

Challenges of Heritage Management in China: A Case Study of Overplanning in Dimen Village

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Abstract

China has 12 different heritage protection systems, which may result in multiple systems regulating and planning for a single heritage site. This study focuses on Dimen village, which is protected under three different systems, and examines five plans collected during fieldwork in 2019 and 2022 to analyze the varying contents of these protection systems. The findings revealed that distinct value assessment criteria for heritage sites exist across different protection systems, leading to differences in how protection areas are demarcated, key focuses established, and methods of utilization implemented. Furthermore, the study highlights the lack of necessary continuity between previous and subsequent plans within frequent planning cycles, which often results in limited implementation. In addition, this study emphasizes the low level of participation by local residents in the planning process and argues for the improvement of this aspect to ensure the effective implementation and preservation of heritage sites.

Keywords: Heritage protection systems, Village planning, Conservation planning, Sustainable, Heritage value assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

The traditional approach to heritage conservation, as advocated and disseminated by international entities and experts, finds its roots in European philosophy (Jokilehto, 1999). The contemporary concept of heritage management has been disseminated globally, influenced by colonial legacies and the efforts of international organizations. Throughout this process, issues in heritage management have continuously emerged, leading UNESCO to re-examine its strategies and implement new concepts. The concept of heritage has been progressively broadened, from the understanding of heritage in the 1972 Convention to include cultural landscapes in 1992.

Practices in Asia, such as the tradition of reconstructing the Ise Shrine in Japan, have provided momentum for adopting the Nara Convention and the Nara Document on Authenticity (Stovel, 2008). The community-based heritage management approach in the villages of Ladakh, India, also goes beyond the traditional emphasis on history and materiality, placing greater importance on landscape features and their local significance (Chapagain, 2013). Asian cultural heritage is deeply influenced by philosophies and religious beliefs that place greater value on intangible elements rather than tangible ones. As a result, the perspective on cultural heritage in Asia often leads to a focus on preserving intangible heritages and sacred places, rather than on the conservation of urban architectural landscapes (Howe & Logan, 2002).

The heritage management in China follows a similar approach. Since 2012, traditional villages have been protected as gathering places for the traditional cultures of different ethnic groups and regions (Note 1). As of 2022, 6,819 villages have been identified as traditional villages in China (Note 2). However, rapid modernization, urbanization, and new rural construction in China have resulted in the reduction or disappearance of the most marginalized part of the heritage protection system.

Although a traditional village protection policy was established, the large-scale and high-intensity intervention brought about by a large amount of support funds made the fragile natural and cultural ecology even more

precarious (Hua, 2015, p. 51). Thus, discussions regarding the protection and utilization of traditional villages have continued. According to a review paper on the study of traditional villages in 2021, the research on traditional villages has gradually evolved from the investigation of specific aspects, such as architectural forms and village layouts in the villages to multidisciplinary participation, focusing on village protection, utilization, urbanization, and other multi-angle studies (Huijun, 2021, pp. 150-152).

Currently, there are 12 natural and cultural heritage protection systems in China (Yaohua, 2014). As rural cultural landscapes, villages have both tangible and visible cultural forms (such as architecture and traditional clothing) and intangible cultural characteristics (such as community culture, festivals, and performances). As the cornerstone of village survival, natural resources, such as farmland and forests, have the same important status as cultural resources. Therefore, traditional villages in China are subject to regulations from multiple heritage protection systems.

This study focuses on Dimen village, a traditional village of the Dong nationality in Guizhou Province, China, that is protected under three different heritage protection systems as the research object. By analyzing three plans collected during fieldwork in 2022, this study provides insights into the varying contents of these protection systems and their impact on the preservation and utilization of heritage sites. Our findings contribute to a better understanding of heritage management in China and offer suggestions for improving the preservation and utilization of heritage sites.

