

# Research on the Integration of Poetic Conception in Urban Waterfront Landscape Design under the Context of China-Chic

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**Abstract:** Classical poetry, as an essential part of Chinese cultural studies, has always attracted countless literati. Integrating poetic conceptions into landscape design can fully showcase the cultural heritage and connotation of a city. This paper addresses issues such as the spread of homogenized design forms, lack of distinctive artistic conception, and scarcity of considerate public facilities in current waterfront landscape design. Using the renewal design of the waterfront landscape in Zigui County as a case study, and drawing inspiration from classical poetry, this research proposes optimization strategies such as a spatial design structure following the qi-cheng-zhuan-he pattern, flexible and diverse spatial functions, and immersive public facilities. By extracting cultural elements and integrating them into landscape design, the study aims to combine the two better, thereby fully realizing their roles in inheriting and promoting Chinese culture and enriching the connotation of landscape culture.

**Keywords:** Classical Poetry; Landscape Design; Artistic Conception; Chinese Culture

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, with the rapid development of China's economy and the acceleration of globalization, Chinese trends have gradually become an emerging cultural phenomenon, warmly welcomed by young people. Chinese trends are not only a re-examination and innovative expression of traditional culture but also a unique form that combines modern and traditional cultures. In this context, how to integrate the artistic conception of classical poetry into modern urban landscape design has become a challenging and creative topic. As an important part of Chinese culture, classical poetry contains rich aesthetic value and cultural connotation. Its artistic conception often presents deep emotions and unique aesthetic experiences through concise language and exquisite expressions. Integrating poetic conceptions into urban landscape design can not only enhance the cultural taste and artistic value of urban spaces but also strengthen citizens' recognition and sense of belonging to traditional culture, thereby promoting the inheritance and innovation of urban culture.

## **2 Design Principles**

### **2.1 Humanization Principle**

Design should be for people, aiming to meet their needs. Landscape design also serves people. Adding elements of classical poetry to the waterfront landscape should reflect the concept of humanization. Designers must think from the perspective of the public, starting from reality, analyzing people's living habits, aesthetic capabilities, and local customs, and summarizing commonly used elements. The expression of artistic conception should not be too rigid but should integrate with the surrounding environment to resonate with people, thereby achieving an educational purpose.

### **2.2 Sustainability Principle**

With industrialization, many plants and green spaces have been cut down, making it impossible to present the beautiful natural scenery depicted in classical poetry. Landscape design should not only meet people's aesthetic needs but also protect existing resources, allowing natural and man-made landscapes to coexist harmoniously. Classical poetry, as part of traditional Chinese culture, has advocated the idea of "harmony between man and nature" since ancient times. To achieve harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, existing natural resources should be maintained and optimized to fully express the scenarios in classical poetry, adhering to the principle of sustainable development.

### **2.3 Regionality Principle**

Regional culture refers to the long-standing local customs, living habits, and even natural resources. With continuous development, different natural and human factors emerge, highlighting a city's unique cultural connotation. Landscape design should follow historical traces, respect history, protect first, and then update. For instance, architect Wang Shu thoroughly analyzes the locality before designing, adopting traditional architectural forms and even collecting old bricks and tiles for construction, ultimately presenting unique cultural connotations and protecting local traditions. The overall planning of Zigui County's waterfront landscape should consider local customs, traditional architectural forms, and materials, better showcasing Zigui's cultural heritage through the waterfront landscape and street commercial areas<sup>[1]</sup>.

## **3 Design Concept**

The overall design focus of Zigui County's waterfront landscape is to extract the artistic conception of classical poetry and appropriately apply it to the waterfront landscape design, providing the public with a comfortable outdoor space rich in cultural heritage. It also aims to reflect Zigui County's regional culture, highlighting its reputation as the "Hometown of Chinese Poetry" to attract tourists. From a design perspective, it is essential to consider people's desire to return to nature and their wish to pursue traditional culture. Placing the overall planning design within the context of classical poetry, integrating traditional poetry culture and modern technology into the construction of the waterfront landscape, and designing a waterfront landscape with poetic cultural connotation and novel shapes.

