

Strategies for Shaping the Cultural Landscape Image of Niufu Ancient Town in Zigong City

-- A Case Study of the Landscape Design of the Niufu Town Yidu Cultural Square in Zigong City

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Abstract: Niufu Ancient Town in Zigong City, Sichuan Province, has a rich history. Originally known as Gaoshi during the Song Dynasty, it was later named Niufu Town due to the Niufu Ferry during the early Ming Dynasty. The town has a profound cultural heritage, and its Yidu culture and spirit are indispensable spiritual legacies. This culture is an important element in the historical trajectory of the town and a significant part of Niufu's cultural identity. The landscape of Yidu plays a crucial role in shaping the image of Niufu, contributing to the town's development, beautifying the city, and enhancing the cultural taste and heritage of its residents. In the context of shaping the image of Niufu Ancient Town, Yidu landscape design should adhere to principles such as regional uniqueness, cultural integrity, and humanization.

Keywords: Yidu Culture; Image Shaping; Principles.

1. The Status and Situation of Yidu Culture in Niufu

Niufu Town in Daxian District, Zigong City, is strategically located, adjacent to Neijiang City, Longchang City to the east, Fushun County to the south, and intersecting with Xindian

Town and Heshi Town to the west, with Maoba Town to the north. Due to its unique location near the Tuojian River, Niufu Town has historically been a crucial transportation hub for both water and land trade, serving as a convergence point for the salt and sugar trade. This has led to the prosperity of Niufu as a well-known trading market.

Table 1. Preservation of Cultural Relics in Niufu Ancient Town Image source: Compiled from "Niufu Town Chronicles" and "Niufu Town History" materials

Niufu Ancient Town Protected Cultural Relics			
	Name	Time	Protection level
Stele carvings and statues	Niuwang Mountain Cliff Carvings	Qing Guangxu (1885)	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009
	Da Yan Dong Stone Stele	In the 29th year of the Qianlong reign of the Qing Dynasty (1764)	
	Leigongyan Cliff Statue	The Ming dynasty	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009
	High Pier Cliff Carvings		
	Jinzishan Cliff Carvings	Ming Dynasty Jinshi Jin Wu	
build	Guanyin Temple	Originating from the Song Dynasty and built in the 1980s	
	Wangye Temple	the Qing dynasty	Listed as a key protected cultural relic in Zigong City in 2009
	Yu Wang Palace	In the eleventh year of the Kangxi reign of the Qing Dynasty (1672)	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009
	Nanhua Palace	In the 31st year of the Guangxu reign of the Qing Dynasty (1905)	
	Wanshou Palace	Late Qing Dynasty	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Sichuan Province in 2012
	Yixinghao	Qing Guangxu (1875)	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009
	Zhonghe Hao	Qing Dynasty (1921)	Listed as a key protected cultural relic in Zigong City in 2009 Listed as a protected cultural relic in Sichuan Province in 2012
	He Letang	Qing Kangxi	Listed as a key protected cultural relic in Zigong City in 2009 Listed as a protected cultural relic in Sichuan Province in 2012
	Liao Gongguan	Nineteen Thirty-one	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009
	Liao's Manor	At the beginning of the Republic of China	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009
	Zhang's Ancestral Hall	Qing Dynasty	Listed as a protected cultural relic in Da'an District in 2009

Niufo Town is easily accessible, with distances of approximately 30 kilometers to Zigong City, Neijiang City, Fushun County, and Longchang City, and just an hour and a half drive from Luzhou Yunlong Airport. The construction of the Niufo Tuojian River Second Bridge has made significant contributions to tourism, industry, and agriculture in Niufo Town, connecting to surrounding highways and radiating to provinces and cities such as Chongqing and Chengdu. The convenience of high-speed rail and highways has reduced travel time for visitors.

Niufo Ancient Town boasts a unique geographical setting with distant mountain peaks, rich vegetation, and a charming Ming and Qing dynasty old town juxtaposed with the surrounding landscape. The town's cultural atmosphere, quaint Ming and Qing old streets, green ecological environment, and rural scenery create a harmonious blend.

In terms of cultural landscape resources within Niufo Town, there is an abundance of resources. These include traditional Ming and Qing residential buildings from South Sichuan, a rich variety of intangible cultural heritage such as dragon boat races, dragon lantern dances, and Sichuan opera. Among these, the most distinctive is the Yidu culture of Niufo, locally known as Niuferdu, which not only gave Niufo its name but also contributed to its development. Yidu embodies a sense of justice and loyalty and is an excellent example of Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, utilizing Yidu culture as an element in the landscape design of Niufo Town plays a vital role in presenting the generosity, justice, and loyalty characteristic of Niufo and in enhancing the town's cultural image.