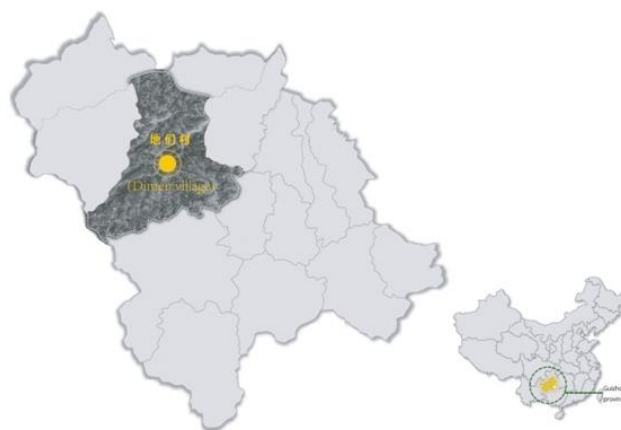


Figure 1. Dimen village's location

1.2 Dimen Village

Dimen Village is located in southwest China and has a mountainous terrain. According to local history and ancient folk songs, the ancestors of Dimen migrated to Dimen around the time of the Song Dynasty (1224-1264) (Note 3). It consists of five natural villages: Mangzhai (芒寨), Muzhai (母寨), Mozhai (模寨), Yinzhai (寅寨), and Weizhai (维寨), all of which are of Dong ethnicity.

The resident population of the village is 2,581 and the villagers' per capita annual income is 3,450 yuan (Note 4). The Dimen Dong Humanities Eco-Museum, based on the Dong cultural community, was China's first privately run eco-museum.

Dimen Village is characterized by both its spatial layout and architectural style, which are distinctly Dong. The culture of Dong has been well-preserved. Dimen Village is situated on a platform at the mountain base. This location is a typical example of the Dong minority architecture, situated at the foot of the mountains with buildings constructed following the traditional terraced step-by-step design (Hua, S.,2013). Thus, agriculture and forestry were the main industries in Dimen.

The Dimen river (also known as Qiansan river) runs through the village and its surrounding terraced fields, providing a year-round abundant water source. Most residents build their homes in accordance with the topography, facing the water and backed by mountains. The wooden stilt house with a tiled roof is the typical architecture in Dimen. These architectural elements, in conjunction with the water system, farmlands, and surrounding forests, together create a unique village landscape (Note 2).

In 1995, this village was selected as a scenic spot and the birthplace of Dong drama when the Guizhou provincial government approved the establishment of the Liping Dong ethnic provincial scenic and historic area, which was

listed as the fifth batch of national scenic and historic areas by the State Council in 2004. Subsequently, Dimen village was selected as a traditional village in 2012 and as a famous historical and cultural village in 2014. This study compares these three systems for settlements.

2. Method

The research employs a combination of literature research and comparative analysis as its methodology.

Literature Research: Literature research involved the collection of three protection plans in 2022.

The plan related to the Scenic Area is “*The General Plan of Liping Dong Ethnic Scenic and Historic Area*”. The plan was published by the private urban planning company and Dimen village is included in the seven scenic areas in Liping County. The plan for historical and cultural villages is “*The Protection of Dimen Famous Historical and Cultural Village in Liping, Guizhou*”. It is issued by Huachengboyuan Engineering Technology Group, a private development company, and covers only the Dimen village.

The plan for traditional villages is “*The Protection and Utilization Plan of ‘Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong’ Traditional Village Cluster*”. It is also issued by private company and covers three villages including Dimen Village.

The context can be divided into two parts: conservation and utilization.

To facilitate conservation efforts, this study identified the constituent elements of Dimen village through three plans. A comparison of these factors will reveal the characteristics of each system.

Comparative analysis of cultural elements: After analyzing the contents of the three plans, this study conducted a comparative analysis between the cultural elements identified in the plans. The aim was to examine the situation and relationship between the villagers and these cultural elements.

By leveraging this methodological framework, the research endeavors to pinpoint the difficulties encountered in the preservation of village cultural landscapes and aims to foster a harmonious balance between preservation and modern developmental needs

3. Legal Basis for Planning and the Legal Status of Each Plan

3.1 Famous Historical and Cultural Village

Famous Historical and Cultural Village is part of the Chinese conservation system of Historic Towns (Villages). This system has allowed China’s cultural heritage protection to evolve from “point” to “area”. The Famous historical and cultural village specifically targets villages in Basic level autonomy, aiming to safeguard these communities as vital custodians of cultural heritage (Feng, 2013, pp. 373-382).

The Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics divides immovable cultural heritage into three levels: cultural relics protection units, historic cultural districts, and historic cultural cities.

Famous Historical and Cultural Villages and Towns belong to second-level historic cultural districts. The protection of historic cultural villages encompasses not only architectures designated as ‘cultural relics protection units’ but also other traditional structures such as roads, ponds, wells, and environmental elements (Jinghui, 2010, pp. 44-49).