## **4 Problems in Modern Urban Waterfront Landscape Design**

### **4.1 Homogenization Spread**

With urbanization, many cities' constructions have become monotonous, tending toward homogenization in design forms, lacking unique cultural connotation, and causing aesthetic fatigue among the public. While pursuing internationalization and modernization, designers often neglect the original urban characteristics. Therefore, it is necessary to use the artistic conception of classical poetry in landscape design. Additionally, in practical design, designers often overemphasize functionality and neglect form. To make the overall design representative of the local features, designers need to conduct thorough research on the local environment, history, and customs, extracting elements to merge with modern landscapes<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **4.2 Lack of Artistic Conception**

As society develops, people's aesthetic demands increase, and the pursuit of a beautiful environment becomes more intense. Waterfront landscapes, as premium venues for creating landscapes and providing aesthetic experiences, are gaining more attention. However, problems such as speed over quality construction lead to formalized and formulaic designs, with cultural deficits being a major factor. Classical Chinese poetry offers many excellent works for reference in landscape design. For instance, in the West Garden of the Liu Garden, the wall has an inscription "Following the stream," inspired by Tao Yuanming's "Following the stream, forgetting the distance of the road, suddenly encountering a peach blossom forest." This implies the poetic conception of Peach Blossom Spring, making the landscape poetic and adding a deep sense of seclusion. Integrating poetic conceptions into landscapes not only gives the landscape deeper meaning but also better preserves traditional culture.

### **4.3 Lack of Considerate Facilities**

Zigui, as the hometown of poetry, has a long history, spreading traditional poetry culture far and wide, renowned both domestically and internationally. Integrating poetry culture into public facility construction gives traditional culture a modern, fashionable appearance, providing a breakthrough for its dissemination<sup>[3]</sup>. While displaying form, attention should also be paid to functional design, allowing public facilities to be used by everyone without special arrangements, achieving universal design. In specific designs, it is essential to find the urban context, extracting forms and colors from the environment for a better user experience. Public facilities can also play an educational role; when optimizing and renovating, consider the combination of function and form to better serve the public.

## **5 Integration of Poetic Conception in Urban Waterfront Landscape Design**

The artistic conception of poetry and painting is "virtual," while the landscape space is "real." By extracting emotional imagery, patterns, colors, and other elements from poetry and painting and applying them to landscape spaces, the transition from "virtual" to "real" is achieved. When people are in this landscape space, they resonate emotionally, transitioning from "real" to "virtual," from scenery to emotion (as shown in Figure 1). Zigui County,

located by the Yangtze River, boasts beautiful scenery and a pleasant climate. Addressing issues in the waterfront landscape, the Zigui County waterfront landscape will be renewed and optimized. By exploring deeper poetic conceptions, the design can provide directions for more fitting urban development and livability. The waterfront landscape design process should emphasize extracting the cultural connotation of classical poetry, imbuing the landscape with the essence of Chinese cultural studies.

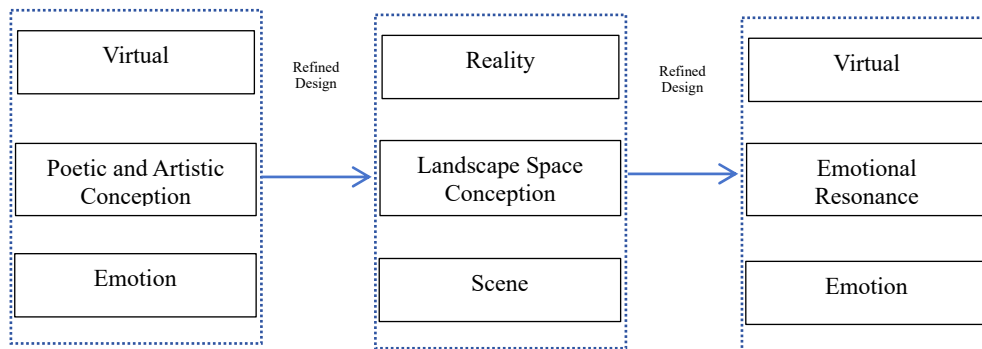


Fig. 1. The Reality and Illusion of Landscape Space ( Drawn by the Author)

### 5.1 Overall Planning of Qi-Cheng-Zhuan-He

As times progress, the Yangtze River has become a crucial transportation river in China, forming the Yangtze River Economic Belt and playing a significant role in the economic development of cities along its banks. Zigui County, located along the Yangtze River, is deeply influenced by the Yangtze River in both economy and culture. After centuries of accumulation, Zigui County has formed a rich cultural history. Therefore, it is essential to conduct thorough research on the city's cultural context and economic conditions, forming a clear cultural theme and extracting cultural elements as creative points. This allows tradition and innovation to merge and collide in Zigui County, improving local residents' living conditions and the ecological environment.

