STUDY OF THE COMPOSITION, VALUE, AND OVERALL PROTECTION OF THE CULTURAL ROUTES IN THE HAN RIVER BASIN AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF POPULATION MIGRATION

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1 ABSTRACT
Due to its unique geographical location, the Han River Basin has historically been an important corridor for north-south population migration. In this paper, cultural routes in the Han River Basin are used as a research setting for a thorough study of selected post roads, water systems, trade routes, and other routes that play a role in population migration. The formation and evolutionary mechanisms of the cultural routes are analyzed, their heritage value is investigated, and ideas about heritage protection in general and protection of basin sites in particular are proposed. The study uses literature collection, map reading, data statistics, and other historical research methods to comb through the many migration routes left by population flows throughout history and the large number of heritage sites that resulted. Migration activities are summarized in four historical stages, based on differing motivations for population migration, and combined with the results of superimposing derivative routes on surrounding heritage sites to analyze their spatial distribution characteristics and element compositions. The heritage sites along the cultural routes fuse the characteristics and cultural attributes of different areas. There were inherent inheritance and succession relationships between heritage sites of different periods, indicating that population migration had a persistent, significant effect on the exchange and development of areas within the Han River Basin. The preliminary investigation into the composition, value, and protection of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin was undertaken with a view to promoting the organic development of the cultural heritage of the Han River Basin under the mastery of history and the guidance of culture.

1.1 Keywords
Heritage protection, population migration, cultural routes, overall protection, Han River Basin
2 FOREWORD

The Han River Basin is situated in the transition zone of north-south cultural exchange, with a unique geographical location, a suitable climate, diverse vegetation, superior farming conditions, and abundant resources, all of which have given rise to frequent population migrations that have had pronounced effects on the culture, economy, population, and other aspects of the basin. On the one hand, population migration brought an abundant labor force and advanced production technology to the Han River Basin, as evidenced by the poem, “Refugees come crossing the Mian, dragging cattle that bear their wives and children”. On the other hand, the Central Plains culture, the Bashu culture, and the Qinlong culture fused with the local Chu culture, causing the Han River Basin to become a cultural exchange center for north-south gathering and a place where many types of people lived, leaving abundant post roads, water systems, trade routes, and so on, in the process. Together with the plentiful heritage sites, these migrations formed cultural routes with unique basin characteristics.

At present, domestic research on cultural routes in the Han River Basin mainly focuses on a single route and divides into several aspects: excavating the historical background of the route, textual research on the historical development of the route, the composition of the route’s heritage and value identification, and assessment of the cultural route and its application to the List of World Heritage Sites. On this basis, research related to the construction, overall value identification, and protection of cultural routes and heritage networks within the basin is undertaken in this paper in hopes of mining thoughts on protection of the heritage characteristics of the basin.

3 COMPOSITION OF THE CULTURAL ROUTES IN THE HAN RIVER BASIN

3.1 Survey of population migration in the Han River Basin

In this section, the four main stages of population migration in the Han River Basin are sorted by organizing research findings from historical sources, ancient books, and related fields.

(1) Pre-Qin Dynasty (21 Century BC—221 BC)

As early as the pre-Qin Dynasty, the Han River Basin was an immigration channel and an early human settlement. People in the Xia and Shang Dynasties had reached the lower reaches of the Han River basin, and in Western Zhou Dynasty, the Nanyang Basin was an area into which there was additional population migration. Some ethnic minority peoples, such as the Nanzheng tribe, also migrated along the Baoxie Road to the Hanzhong area.

(2) Qin Dynasty (221 BC—207 BC)to Six Dynasties (AD222—AD589)

During the Qin and Han Dynasties, the number of immigrants moving into the Han River Basin increased greatly relative to the previous period; the range of migration involved the Hanzhong Basin, the Suizao Corridor, the Nanyang Basin, the lower reaches of Han River Basin, and other areas, and the ethnic composition of the population that moved in was richer. In Volume 37 of the Book of Song, the Three Prefectures of Jin, the following was recorded: “With the death of Hu and chaos in Di, refugees from Yongzhou and Qinzhou mostly went south to Fanzhou and Mianyang; Emperor Xiaowu of Jin began in Xiangyang.”