Cultural relics protection units are protected under the requirements of *the Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics*. However, famous historical and cultural villages should follow the “*Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns, and Villages*” and “*Requirements for the Preparation of Protection Planning for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages (for Trial Implementation)*.”

The protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020) was commissioned by the Liping County Government and developed by the Huacheng Boyuan Engineering Technology Group Co., Ltd. The planning team comprised engineers and registered architects, with participation from officials from the Guizhou Provincial Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the Qiandongnan Prefecture Bureau of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, and the Liping County Bureau of Housing and Urban-Rural Development.

3.2 Traditional Village

Compared to the Historic Towns (Villages) system included within *the Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics*, the concept of traditional villages is administrative in nature and has not been incorporated into the legal system. In the evaluation and recognition process, traditional villages are a broader concept than historical and cultural famous villages. (Hu, Chen, 2014, pp10-13) The aim of the traditional

village directory is to preserve as much of the cultural heritage of ancient villages as possible, retaining the essence of agrarian civilization.

Table 1. Data of three plans

Heritage system	Legal status	Plan Title Author	Objects
Famous historical and cultural village	Requirements for the Preparation of Protection Planning for Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages (for Trial Implementation)	the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035) Huachengboyuan Engineering Technology Group	Dimen village
Traditional village	Notice of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on the Issuance of Basic Requirements for the Preparation of Traditional Villages Protection and Development Planning (for Trial Implementation)	the protection and utilization plan of ‘Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong’ traditional village cluster Rockcheck Xinzhi Natural Sciences Institute	Dimen village, Dengcen village, Ladong village
National Scenic and historic area	1)The General Planning of Scenic and historic area(2018) 2)The Detailed Planning of Scenic and historic area(2018)	the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035) Nantong Urban Planning & Design Institute CO.LTD.	Zhaoxin—Diping, Bazhai—Jiuchao, Yanhu—Koujiang, Tianshengqiao—Bazhouhe, Liping Qiaojie Ancient Architecture Scenic Group, Shangchong, Hongzhou

The protection and utilization plan of “Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong” traditional village cluster, designed by Rockcheck Xinzhi Natural Sciences Institute, aims to transform the “Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong” traditional village cluster into a demonstration project for traditional villages. This plan differs from other two plans in that, while it proposes protection, it also suggests economic development initiatives for traditional villages. The planning should adhere to the “Notice of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on the Issuance of Basic Requirements for the Preparation of Traditional Villages Protection and Development Planning (for Trial Implementation).”

All planning should be subject to the framework of *the China Urban and Rural Planning Law* in the process of formulation and should refer to *the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Environmental Protection, the Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics* and *the Forest Law of the People’s Republic of China* (Ha & Yafang, 2020).

3.3 Scenic and Historic Areas

The Scenic and Historic Area is one of the three major heritage conservation systems in China, encompassing both natural and cultural resources within its region (Jia, 2012, pp. 11-15). Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area, established as a national-level scenic area, is based on the pristine natural environment and well-preserved Dong ethnic villages, with a focus on the rich Dong ethnic folk culture. Dimen Village, as the birthplace of Dong drama, is included within this area.

The general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035) was organized by the Guizhou Forestry Bureau and the Management Office of the Liping Dong Ethnic Scenic and Historic Area, with the specific planning undertaken by the Nantong City Planning and Design Institute Co., Ltd. This plan covers seven Dong ethnic regions, including Dimen Village, and determines the planning content from several aspects, including landscape resource sorting, protection planning, tourism planning, and resident management within the region.

4. Results

This study began with a cross-sectional comparison of three plans. All three plans designed the future direction of Dimen village from the perspectives of both conservation and utilization.

Planning first identified the villages' value elements and proposed corresponding conservation solutions. This suggests utilization, based on the survey results. The plans focused on two main aspects: Conservation and Utilization.

4.1 Differences in Zoning and Regulation

4.1.1 Overall Comparison of Zones

Figure 3 integrates the protective boundaries of Dimen Village as delineated by the three different plans. *The protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster* delineated Dimen's land into two categories: the traditional cultural protection zone and the traditional cultural construction control zone.