### 5.2 Flexible and Diverse Spatial Functions

The waterfront landscape design of Zigui County presents an overall structure of "One River, Four Zones, Eight Points." "One River" refers to the Yangtze River, with the overall design extending along it. "Four Zones" refers to dividing the waterfront landscape into four areas: Listening to the Wind at the Building, Zigui Fragrance, Clear Wind and Bright Moon, and By the Water's Edge, each highlighting different features while forming a whole when combined. "Eight Points" refers to cultural nodes based on poetic conceptions. The various levels of structure intersect, giving the waterfront landscape both integrity and rich diversity, showcasing the reimagined imagery of classical poetry from multiple dimensions.

#### 5.2.1 Zigui Fragrance Zone

The "Willow Dark and Flowers Bright" children's entertainment installation has a simple overall shape, consisting of several geometric shapes of different sizes. Inspired by the poem "After traveling through mountains and rivers, there is another village where the willows are

dark and the flowers are bright," this installation implies the scene of finding new views after being lost in the mountains and waters, teaching children the principle of exploring for answers when encountering difficulties.

### 5.2.2 Clear Wind and Bright Moon Zone

Stepping stones in gardens primarily showcase the beauty of nature. Stepping stones add natural interest to the water scene, varying the water surface and facilitating water sightseeing (as shown in Figure 2). Large, flat stones are usually selected for stepping stones, distributed in shallow water, arranged naturally and elegantly, easily bringing people close to the water and enriching the water scene. In this design, the "Cut Jade and Ice" stepping stone design is added, inspired by Bai Juyi's poem describing "fragments of ice like jade pieces." In early spring, melting ice on the water surface resembles oddly shaped jade pieces, paired with bushes on the shore, creating a serene and fresh Jiangnan landscape. At night, as visitors step on the stones, gravity-sensing lights on the stones illuminate, enhancing the layers of still water stepping stones and reflecting the natural atmosphere with infectious charm.

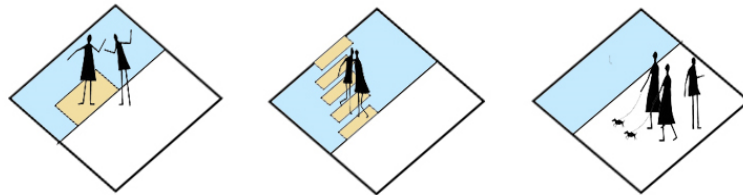


Fig. 2. Analysis of Different Types of Water Feature Design (Drawn by the Author)

### 5.2.3 By the Water's Edge Zone

Water is the source of life, closely related to human production and life. In ancient poetry, "water" often serves as a metaphor, expressing poets' beautiful visions of nature and entrusting their ideals and emotions. Adopting diverse forms of water scenes can effectively coordinate water body changes. The waterfront landscape is an ecological, natural, and fresh space in the city, where people can engage in various water-related activities on waterside platforms, temporarily forgetting worries and fully enjoying nature's beauty. The "Sky and Water Merge" platform design in Zigui County's waterfront landscape fully reflects this. The waterside platform offers a broad view, recreating the scene described by poet Wang Bo in "The lone bird flies with the sunset, the autumn water shares the same color with the sky," depicting a serene and distant picture.