(3) Tang (AD618—AD907) and Song (AD960—AD1279) Dynasties

“In the Tianbao Rebellion, Yuan Jie from Ru was on the river bank, leading the neighbors move to Xianghan, preserving over 1,000 families.” In the Late Tang Dynasty, the Central Plains were in chaos, which many northerners moved into the Jingmen-Xiangyang area to avoid. The Old Book of Tang—Geographical Records states: “From the beginning until after the reign of Emperor De (756), the Central Plains had many incidents; the people of Xiangyang and Dengzhou wore the dress of two capitals and went to the area of the Yangtze River and Xiang River. Therefore, Jingnan had wells and cities 10 times its beginning.” In the Central Plains, after the chaos of war spread to Xiangyang and Dengzhou, the residents continued to move southward. During the Northern Song period, the vast area of the middle and lower reaches of the Han River were sparsely populated and became an important immigrant destination.

(4) Yuan (AD1271—AD1368), Ming (AD1368—AD1644), and Qing (AD1644—AD1912) Dynasties

As described by Wei Yuan, in the Water Conservation Theory of Huguang: “In the final phase of the Ming Dynasty, the people were exhausted by the massacre in Shu by the thief Zhang; then, under Chu, there was less suffering in Jiangxi. After things settled down, the people of Jiangxi moved into Chu, and the
people of Chu moved into Shu.” There was indeed a rhyme about “Jiangxi filling Huguang, Huguang filling Sichuan.” The immigrants took full advantage of the Yangtze River-Han River transportation arteries; immigrants from the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, mainly from Jiangxi, moved into Huguang, and residents from Huguang and other areas moved into Sichuan (as shown in Figure 1).

![Map of population migration. Diagram by the authors.](image)

3.2 Composition of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin

Combing through the process of population migration in the Han River Basin, we summarize the main population migration routes and derivative routes by time period and the heritage sites surrounding them. The main conclusions are as follows: (1) Population migration activities were frequent within the Han River Basin and had prominent effects; cultural diversity within the basin was significant. (2) Types of cultural routes in the basin mainly divide into ancient post roads, ancient tea roads, ancient salt roads, ancient river courses, and so on. (3) Heritage sites along the routes have diverse characteristics; they include ancient cities, religious buildings, buildings that house classical learning academies, landscape architecture, residential buildings, and many other types of structures.

3.3 Characteristics of the cultural route distribution in the Han River Basin

Crisscrossed land and sea transport - Frequent population migration in the Han River Basin was encouraged not only by the advantages of the terrain but also by the relatively convenient water transport conditions of the Han River Basin; land and sea were equally important. On the basis of its unique geographical conditions, the cultural route distribution in the basin area exhibited two trends: north-south and east-west. The north-south direction was mainly land route-based, and the east-west direction was mainly waterway-based.

Highlighted central control points - Hanzhong, Xiangyang, Nanyang, and Wuhan were the central control points of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin, radiating in four directions. In the historical period, people grouped about these cities, providing a labor force for local development, promoting cultural exchange and fusion between areas and providing an impetus for the formation of an all-inclusive culture arising from the proximity of many different peoples (as shown in Figure 2).
Formation and evolution of cultural routes in the Han River Basin

Studies of the formation and evolution of cultural routes in the Han River Basin have mainly employed historical research methods. In particular, they have used longitudinal research, written records, and textual research to extract the mechanisms of dynamic change in the cultural routes in the Han River Basin. Therefore, routes with relatively full and accurate records of population migration that made prominent contributions to the cultural landscape have been selected as the main subjects of analysis (as shown in Table 1). In particular, land routes studied include the Baoxie Road, the Wuguan Pass, the pass between Xiangyang and Nanyang, and the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang, while waterways studied include the trunk stream of the Han River and the tributaries of the Danjiang River and the Tangbai River.