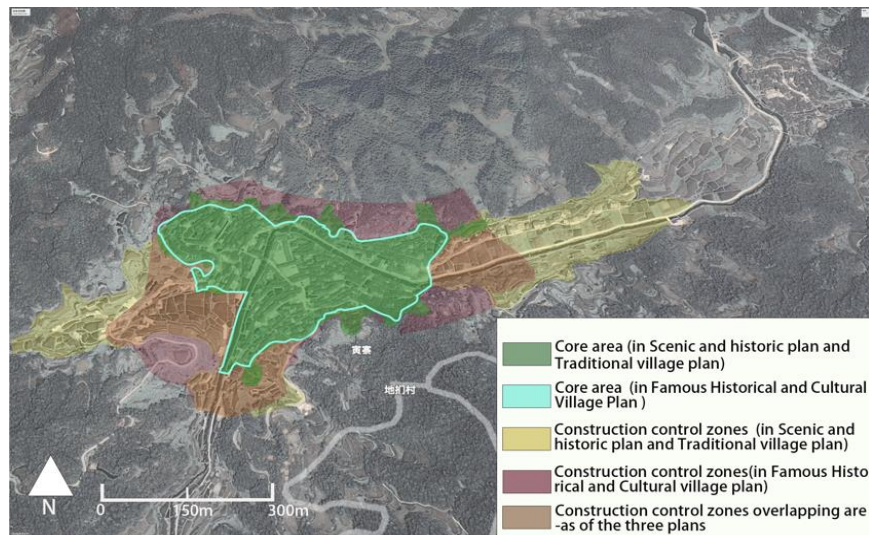


Figure 2. Zoning of three plans

The traditional cultural protection area coincides with the primary protection zone of Dimen Village, as defined by *the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)*. Similarly, the traditional cultural construction control zone aligns with its secondary protection zone. Since *the protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster* does not record specific protection requirements, it's challenging to compare whether its requirements for the same area align with national scenic and historic area. However, *the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)* stipulates that "traditional villages within the area should be protected according to the core protection area requirements of traditional villages" (Note 8). It can be inferred that, despite the absence of explicit details in *the protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster*, the requirements of the National Scenic and Historic area should be consistent with it.

4.1.2 General Plan of Liping Dong Ethnic Scenic and Historic Area

In *the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)*, the primary protection zone, also known as the core scenic area, is strictly off-limits for construction. Within this zone, the architectural integrity of traditional villages must be preserved, with no unauthorized demolitions or renovations permitted, and all activities should adhere to the traditional cultural protection zone standards (Note 8).

The secondary protection zone is stringently regulated for construction. This area emphasizes the preservation of geological features and water quality. Tourist capacities are controlled, and unrelated construction activities are restricted. The plans should guide and limit residents' activities to preserve the traditional charm of the area (Note 8).

Areas not covered by the protection and utilization plan of the 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster are designated as the tertiary zone, where construction activities are controlled. Detailed planning is required to guide construction activities within this zone.

Table 2. Zoning and requirement of each plan in Dimen

Title	Zoning	Require
The protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035)	Core protection areas	Classified the area's buildings into four categories, each category has distinct protection standards
	Construction control zones	Cultural preservation
	Environmental coordination zones	natural landscape
The protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster	The traditional cultural protection zone	-
	The traditional cultural construction control zone	-
The general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)	Primary	Strictly off-limits for construction
	Secondary	Stringently regulated for construction
	Tertiary	Designated for controlled construction activities

4.1.3 The Protection of Dimen Famous Historical and Cultural Village in Liping, Guizhou

The protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035) categorizes Dimen Village's protection range into core protection areas, construction control zones, and environmental coordination zones.

Within the core protection areas, buildings are classified into four categories: cultural relic protection units, recommended historical buildings, traditional architectural buildings, and other buildings. Each category has distinct protection standards.

Cultural relic protection units strictly adhere to the '*Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China*' and '*Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages*'.

The protection and improvement of recommended historical buildings are solely based on the '*Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns, and Villages*'.

Traditional architectural buildings are maintained, refurbished, and regulated without altering their external appearance. Other buildings are categorized based on their impact on local aesthetics, with specific requirements for preservation, renovation, or transformation.

The construction control zone emphasizes cultural preservation. New or renovated buildings, streets, and spatial environments in this area should continue the traditional aesthetic. Architectural designs should reflect Dimen Village's traditional residential characteristics, ensuring a harmonious and unified appearance.