2. The Role of Yidu Cultural Square Landscape in Image Shaping

The term "Yidu" refers to an act of public welfare that transcends material gain, and "Yidu Ferry" refers to a ferry service that carries people and goods across the river without charging a fee. Niufo Ancient Town, commonly known as Niuferdu, owes its existence to Yidu. According to "Niufo Town Chronicles," Yidu in Niufo originated during the Qing Qianlong period. It was funded by salt merchants from Zigong with the aim of serving the public by providing a low-cost ferry service across the river. This act embodies values such as selflessness, a sense of justice, trustworthiness, and benefiting society, which are not only local virtues but also national virtues, representing an excellent aspect of Chinese culture. The Yidu culture landscape uses Yidu culture as a design element for cultural promotion, playing a significant but often overlooked role in shaping the image of Niufo Ancient Town.

2.1. Presentation of Yidu Culture

Among the various cultures that have developed in Niufo Ancient Town's long history, Yidu culture shines the brightest. It represents a sense of social responsibility and commitment. Yidu culture also symbolizes justice and loyalty, which are essential elements of China's outstanding traditional culture. It sets Niufo apart from other ancient towns. Therefore, using the Yidu culture landscape as a showcase for Niufo Ancient Town's image can highlight Niufo's generosity, justice, trustworthiness, and benevolence, making it distinctively Niufo. It allows tourists to learn about Niufo's history through cultural storytelling, leaving a profound impression and

showcasing Niufo's cultural image to visitors.

2.2. Promoting Economic and Cultural Development in Niufo Ancient Town

Niufo Ancient Town has historically been a vital transportation hub and famous trading port in the Tuojian River Basin. It is often referred to as the "Niuferdu that never stops." However, with the rapid development of China's railway industry, the decline of water transport in Niufo has slowed the town's economic development. The construction of Niufo Ancient Town's Yidu Cultural Square and the promotion of values such as selflessness and other traditional virtues advocated by Yidu can become prominent symbols of Niufo Ancient Town. They should be revered and upheld, further enhancing the town's reputation and serving as an essential calling card for promoting leisure tourism in Niufo Ancient Town. This, in turn, can contribute to the economic and cultural development of Niufo Ancient Town.

2.3. Beautifying Niufo Ancient Town

As globalization advances and China's economy grows rapidly, urban landscape development has not kept pace, leading to a lack of consideration for the overall urban appearance. This has resulted in cloned, trendy, and imitative urban landscapes, confusing and often bewildering residents. Niufo Ancient Town lacks large parks and extensive leisure spaces. The planning of the riverbank area is unreasonable, with private land ownership and widespread littering. Addressing these issues requires rational planning and design to meet the needs of residents. Enhancing the landscape design of the Yidu Cultural Park in Niufo Ancient Town, considering factors such as site conditions, architecture, culture, and more, will create a multifunctional ecological system that improves residents' living environment, shapes a new image for Niufo Ancient Town, and optimizes the overall space.

2.4. Enhancing Cultural Enrichment for Residents of Niufo Ancient Town

The traditional virtues promoted by Yidu, such as selflessness, are distinctive and prominent characteristics of Niufo Ancient Town. They deserve respect and promotion. By studying and researching Niufo Ancient Town's "Yidu Culture" and attempting to express the unique Yidu culture of Niufo Ancient Town through landscape techniques, we hope to pass on Yidu culture through the landscape and effectively enhance the cultural enrichment of Niufo Ancient Town residents. This will contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of Niufo Ancient Town.

3. Principles of Shaping the Landscape Image of Yidu Cultural Square

3.1. Principle of Regional Uniqueness

In the landscape design of Yidu culture, efforts should be made to avoid uniformity. By adhering to historical context and utilizing cultural resources, the design should fully explore and develop local historical and cultural connotations and styles, creating a spatial environment with a distinctive historical and cultural atmosphere and local cultural heritage, and using the unique connotations of Yidu culture as an expression in the landscape.

3.2. Principle of Cultural Integrity

In the design of the park landscape, the site should be unified under a single style or system. While various functional areas exist within the site, the common thread that runs through the site is Yidu culture. The design should be fragmented into multiple areas, but Yidu culture should consistently permeate the site. The ultimate goal is to improve the living environment of residents, shape a new image for Niufu Ancient Town, and optimize the entire space.

