rich in characteristic cultural landscape resources. According to the prominent features of the cultural landscapes of traditional villages in this study, they are classified into five categories: agricultural landscape, traditional architecture, revolutionary relics, humanistic history, and folk customs and religious culture. The Tongjiang County Government can combine the characteristic cultural landscape resources and traditional industrial advantages of different types of traditional villages to forge a sustainable development model of concentrated and contiguous areas that conforms to the characteristics of the villages.

It is suggested that the Tongjiang County Government combine the protection of traditional villages with the overall industrial zone division of the county (Tongjiang County People's Government Website, 2021). By optimizing the resource allocation of traditional villages, promoting the integration of village characteristic cultural landscapes and regional industries, and creating concentrated and contiguous protection and utilization zones. Figure 8 presents the concentrated and contiguous layout of the traditional village industry development in Tongjiang County, which can be divided into six major industrial development zones: Fuyang Silver Ear (Edible Fungus) Industry Development Zone, Yong 'an Tiexi Tea and Tourism Integration Development Zone, Shaxi Red Tourism Zone, Hongkou Mountain Ecological Animal Husbandry Development Zone, Tiefo High-quality Grain and Oil Agriculture and Tourism

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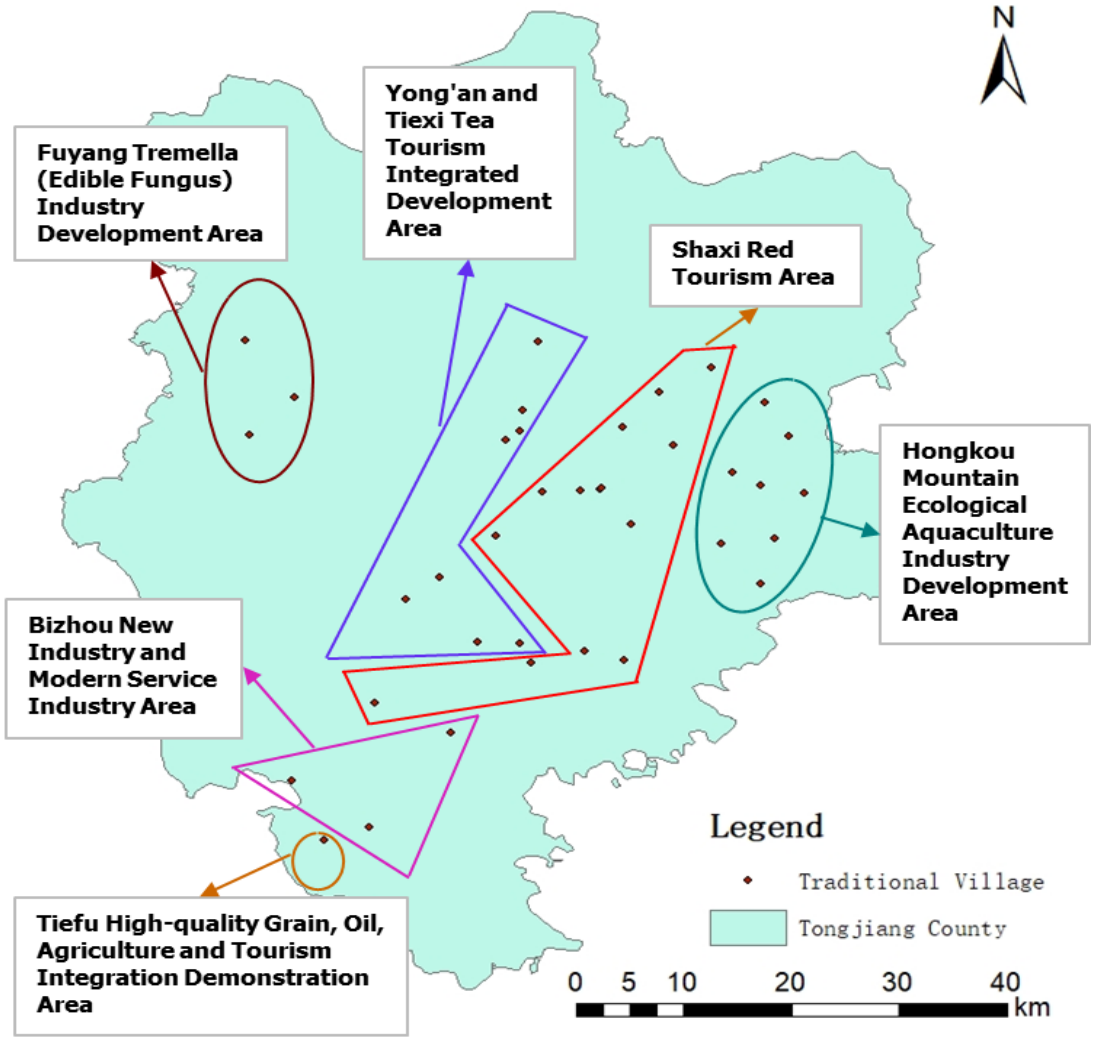
Integration Demonstration Zone, and Bizhou New Industry and Modern Service Industry Zone. Combined with the cultural landscape characteristics of each traditional village, and puts forward suitable suggestions for industrial development models to achieve the revitalization and sustainable development of traditional villages.

Figure 8: Tongjiang County Traditional Villages Industrial Development Centralized Contiguous Planning Map



Source: Researcher

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of this study provide a case reference for the concentrated and contiguous protection of traditional village clusters in counties, further confirming that the cultural landscape of traditional villages is an important component of the revitalization and development of villages and the protection of rural cultural heritage. Studies show that the cultural landscapes of different types of traditional villages are heterogeneous, forming an industrial development model relying on landscape resources. It is necessary to conduct type classification and overall planning for traditional villages.

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Therefore, this study suggests that the relevant government departments of Tongjiang County adopt a model combining the classification of cultural landscape resources with the concentrated and contigualized protection of industries, so as to promote the overall protection and sustainable development of regional traditional village groups. Overall, this study provides empirical references for the classification of traditional village groups in county areas, and offers suggestions and strategies for the activation, utilization and revitalization development of traditional village cultural landscape.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The researchers used the research ethics provided by the Research Ethics Committee of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of Interest.

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