The environmental coordination zone focuses on the natural landscape surrounding Dimen Village. It aims to maintain the cohesive aesthetic between the natural environment and the historical architectural cluster of Dimen Village, ensuring the continuity and environmental harmony of the mountainous Dong ethnic ancient village.

4.1.4 The Protection of Dimen Famous Historical and Cultural Village in Liping, Guizhou

Compared to the other two plans, *the Dimen famous historical and cultural village protection plan (2020-2035)* encompasses a narrower range of structures within its core protection areas.

The core areas defined in the traditional village plan and Scenic and Historic plans encompass a broader range of village structures compared to the Famous Historical and Cultural Village plan.

In the secondary protection zone, the protection boundaries are based on the village's natural contours. In contrast, the the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035) using four specific landmarks to decide the range of Construction control zones: the northern mountain of the Mu Village, the southern mountain of the Wei Village, the Ladong Road, and the eastern side of the Dimen Eco-Museum. This distinction, one using a mountainous reference and the other relying on the village's outline, results in significant variations in the construction control zones across the three plans. The two plans that use the village's outline as a reference cover more residential buildings than the famous historical and cultural village plan. In other words, areas eligible for renovation under the Famous Historical and Cultural Village plan are deemed strictly off-limits for construction in the traditional village and scenic and historic area plans.

4.2 Conservation

4.2.1 Element Identification in Dimen

This study analyzed the three plans, systematically categorizing and summarizing the elements within Dimen village that were highlighted for conservation and utilization. The results can be divided into three categories: natural elements, cultural elements, and others. Cultural elements can be further divided into tangible and intangible heritage.

As a typical Dong village, Dimen has a river in front and mountains behind it. Natural elements have received particular attention as essential components of village landscape protection.

Table 3. Natural elements in Dimen

	the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035)	the protection and utilization plan of ‘Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong’ traditional village cluster	the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)
Dimen river	○	○	
Forest		○	
Farmland	○	○	
Mountains	○		

Among the three plans, the scenic and historic area plan covers a more extensive region, resulting in less detailed references to Dimen village compared to the other two plans (Table 3).

In terms of natural elements, the scenic and historic area plan does not mention the natural environmental elements of Dimen village. In the other two plans, the Dimen River, which runs through the village, is deemed highly significant in both the famous historical and cultural village plan and the traditional village plan. The famous historical and cultural village plan views the Dimen River as a crucial channel for floodwaters in Dimen village and as one of the essential landscape elements. At the same time, the traditional village plan emphasizes the river as a vital water source for Dimen village, suggesting the establishment of river channel management for the Dimen River. Regarding forests, the traditional village plan recommends creating archives for ancient trees to facilitate better management and protection.

Both plans recognize farmland as a critical element. They believe that the farmland is an important part of the Dimen village landscape, and that the existing agricultural mode should be maintained to preserve the current agricultural scenery.

Besides the river and farmland, the famous historical and cultural village plan considers the surrounding mountains and waters as defining characteristics of the Dong ethnic village. Therefore, the mountains, as significant natural elements, should also be protected, a point not mentioned in the traditional village plan. The traditional village plan describes that ancient trees in Dimen village should be documented and protected.

Cultural elements can be summarized into two categories: tangible and intangible.

4.2.2 Tangible Element

The tangible culture is dominated by traditional Dong architecture, of which all the plans consider the rice barn group and the 萨坛 (a shrine for Dong minorities’ Goddess) as important constituent elements of the village of Dimen. Except for the scenic and historic area plan, all the other four plans consider the wind and rain bridge (风雨桥), drum tower (鼓楼), outdoor theater (戏台), pavilion (凉亭), ancient well (古井), village gate (寨门), kafang (卡房), Satan (萨坛), mother village drum tower (母寨鼓楼), and seven main historical streets in the village as critical constituent elements. The Tangong Ancestral Hall (塘公祠) and the Altar of Earth and Harvests (社稷坛) are considered important cultural elements of Dimen by the local faith tradition plan, underscoring their significance.

At the same time, the protection and utilization plan of ‘Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong’ traditional village cluster recognizes that some of the buildings constructed after 1949 also hold preservation value. It suggests that in addition to the traditional Dong ethnic public buildings, other structures such as old schools, former village committees, and unused old buildings of the village committee should be transformed into village history museums or exhibition halls.