4.1 Baoxie Road

Initially, Baoxie Road ran from the Xie Valley upstream to Wulipo, entering the upper reaches of the Bao River to head south along the Bao River Valley through the two counties of Taibai and Liuba, then exiting the Bao Valley to arrive at Hanzhong. The road was a thoroughfare used in opening Guanzhong to the Han River Basin. During the period of the Western Zhou, Wei, Jin, Northern, and Southern Dynasties, Baoxie Road got its name, as it started from the south at the mouth of the Bao River Valley in Hanzhong and ran along the two waterways of the Bao River and the Xie River. Rebuilding, which made the surface of the road wider, flatter, and more convenient, occurred during the Eastern Han and Northern Wei periods: “A 40-foot wide pavilion, a 60-foot wide road, The sage does not do it, even it is difficult to imagine things, have achieved today.” (Inscription at Shimen). Baoxie Road, connecting Guanzhong to the Hanzhong area and bearing commercial and trade transport, was relatively prosperous until the Ming Dynasty; the period of its prosperity is thus recorded in Volume III of the Trivial Records on Jinchuan: “The pass is full of business travelers, and the river is full of tea boats.” In addition to population migration and commercial and trade transport functions, Baoxie Road was a road with which military strategists had to contend and over which economic and cultural exchanges had to pass. The Biographies of Merchants in Records of the Grand Historian recorded: “The thousands of miles of plank road pass through everything; only Baoxie controls the hub of communication at its mouth.” We can see that for quite a long historical period, Baoxie Road was a thoroughfare for military affairs, commerce and trade, and cultural communication, providing a bridge for north-south economic and cultural exchanges.

The presence of the Green Bridge (Qingqiao) Post and the Horse Road (Madao) Post during the period of the Qin and Han Dynasties are proof of early transportation functions. After the Tang Dynasty,
population exchanges as well as cultural, commercial, and trade exchanges were more frequent; the Jingguang Temple of the Tang Dynasty, the River-watching Pavilion (Wangjianglou) of the Song Dynasty, the Storm (Fengyun) Temple of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and so on, clearly demonstrate that Baoxie Road provided an important channel for cultural exchange. The Ancient Chinese Dias was left after the Chu-Han war, proving its military status. These remains witnessed the evolution and development of Baoxie Road, which also increased their historical value.

Figure 3. Map of Baoxie Road and the distribution of its surrounding heritage sites. Diagram by the authors.

4.2 Wuguan Pass (Danjiang River)

The Wu Pass started from Changan, went through Lantian, and passed the Qinling Mountains to go down along the Qipan River, a tributary of the Danjiang River, to reach Nanyang; it was an important traffic route linking Guanzhong with the Nanyang Basin and to the vast areas of Jingzhou and Xiangyang. In the 25th Year of Duke Xi of Lu, the Commentary of Zuo recorded: “The State of Qin and the State of Jin cut down the State of Ruo during the Autumn period.” The State of Ruo was located on the left bank, southwest of the Danjiang River in Xichuan County, Henan Province; it was a fortress on the Guanzhong Plain, which ran from the Wuguan Pass to Nanyang. The attack by the State of Qin and the State of Jin on the State of Ruo very possibly passed through the Wu Pass. This is currently the earliest recorded use of the Wu Pass.

“Went up from Nanjun and returned by the Wu Pass” (cited in the Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin); “In the eighth month, the King of Han used the plan of Han Xin …… He ordered the generals Xue Ou and Wang Xi to go out of the Wu Pass” (cited in the Chronicle of the Originator of the Han Dynasty); “There are people who walk the road of fame and fortune on Mount Shang even at night” (cited by the Late Tang Dynasty poet Wang Zhenbai); “Nowadays, people who enter the State of Qin from Nanyang in Henan and from Xiangyang and Yunyang in Huguang must take the Wu Pass” (cited in Volume LII of Essentials of Geography for Reading History).

These few passages in literature document the important historical position of the Wuguan Pass in politics, military affairs, the economy, and so forth. Additionally, they show the endless changes in function of the Wuguan Pass, playing an irreplaceable role in exchanges between the Han River Basin and the Guanzhong Region in the historical development of the area. The existing, rich historical heritage along the Wuguan Pass includes a large number of transportation buildings, such as the Cengfeng Post, the Double Theater (Shuangxilou), and other heritage sites that embodied the fusion of northern and southern cultures, proving that the pass had once been a channel for north-south exchange. The heritage sites and the Wuguan Pass jointly became the elements that constitute this section of the cultural routes.
4.3 Ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang

From ancient times until today, the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang has been an important traffic route between north and south, connecting the three major central cities of Jingzhou, Jingmen, and Xiangyang. Xiangyang gradually rose up after unification under the State of Qin and, along with Jingzhou, became an important military hub. As Zhao Qi, a personage of the Three Kingdoms, observed: “Today the sea collapsed inward, only Jingzhou had the wide territory and resources…… Scaling the old valley alone, the soldiers are short of a full complement.” “A trail of five hundred from Xiangyang to Jiangling, the situation is close. Without Xiangyang, Jiangling will be attacked by the enemy” “Will victory in Huguang take place in Wuchang? In Xiangyang? Or is it planned for Jingzhou? Say: Speaking of the world, the focus is on Xiangyang; speaking of the Southeast, the focus is on Wuchang; speaking of Huguang, the focus is on Jingzhou.” We can see that from the Qin and Han Dynasties to the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Jingzhou and Xiangyang were important political and military sites; because both are located on the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang, we know of the historical military importance of the ancient road.