3.3. Dialectical Unity of Artistry and Practicality

In the landscape design of Niufu Ancient Town's Yidu Cultural Park, Yidu culture should be used as the main theme, and creative design should be carried out around it. Yidu culture should not only be based on Niufu Ancient Town but should also draw inspiration from other outstanding cases. This approach enriches the cultural connotations and makes the Yidu culture in the park's landscape design more meaningful, creative, and interesting.

The expression of Niufu Yidu culture in the park's design should fully consider its artistic and practical aspects. By utilizing the rich cultural heritage of Yidu culture, unique original designs can be created to make the Yidu culture park landscape more innovative.

3.4. Humanization Principle of Landscape Design

The ultimate goal of Yidu Cultural Park landscape design is to serve humanity. "People-oriented" is a design concept and principle that people continually pursue. During the design process, it should meet the needs of local residents and satisfy the psychological behaviors of tourists. Details such as scale, materials, colors, forms, etc., should be humanized, better meeting the aesthetic requirements of the public.

3.5. Ecological Conservation Principle

In the ecosystem design of Yidu Cultural Park landscape design, the ecological structure of local species should be used as the guiding principle. A variety of plants, including trees, shrubs, vines, ground cover plants, and aquatic plants, should be used in combination with conifers and broad-leaved trees, evergreen and deciduous trees, drought-resistant and water-loving plants, as well as plants of varying heights and different seasonal characteristics. The vertical space of plants should be fully utilized to construct a multi-functional ecosystem with distinct levels and abundant structure. This should be maintained to ensure long-term ecological stability.

Niufu Yidu Cultural Park landscape design should also pay special attention to ecological protection under different hydrological conditions, ensuring that the park can be enjoyed during low-water periods and that rainwater can be effectively discharged during high-water periods.

4. Expression Techniques for Yidu Cultural Park Landscape Design

4.1. Direct Expression Method

Directly expressing Yidu culture in the park's landscape design involves showcasing cultural objects that have cultural significance without adding any embellishments. For example, historical buildings, cultural relics, stone inscriptions, and cultural sculptures in the park can be

displayed without adding abstract elements or additional symbolism. This straightforward approach conveys the cultural attributes directly.

4.2. Scene Reproduction Method

The scene reproduction expression technique involves using modern design methods to recreate typical scenes from a specific period in the development of Niufu's Yidu culture. It aims to evoke a sense of nostalgia and historical reflection for those familiar with Yidu culture while providing an immersive experience for those new to it. Scene reproduction allows people to immerse themselves in the culture and understand Yidu culture within a cultural atmosphere.

4.3. Symbolic Treatment Method

The symbolic treatment method involves incorporating Niufu's Yidu culture into specific environmental elements, primarily architectural features, landscape sculptures, and small landscape elements. This allows them to carry the cultural connotations of Yidu culture and become carriers for the transmission of Yidu culture. For example, the sails of the ferryboat can be extracted as the basis for sculptural representations of Yidu culture.

4.4. Metaphorical Representation Method

Metaphorical representation involves using landscape elements to symbolize aspects of Yidu culture that are challenging to depict directly. For instance, when conveying the spirit of Yidu, which is difficult to represent in physical form, metaphorical representations can be used to resonate with viewers and communicate meaning through the landscape. For example, in the design of a landscape element related to Niufu's new post station, using plant species such as red maple and magnolia to symbolize the station's historical significance can help people understand Yidu culture better.

4.5. Abstract Condensation Method

The abstract condensation method involves abstracting and refining Niufu's Yidu culture into a new form of representation. During the abstraction process, new elements can be introduced to enhance interest and make the representation more meaningful. This approach allows visitors to experience Yidu culture more deeply.

5. Conclusion

Yidu culture is an essential component of Niufu Ancient Town's identity, reflecting its historical and cultural heritage. The construction of the Yidu Cultural Park landscape plays a significant role in shaping the cultural image of Niufu Ancient Town. Currently, the unique "Yidu Culture" of the ancient town has not been effectively explored and applied, necessitating further promotion and dissemination. It is crucial to spread the Yidu spirit widely, educate the younger generation about Yidu culture, encourage them to learn and promote the Yidu culture spirit, and pass it down from generation to generation. This will strengthen cultural confidence, propagate excellent Chinese culture, and contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of Niufu Ancient Town.

Acknowledgments

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