Table 4. Tangible culture elements in Dimen

	the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035)	the protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster	the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)
Wind and rain bridge	○	○	
Drum tower	○	○	
Outdoor theater	○	○	
Pavilion	○	○	
Ancient well	○	○	
Village gate	○	○	
Rice barn	○	○	○
Kafang	○	○	
Satan	○	○	○
Mother village drum tower	○	○	
Historical streets	○	○	
Tanggong ancestral hall		○	
Altar of Earth and Harvests		○	
Building after 1949		○	

4.2.3 Intangible Element

The identification of intangible culture can be divided into six areas: Festivals; Handicrafts; Local legends; Performance; Religions; Dong culture, with a total of 18 items.

Among the three plans, the traditional village plan covers the most intangible cultural heritage elements. 18 intangible cultural heritage elements mentioned across the three plans, the traditional village plan suggests protecting 15 of them. The famous historical and cultural village plan suggests protecting 8 of them, while the scenic and historic area plan suggests protecting 4 elements.

Table 5. Intangible culture elements in Dimen

	the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035)	the protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster	the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)
Festival	Three Thousand Dimen Festival	○	○
	June 6 Festival	○	○
	October 10 Festival		○
Handicraft	Indigo dyeing	○	
	Traditional papermaking	○	○
	Dong embroidery		○
	Dong wooden construction techniques		○
	Local cuisine		○
	Bamboo and rattan weaving		○
	Herbal tea		○
Local legend	○		
Performance	the Grand song	○	○
	Dong drama	○	○
	Dong biwa		○
	Yueye (Singing parties)		○
Religion	○		
Others	Dong costume	○	
	Dong medicine		○

All three plans recognize three intangible cultural heritage elements as deserving of protection. There are: Three Thousand Dimen Festival (Festival), the Grand song (Performance), Dong drama (Performance).

In terms of festivals, the Three Thousand Dimen Festival is unique to Dimen. It is recognized as a provincial-level intangible cultural heritage of Dimen village and is highlighted as a vital element in all the plans.

The June 6 Festival is not a traditional festival for the Dong minority. This festival originates from the Han ethnic group's traditional celebration, also known as the Double Sixth Festival or Tian Gong Festival(天贶节). However, Dimen village has always regarded June 6 as a festival of their own ethnicity. (Note 5) As a result, both the famous historical and cultural village plan and traditional village plan consider this festival as a cultural element that should be protected.

The October 10 Festival, also known as the Pingan Festival, is a Dong ethnic festival praying for favorable weather, a bountiful harvest, and peaceful days. People will play Dong drama, bullfighting, and lushing to celebrate the day (Note 5). The traditional village plan believes that this intangible cultural heritage should be protected.

Regarding handicrafts, the Scenic and Historic Area Plan mentions the protection of Dimen's traditional paper-making technique. The famous historical and cultural village plan also believes that this technique should be protected.

Additionally, the indigo dyeing craft has been recognized by both the famous historical and cultural village plan and the traditional village plan as something that should be preserved.

The traditional village plan provided the most extensive identification of Dimen's handicrafts, including Dong embroidery, Dong wooden construction techniques, local cuisine, bamboo and rattan weaving, and herbal tea.

Two plans consider indigo dyeing an important cultural element of the Dimen people.

Although the famous historical and cultural village plan identify fewer intangible cultural heritage elements, this type of plan is the only one that considers local legends as essential cultural elements of Dimen village.

This difference can be explained by the recognition criteria for famous historical, cultural, and traditional villages. The protection system for such villages emphasizes the description of recorded history and cultural values in declaration and recognition (Note 6). In contrast, when identifying a traditional village, the scarcity, richness, continuity, scale, inheritors, vitality of the intangible cultural heritage, and its dependence on the surrounding environment are all crucial factors in determining the value of the traditional village. For this reason, the Traditional Village Plan also involves a more comprehensive recognition and protection of intangible cultural heritage (Note 7).

In terms of performance, the Dong Grand Song is a World Intangible Cultural Heritage, while the Dong Drama is a National Intangible Cultural Heritage. Therefore, both intangible heritage elements are covered in all three plans. The Traditional Village Plan further includes the Dong Pipa Song and Yueye, two additional performance forms.