In addition, the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang also bore an important commercial transport function. As early as the Spring and Autumn Warring States Period, the State of Chu had drawn support from the profusion of products transported on the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang: “Goji, Chinese catalpa, and leather, thus, the State of Chu will carry on. Though the State of Chu has the materials, the State of Jin finds them useful” “Wine is mellow, and the flowers cover the bridge in Yicheng. The green ducks quack and bite in the clear sand. …… Having a long dream while a brocade of straws is in the golden furnace, the owner’s chicken crows to sound the morning.” “The pedestrians leisurely stroll along the river’s edge at dusk. Remarkably, Jingzhou cannot yet be seen at the hilltop.” From the records of these ancient poems, the bustling scene of the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang can be seen. While the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang played an important role in transportation, it also took on a role in politics, military affairs, and commerce and trade.

In summary, it is known that the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang has always borne the function of transportation in the historical development process, providing an important channel for population migration and leaving large numbers of settlement sites and cultural remains. Among the latter are the ancient settlements of the Qujiailing site from the Neolithic Age, the Chenjiagang site from the Eastern Zhou Dynasty, the cultural remains of the Lumen Temple from the Han Dynasty, and the Eastern Pagoda (Dongbaota) from the Sui Dynasty. Military sites include the Xiangyang ancient city wall, built during the Western Han Dynasty. These historical remains not only bear witness to the historical evolution of the ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang. They also enrich its connotations, making it a cultural route with historical value.

The sorting analysis shows that Baoxie Road and other important routes in the Han River Basin were important channels promoting the prosperous development of the economy, culture, and other aspects of the Han River Basin and that they played an important role in population migration. Although the reasons
for forming the individual routes differed, as did the evolutionary mechanisms involved, the routes promoted north-south exchange and witnessed historical changes, leaving rich historical remains.

Figure 5. Map of Ancient road between Jingzhou and Xiangyang and the distribution of its surrounding heritage sites. Diagram by the authors.

Table 1. The statistical table of heritage sites in ancient road

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agricultural heritage</th>
<th>Phase of interest</th>
<th>Religious building</th>
<th>Transport facilities</th>
<th>Ancient settlement</th>
<th>Military installation</th>
<th>Trinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Han River</td>
<td>The first road crossing</td>
<td>National Forest Park, Qingling, Han River, Guanzhong, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Qingling temple, Zhangye temple, Wugao stage, Wuhan city, Han River</td>
<td>Wugao stage, Wuhan city, Han River, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Wugao stage, Wuhan city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Wugao stage, Wuhan city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>The distribution of the type of sites is uniform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wugao Road</td>
<td>Yellow river, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Junan, Gansu province</td>
<td>Wugao city, Han River, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Junan, Gansu province</td>
<td>Wugao city, Han River, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Wugao stage, Wuhan city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Yellow river, Shaanxi province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanxiang Road</td>
<td>Yellow river, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Nanxiang city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Nanxiang city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Nanxiang city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Nanxiang city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Nanxiang city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Yellow river, Shaanxi province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingzun Road</td>
<td>Blue river, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Jingzun city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Jingzun city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Jingzun city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Jingzun city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Jingzun city, Shaanxi province</td>
<td>Yellow river, Shaanxi province</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Thoughts regarding the overall value and protection of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin

5.1 Overall value of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin

5.1.1 Important channel of population migration

The Han River Basin has a unique geographic location, with superior natural conditions. As the region continued to develop, important cities along the shores of the Han River, such as Hanzhong, Xiangyang, Nanyang, Hankou, and others, attracted large numbers of immigrants, giving rise to an enormous amount of migratory activity in the region. Lu Xiqi observed that during a period of turmoil from
the Late Han Dynasty to the Six Dynasties, refugees from the north left Hanzhong through the Wuguan Pass, went down to Nanyang through the Fangcheng Pass, and gathered in the Xiangjiang and Mian River Valleys or the Nanyang Basin, documenting that population migration activities had occurred in the Han River Basin.

