A Study on the Characteristics and Preservation of Gardens' Space in the Pingjiang Ancient City, Suzhou, China from the Ming to the Republic of China Period

明代から中華民国期までの中国蘇州平江古城における庭園空間の特性と保存に関する研究

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Abstract

Chinese classical gardens are a vital part of China's cultural heritage, with Suzhou's Pingjiang ancient city exemplifying this art form. However, rapid urbanisation has posed critical challenges to preservation, highlighting the need for scientifically-based approaches that ensure sustainable protection within modern urban development.

This study systematically analyses the spatial characteristics and evolution of gardens in Pingjiang from the Ming Dynasty to the Republic of China, offering preservation recommendations. The objectives include: (1) examining global research trends in garden heritage conservation and the uniqueness of Suzhou studies; (2) exploring internal spatial characteristics and influencing factors; (3) assessing external distribution patterns and their influencing factors. Initially, bibliometric and visualisation tools were used to review studies from 2004 to 2024. Global research showed a marked rise, with digital technology, sustainable management, and integrated approaches emerging as key themes. Conversely, Suzhou studies focused more on isolated design elements, lacking comprehensive spatial analysis, which provided a theoretical foundation for subsequent research. Focusing on 27 representative gardens, space syntax and statistical methods revealed significant differences in internal characteristics like building density and spatial integration, reflecting owners' social status and cultural tastes, thus guiding categorised conservation. GIS analysis showed garden distribution

evolving from dispersed in the Ming period to centralised in the Qing, and multi-centred by the Republic of China, influenced by factors such as water networks, religious sites, and economic hubs. This change mirrored shifts in Suzhou's social structure and urban functions.

Based on these findings, differentiated preservation measures and digital monitoring methods are proposed. The study emphasises integrating garden conservation with the surrounding environment through holistic urban planning. In conclusion, this study enhances understanding of Pingjiang gardens' spatial characteristics, providing scientific guidance for heritage preservation and offering reference points for conservation in other contexts.