Regarding religious beliefs, although all three plans have protected the Satan, which represents the Dong's "Sa" religious belief, in terms of tangible elements, the intangible heritage elements did not mention the Sa belief. Only the Famous historical and cultural village plan mentioned the need to protect and restore the original intangible cultural space carriers of Dimen village, aiming to protect and restore the traditional belief system of Dimen village (Note 7).

4.3 Utilization

Beyond preservation, utilization is also a crucial aspect of all three plans. The methods proposed in the three plans for the utilization of Dimen village can be categorized into three types: 1) intangible cultural heritage protection and display, 2) government and business cooperation for building village brands, 3) cultural reuse availability.

4.3.1 Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Display

The general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035), recognizing Dimen as the birthplace of Dong drama, selects significant sites like the Three Thousand Dimen Festival, traditional paper-making techniques, outdoor theater, rice barn, and the tomb of Wu Wencai (the founder of Dong drama), as major tourist attractions in Dimen. It establishes five related tourist routes to enhance cultural displays and improve visitor experiences.

Building on the scenic and historic area plan, the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035) proposes a scheme for the protection and display of intangible cultural heritage. It emphasizes preserving physical spaces associated with intangible heritage, such as Tanggong ancestral hall and Satan, to continue traditional festivals in Dimen. Performance venues like outdoor theater are protected to maintain the Grand song and Dong dramas, characteristic of Dong culture.

The plan includes printing brochures and organizing the Grand song and Dong dramas competitions to increase villagers' awareness of their culture, thereby encouraging their active participation in the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. The government fosters inheritors of intangible cultural heritage through scholarships and supports cultural performance competitions to identify and reward talented folk artists. This approach aims to inspire villagers to learn and engage with the Grand song and Dong dramas.

For traditional architecture, the primary method of preservation is to maintain the original state, allowing the Dong ethnic culture and lifestyle to be showcased authentically.

4.3.2 Government and Business Cooperation for Building Village Brands.

The protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster was primarily developed by a research institute affiliated with a corporation, hence proposing Dimen Village as a model to explore new collaborative approaches between local governments and businesses for the protection of traditional villages.

The plan focuses on rural innovation and entrepreneurship, customization of local ingredients, processing of specialty agricultural products, and the development of distinctive industries in Dimen Village, aiming to advance both the primary and secondary sectors of the village's economy.

The rural innovation and entrepreneurship program, organized by the corporation's public welfare group, provides guidance and training for villagers to encourage local entrepreneurship. The local ingredient customization initiative connects urban families with rural households, allowing city dwellers to order their own exclusive ingredients, thereby supporting the cultivation of tea, fruits, vegetables, and spices on family farms.

The specialty agricultural product processing aims to develop deep processing industries for Dimen food products such as traditional Chinese herbs, traditional brewing, rice, camellia oil, and tea. Additionally, it fosters industries like medicinal herb cultivation and wooden furniture manufacturing.

The tertiary sector revolves around Dimen Village's Eco-Museum, focusing on developing unique tourism industries like rural study programs and camping experiences.

4.3.3 Cultural Reuse Availability

In addition to the direction of government-enterprise cooperation in traditional village plan, the proposal also suggests leveraging Dimen's unique cultural aspects. This includes learning and using local traditional medicine by developing Dong ethnic medical and herbal medicine centers. It also involves forming the Grand Song and Dong Drama troupes, as well as utilizing vacant village houses to establish 'Dong Ethnic Traditional Handicraft Exhibition Centers' and consignment shops. These centers would not only showcase Dong embroidery, costumes, handmade paper, and musical instruments but also provide a platform for villagers to sell their handmade products.

The plan additionally suggests establishing the "Dong's Rice-Fish-Duck System Agricultural Exhibition Area" on existing farmlands. This initiative involves reviving traditional cattle pens and waterwheel irrigation systems to illustrate age-old agricultural methods. The objective is to effectively highlight Dimen's rich rice cultivation heritage through these authentic demonstrations.

Table 6. Utilization of 3 plans in Dimen

Heritage system	Title	Utilization
Famous historical and cultural village	the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035)	Preserving physical spaces, nurturing talent, and safeguarding traditional festivals.
Traditional village	the protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster	Dimen should be used as an exploration area for the development path of traditional Chinese villages.
National Scenic and historic area	the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035)	As the birthplace of Dong drama, five related tourist attractions and corresponding travel routes are developed.