5.1.2 An important bridge for cross-regional cultural exchanges

The cultural routes in the Han River Basin covered a wide range, greatly promoting the blending of cultures. Drawing from the advantages of its unique location, the network of cultural routes in the Han River Basin went north through the Central Plains and linked to the Wu and Yue Kingdoms in the east, building a bridge for cross-regional cultural exchanges. For example, the guild hall for merchant fleets on the north shore of the Danjiang River combines the solemn generosity of the north with the gorgeous details of the south, gathering the essence of northern and southern architecture in one structure; it thus provides a model of cultural fusion in the Han River Basin. These cultural routes brought cultures from different regions to the Han River Basin, promoting the cultural style of the Han River Basin as a place where all types of people lived together.

5.1.3 Rich heritage sites with a long historical span

The Han River Basin has a long history and a rich heritage. The cultural routes within the basin contain many types of historical remains, tracing human activities and their related histories and cultures and embodying the historical changes that have occurred in the Han River Basin; according to historical records, human activity has been present in the Han River Basin since the Paleolithic Era, for example, at the site of the Meipu Man in Yunxian County.

5.2 Thoughts on the overall protection of cultural routes in the basin

The main framework of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin arises from the routes generated, with clear time continuity, by population migrations. Such migrations transported a series of production and living activities and facilitated exchange between heritage sites and cities. The geographic location of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin is an area where all types of people lived together, and the land was rich with innate superiority. The heritage sites in the area share natural and humanistic environments in the linear space of the Han River Basin.

Given the inherent complexities of the cultural routes in the Han River Basin and seeking to respect the historical development of heritage sites, cultural exchanges and inheritance relationships, the inherent succession mechanism was used to establish a “three-dimensional” heritage protection framework that highlights the historical and cultural values of the cultural routes.

1) Improve time continuity. The remaining cultural routes show not the face of a certain historical snippet but a dynamic evolutionary process formed by superimposing different historical periods upon one another. Therefore, the style and features of all historical periods should be protected and exhibited in the protection process. Through the collection of historical information on the heritage sites in the Han River Basin, a complete sequence of ideas on historical development should be sorted out, the meanings and values of different historical periods should be revealed, and continuity and renewal should be pursued.

2) Build spatial links. All heritage sites on the cultural routes share the same linear space; at the same time, the promotion of linear links drove exchange between different areas. The historical and socioeconomic reasons why the heritage sites in the Han River Basin drove the development of routes should be uncovered, and the heritage sites generated under the influence of the routes and their courses of development, which ultimately formed cultural routes that mutually associated the sites, routes, and surfaces, should be found.

3) Look for derivative associations. Interactions between heritage sites in the Han River Basin and routes drove each other, which developed symbiotically (or disappeared) with the natural environment. Some core heritage sites in their own development process drove the development of secondary heritage sites, and the values they carry also continues in inheritance, succession, and development over time.

After construction of the protection framework for the cultural routes in the Han River Basin, it is also necessary to take specific protective measures. That is, research on heritage sites that require protection and repair should be undertaken. Such research should place these sites against their historical backdrops. Links with history in terms of material selection, scale, historical style, features, and other
aspects should also be elucidated. At the same time, it is necessary to fuse these historical sites with contemporary developments to endow them with meaning in a new era.

6 CONCLUSION
Combining the special geographical location and rich resources of the Han River Basin, population migration played an important role in promoting inherent associations between the cultural routes in the Han River Basin. The study has found that the cultural routes in the Han River Basin exhibit linear spatial distribution characteristics in the two directions of north-south and east-west. The types of routes formed are plentiful and diverse, and the heritage sites along the routes are of many types, e.g., military, religious, landscape garden, residential, and so forth. The cultural routes demonstrate the value of strong channels, cultural fusion, and rich heritage sites over long time periods. Efforts to protect these routes should seek overall protection in terms of time continuity, spatial linkages, and internal derivative associations between routes.

7 Acknowledgement section
Thanks for the support of National Natural Science Foundation of China (Fund number: 51408251) and Laboratory of Urban Agriculture in Central China (pilot run)/Ministry of Agriculture.

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