

THE ECOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE RESTORATION OF SUBURBAN RIVERS: A CASE STUDY ON THE MEIXIAN COUNTY SECTION OF THE WEI RIVER

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Track b. Resilient spaces of river fruition

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Abstract

In the course of history, suburban rivers has always played an important role in economic and socio-cultural development, local micro-climate adjustment and ecosystem maintenance. However, in the process of accelerating and deepening urbanization and industrialization guided by the instrumental rationality and pragmatism deep-rooted in the modernity, their significant values in landscape aesthetics and ecological ethics as well as their potential contribution to the sustainable economic and social development tend to draw little attention. The conservation of suburban rivers, in consequence, is out of the question; instead, they are faced with three prominent crisis, namely, the ecological crisis, the landscape crisis and social function crisis. This article aims to, adopting a perspective of landscape ecology and ecological ethics, analyze the ecological and socio-cultural functions and current problems of suburban rivers and point out the necessity of the restoration of their ecosystem and landscape. A study of the comprehensive management project implemented in the Meixian County section of the Weihe River is also carried out, analyzing the pros and cons, which, together with the discussion above, helps the author work out a tentative proposition on the ecological and landscape restoration concepts and principles of suburban rivers, i.e. the principle of minimum intervention based on the economic and socio-cultural context, cultural and landscape relativity and continuity and harmonious coexistence of Man and Nature within the framework of economic and socio-cultural sustainable development. The ultimate objective of ecological and landscape restoration should be that of the return of humanistic spirit and traditional culture.

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Biography

Ou Yapeng, with an Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in *Cultural Landscapes Management*, has been working as Project Specialist at the Italian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS Italy) since February, 2014. Currently, Ou is a PhD candidate, and his research, focused on the Chinese classic aesthetics of landscapes, aims to bridge materiality and immateriality, historicity and modernity as well as nationality and cosmopolitanity.