5. Discussion

Upon reviewing the three distinct planning documents, it becomes clear that each plan has distinct emphases on the cultural value recognition and conservation priorities for Dimen village.

All three plans approach Dimen village from both cultural and natural perspectives, identifying the village's overall environmental and cultural values and establishing conservation strategies.

In this process, the unique focus of each plan becomes apparent. Firstly, the general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035), encompassing a broader region, primarily targets the village's elements that are already recognized as cultural heritages, such as the cultural heritage site Rice barn, the World Heritage Grand song, and the National Heritage Dong drama, or those with strong local characteristics (e.g., the Dimen Three Thousand Dimen Festival).

In contrast, the protection of Dimen famous historical and cultural village in Liping, Guizhou (2020-2035) and the protection and utilization plan of 'Dimen-Dengcen-Ladong' traditional village cluster offer a more comprehensive assessment, covering all aspects of Dimen village. The famous historical and cultural village plan pay more attention to the preservation and unification of architecture and village landscapes. The traditional village plan emphasizes maintaining and utilizing the current status, as well as inheriting and conserving intangible cultural heritage.

The three plans exhibit elements of mutual reference. Traditional villages within the scenic and historic area are required to adhere to the protective scope and requirements outlined in the traditional village plan. The historical and cultural village plan takes cues from the scenic and historic area's utilization strategies, further developing its own utilization plans. As registered heritage sites, cultural relic protection units are safeguarded under the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics, and all three plans are required to comply with this law.

However, there are contradictions among the plans. For instance, the historical and cultural village plan designates a larger core area. This leads to residential buildings, not considered core in the scenic and historic area and traditional village plans, being subject to stricter protection requirements under the historical cultural village plan.

Despite all three plans being crafted by professional teams or companies, there is a noticeable absence of local community involvement. Each plan adopts a government-led perspective, detailing actions to be undertaken by the government, such as infrastructure development, traditional architecture preservation, and organizing Dong drama competitions funded by the government to enhance villagers' awareness of their culture. In these plans, villagers are seen more as subjects to be mobilized and managed, rather than active participants.

This lack of community inclusion and involvement in the planning process can lead to conflicts when government management interferes with the daily life and development of the villagers, potentially causing resentment towards the heritage management system. Additionally, the absence of a spontaneous protective awareness among the villagers can make the implementation and sustainability of the protective measures outlined in the plans challenging.

In conclusion, under different conservation systems, the focus and methods of protection for the same location vary. In the case of Dimen Village, three heritage systems have extracted elements of the village from perspectives of natural, tangible, and intangible heritage, and made corresponding conservation plans. These plans clearly show the different emphasis on the village's values under different heritage systems, and the resulting approaches to conservation and utilization.

These insights contribute to a better understanding of heritage management in China and offer suggestions for improving the preservation and utilization of heritage sites. This study suggests that the plans are likely to remain superficial and difficult to implement without making residents aware of the value and significance of protecting their village. Involving them as stakeholders in the planning process is crucial. Therefore, the next step in this study is to explore the extent of resident participation in the planning process as a critical area for future research.

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Notes

- Note 1. Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Ministry of Culture, State Administration of Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Finance Notice on the survey of traditional villages. http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2012-04/24/content_2121340.html (Accessed on 2023.3.1)
- Note 2. Traditional Chinese village digital museum: <https://www.dmctv.cn> (Accessed on 2023.3.2)
- Note 3. The Protection and Development of Dimen -- Dengcen Traditional Village (2014), Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning & Design Institute CO.LTD., Unpublished, vol. 3, p. 3. Collected from 2019.
- Note 4. Dimen village in Traditional Chinese village digital museum: <https://main.dmctv.com.cn/villages/52263120404/Index.html>(Accessed on 2023.3.2)
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- Note 6. Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns, and Villages, article 8: <http://www.lawinfochina.com/display.aspx?lib=law&id=6792&CGid=&EncodingName=big5> (Accessed on 2023.3.2)
- Note 7. Evaluation and Identification Indicator System for Traditional Villages (Trial Version) https://www.mohurd.gov.cn/gongkai/zhengce/zhengcefilelib/201208/20120831_211267.html
- Note 8. The general plan of Liping Dong ethnic scenic and historic area (2019-2035), pp. 45-49.

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