### 5.2.4 Elastic Space Design

The overall planning includes an ancient tree, following the principle of minimal intervention, respecting nature in the tree's protection, minimizing human destruction, and preserving the tree's original state as much as possible. A small activity area is set around the tree, flexibly utilizing the space according to different festival customs (as shown in Figure 3). The design also fully reflects the soundscape, integrating modern intelligent means into landscape design, creating an intelligent poetry corridor with an interactive poetry voice system, allowing people to interact with artificial intelligence devices to recite poems, earning "S" points that can be

redeemed for cultural and creative products at the Zigui Poetry Exhibition Hall across the street, enhancing people's interest in classical poetry<sup>[4]</sup>.

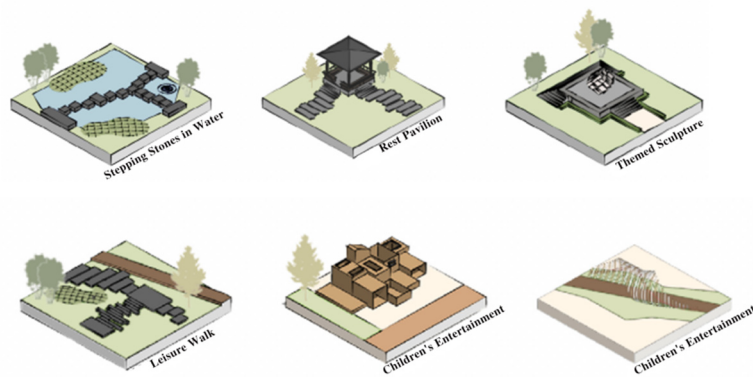


Fig. 3. Analysis of Elastic Space Design (Drawn by the Author)

### 5.3 Public Facilities with Deep Artistic Conception

#### (1) "Light Makeup and Heavy Makeup" Landscape Wall

The curved shape of the landscape wall is inspired by the tonal patterns of poetry, with different hollowed-out poetic texts on each wall<sup>[5]</sup>. On sunny days, the sunlight changes over time, casting shadows on the ground that form different verses, showcasing the charm of words. On rainy days, although there is no sunlight, the white wall gradually changes to light pink and finally to rouge red as it gets soaked, echoing Su Shi's words in "On the West Lake in the Early Morning and After the Rain": "Trying to compare the West Lake to Lady Xi, it is suitable whether light makeup or heavy makeup." Whether sunny or rainy, the landscape wall's scenery is just right, bringing unexpected touches.

#### (2) "Leisurely Distant Village" Street Lamps

The street lamps incorporate simple line patterns of traditional architecture, inspired by the poetic conception in Tao Yuanming's "Returning to the Countryside": "The village far away is faintly visible, with curling smoke rising gently, making people feel at ease, entrusting the poet's longing for a secluded life." At night, the village's lights illuminate, creating a warm atmosphere that resonates emotionally with people.

#### (3) "Poetry Rubik's Cube" Theme Sculpture

The "Poetry Rubik's Cube" theme sculpture is located at the entrance of the riverside landscape, inspired by the constantly rotating Rubik's Cube. The different colors on the Rubik's Cube are switched to poetic texts, implying the flexibility of poetic culture, where the same word has different meanings in different poems. The sculpture is made of traditional granite, highlighting Chinese cultural features<sup>[6]</sup>. The texts on the sculpture are equipped with light strips, which outline the shapes of the words at night, allowing people to clearly understand the theme of the sculpture even at night, thus creating a strong poetic cultural atmosphere.

## 6 Conclusion

Classical poetry, as an essential part of Chinese cultural studies, records many beautiful and poetic chapters in elegant words. Integrating poetry culture into waterfront landscapes can fill spaces with poetic charm, providing people with opportunities to appreciate the elegance and tranquility of poetry and scenery. Space is the essence of scenery, while the artistic conception of poetry is its soul, both continuously developing. Recreating poetic conceptions can give people spiritual pleasure in the beautiful nature, helping them forget their worries. Integrating classical poetry culture into waterfront landscapes allows people to experience nature more closely, achieving an aesthetic experience of harmony between man and nature. It also helps people better understand the cultural connotation of cities, elevating spiritual realms, enhancing cultural awareness, strengthening cultural confidence, and achieving cultural self-reliance.

**Acknowledgments.** This work was supported by the fund project: 2023 Tianjin Education Commission Research Program Project: “Research on the Activation Strategy of Time honored Brand in the Context of China-Chic” (No. 2023SK002).

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